

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/23/2020 11:17 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: UNBOUNDED LEARNING, INC (S423A200129)

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 #12 - SEED - 12: 84.423A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: UNBOUNDED LEARNING, INC (S423A200129)

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:

1. The applicant clearly articulated the extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority established for the competition. For example, UnboundEd (UE) will train 154 school leaders, reach 620 middle school math teachers and 77,500 middle school students. They will serve 77 school leaders (Y1), 154 leaders (Y2), and 77 leaders (Y3; cohort 1 spans years 1-2, cohort 2 spans years 2-3). Furthermore, they will transform how school leaders raise math achievement by 1) emphasizing the role of leadership; 2) supporting teachers to implement high-cognitive-demand tasks with multiple strategies; and 3) addressing expectations and bias through culturally responsive methods. Principals will improve math instructional practices that maximize opportunities for students from marginalized groups to engage with challenging tasks using multiple math strategies(e15).

2. The proposed program will be high-quality, as it has been developed from multiple evidence-based frameworks, including New Leaders' Aspiring Principals Program, WWC Practice Guide for Mathematical Problem Solving, and research literature on CRI. Moreover, it leverages UnboundEd's expertise with developing and facilitating effective educator training programs over the past five years. Furthermore, the intensity and duration are expected to lead to improvements in participating school leaders' practice, which is expected to result in increased math achievement for students. This is premised on the RAND research reports on APP that found statistically significant impacts on math achievement. UnboundEd's program design is consistent with much of their training(e27).

3. The applicant proposed clearly how the design of the project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. For example, MILA will successfully address needs of the ultimate target population - middle school students who are below grade level in math. It will better engage and support the learning of students of color so they can achieve at the same levels as their white peers. The project is partnering with seven diverse urban and rural school districts across the country that provide a large sample of Black and Latinx students to assess intervention effectiveness. The table describes participating school districts' demographics and levels of math achievement(e27)

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 is detailed. For example, they have a robust plan to incorporate MILA activities and benefits into PD programs. As required by the U.S. Department of Education, UnboundEd will openly license all new content created with SEED funds, and plan to go beyond this by adding selections of the new digital content to their instructional resources library already offered for free on their website, which includes the EngageNY K-12 math and English Language Arts curriculum. EngageNY has been downloaded over 40 million times and is used by educators in all 50 states. Furthermore, after the grant ends, UnboundEd will charge participants for live trainings (whether delivered online or in-person) in order to sustain this professional development option for school leaders. The current model of providing free access to curricula and resources and charging for facilitated trainings has demonstrated success at both covering UnboundEd's costs while increasing access to high-quality instructional resources for districts and schools. To date they have served more than 9,000 educators in our Standards Institute and other offerings, which shows this model will work for the SEED project as well. And, the two-day Virtual Summit they are offering the week of June 22, 2020 has sold out with nearly 1,000 paying educators.

Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses
2. No weaknesses
3. No weaknesses
4. No weaknesses

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:

1. The applicant will help school leaders increase their understanding of math problem solving strategies, culturally responsive pedagogy, and structures necessary to support development in teachers. They in turn will build collaborative planning spaces where teachers develop focused understanding of content and plan meaningful grade-level instruction that utilizes strategies for math problem solving, including leader and peer observation for instructional norming. School leaders build targeted PD to enhance teacher pedagogical content knowledge. They expect that efforts of school leaders will result in the following for teachers: deeper understanding of math problem solving strategies; increased and effective use of culturally responsive instruction that increases the relevance of math concepts and leverages multiple math problem-solving strategies.

2. The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study is detailed. For example, the project will contribute to theory, knowledge and practice by developing and establishing a middle school math (STEM) PD program for school leaders based on evidence. The result, as established through an independent evaluation, will create research submitted for peer reviewed publication to meet

WWC standards with reservations. The applicant will target school leaders new to their positions and already established in their careers. The applicant will provide a professional development model that incorporates multiple problem-solving strategies with support from an independent evaluation to document improvements in school leader effectiveness and student academic improvement with a moderate level of effectiveness(e36).

3. The applicant clearly proposed how the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies. For example, UnboundEd's existing Teacher and School Leader professional development and support programs have demonstrated a considerable impact, having grown from serving 350 educators and district decision-makers to a cumulative total of 9,000 educators from 250 education systems across 47 states trained from 2016-20. This network of partners and professionals remains in contact with UnboundEd and will access project results through Open Educational Resources (OER) developed through MILA. These will be available on partners' websites, on UnboundEd's website (which received 1,288,492-page views in 2019). UnboundEd staff will provide resources, talks including a podcast, and give presentations to school districts and charter management organizations to share lessons learned and provide resources to support dissemination beyond the funding period(e37).

Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses
2. While principal preparation is needed, this does not benefit thousands of principals who are already serving in the program.
3. No weaknesses

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 applicant clearly demonstrated how the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. For example, the long-term goal of MILA is to demonstrate the effectiveness of intensive professional development programs for school leaders that provide tools to empower teachers at their schools while increasing student achievement in mathematics. The goals, objectives, outcomes and measures (performance measures) are discussed and describe the impact on all three populations and incorporate an independent evaluation to analyze the impact of instructional quality on teaching and student achievement in mathematics in the middle grades(e38-41).
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. For example,

a detailed breakdown of timelines and milestones, linked to objectives and goals is provided. To maintain communication and accountability, the UnboundEd team led by the Program Director uses a wide range of communication and project management tools, including Zoom conferencing, cloud tools such as Slack and Google's suite of tools that support communication, collaboration and to organize complex logistics around professional development training. They also use Atlassian's project management tools including Jira and Confluence. These are used by both the UnboundEd operational team, the program team and the independent evaluation team to ensure services are delivered and are analyzed appropriately and in a timely manner to track program outcomes and success(e41-45). A detailed budget narrative is attached to this proposal, indicating how LWL funds will be allocated for each year of the project. Each year's budget is adequate to fully implement the proposed activities with fidelity to the proposal model.

3. The applicant clearly accounts for the adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. For example, UnboundEd will use two methods to collect performance feedback that will enable continuous improvements to the project. The first will be part of the evaluation conducted by the independent evaluator and will include two phases of the project- Pilot (phase 1 - a four month pilot project after planning) and Implementation (phase 2 - Years 2 - 3 of services). UnboundEd will continually use feedback to inform changes to curriculum and training content and delivery throughout the three year project period (including Years 4-5 if additional funding is provided). During the Pilot phase, MILA will serve a small cohort of school leaders with shorter, focused training, and conduct a formative evaluation. This will include completion of surveys assessing school leader and program staff understanding of effectiveness of program services. At the end of the Pilot, formative evaluation results will inform changes to the design including improvements to better meet the outcomes and performance measures. The final Implementation Design will be in place by Month 8, when the first Implementation Cohort will begin (e49-50).

Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses
2. No weaknesses
3. No weaknesses

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:

1. The applicant provides a thorough narrative about how 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. For example, HumRRO will conduct an independent formative evaluation to provide timely feedback that informs continuous process improvements throughout the life cycle of MILA to ensure the program is meeting goals and objectives. HumRRO will also conduct an independent summative evaluation of MILA's impact on (a) principals' instructional coaching and culturally responsive leadership self-efficacy; (b) teachers' problem-solving skills, and culturally responsive self-efficacy; and (c) students' math achievement. Together, the formative and summative evaluation will support program claims(e51).
2. The plan to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes is detailed. For example, in addition to conducting a rigorous RCT meeting WWC standards, the evaluation will provide ongoing feedback on meeting intended goals. During Phases 1, 3, and 4, it will collect multiple sources of data from principals, teachers, and students. These formative evaluation efforts will provide feedback on program performance, implementation, and perceived effectiveness. The primary formative evaluation questions support main summative evaluation questions that frame the RCT and are listed(e56). The program will administer a MILA implementation survey for principals to gather self-reported data on implementation. HumRRO conducted similar surveys for the California Department of Education and the College Board(e58).
3. The plan to which 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 is clearly written. For example, the outcomes measured will be relevant and tailored to MILA and produce valid and reliable performance data. The measures in the table were selected to measure evaluation questions based on the logic model. They will capture data at the principal, teacher, and student levels. For students, they will use state standardized test scores as required for valid and reliable achievement measure. The evaluation is developing surveys based on literature and best practice that will use existing survey questions as appropriate, such as the NAEP Math student teacher surveys (e59).

Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses
2. No weaknesses
3. No weaknesses

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 project is designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in science, technology, engineering, math, or Computer Science. The project will 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.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses

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 proposed project represents an exceptional approach for increasing the number of highly-effective and diverse principals, who positively impact student outcomes, by building upon Evidence-Based strategies from a study that meets

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Moderate Evidence Standards, as defined in the Federal Register. As highlighted by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), when students are exposed to multiple strategies to solve complex tasks, learning is improved (Star & Rittle-Johnson 2008)(23).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses

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 project will meet CPP 3 – Qualified Opportunity Zones(OZ), as they will serve middle schools in qualified OZ census tracts, including 37081012803 where Hairston Middle School is located (Guilford County Schools). They will meet QOZ preference by providing MILA services within that census tract for Hairston Middle School's Principal Courtney Blake-Smith. UnboundEd Facilitators will conduct site visits, so she will participate from the school site in the QOZ.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses

Reader's Score: 5

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: UNBOUNDED LEARNING, INC (S423A200129)

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	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 #12 - SEED - 12: 84.423A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: UNBOUNDED LEARNING, INC (S423A200129)

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:

(1) The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the Absolute Priority 2 and will increase the number of highly effective school leaders in middle schools serving high needs students. The project has a specific and unique focus for the training program and that is for School leaders to demonstrate changes in understanding of math problem solving and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. For example, the proposed project will transform how school leaders raise math achievement by (1) emphasizing the role of leadership; (2) supporting teachers to implement high-cognitive-demand tasks with multiple strategies; and 3() addressing expectations and bias through culturally responsive methods. Principals will improve math instructional practices that maximize opportunities for students from marginalized groups to engage with challenging tasks using multiple math strategies. The project is exceptional because, the training will also develop competencies in leadership, collaborative planning structures, CRI, multiple math problem solving strategies, mathematical discourse, and high leverage practices to enhance teacher practice. As school leaders participate in the training, they will concurrently implement math practices with school teams through Professional Learning Communities. (pg. e 21-24)

(2) The applicant clearly demonstrated that the professional development trainings are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services. For example, the applicant indicated the APP training is 12 months with 135 hours of training, followed by a one-year Residency as a school leader with 280 hours of training, and a third year with 80 hours of coaching. The training will include 95.5 additional hours of self-paced assignments (16 hours), classroom observations/feedback on math practices (26 hours), collaborative planning teams (33 hours), participation in a professional learning community (PLC) with peers (4.5 hours), and 16 hours of additional activities for a total of 215.5 hours. The training is facilitated over 12 months and includes a three-week summer training, 1- 2 in-person group trainings monthly, web tutorials, yearlong residency on an instructional leadership team and leading a teacher team, job-embedded assignments, video recording practice, coaching, and three 1:1 performance meetings. Principals are current principals and they will continue in their jobs in Year 2. (pgs. e23-28)

(3) The applicant successfully demonstrated that the design of the proposed project is appropriate to address the needs of the target population, which is to improve math test scores of students and teacher efficacy. For example, the trainings

were developed using evidence-based frameworks, including New Leaders' Aspiring Principals Program, and WWC Practice Guide for Mathematical Problem Solving. The resources provided a cross collaborative training program that will emphasize increased understanding of math pedagogical content knowledge, instructional strategies and expectations for students for improving math achievement. The research indicated that students attending schools led by APP-trained principals had greater achievement gains relative to similar students at other schools. (pgs. e26-28)

(4) The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed project has the potential to incorporate the purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant. The applicant outlines multiple plans to make project content available for use after the grant program for others to use. Such as, the program will openly license all new content created with SEED funds and place the materials as free digital content to an instructional resources library. In addition to printed and digital instructional and professional development resources, the project's online learning management system will deliver live training along with pre-recorded, self-paced digital learning modules, videos and case studies. Other workshops and training will be available for districts at a cost. However, the principals who are trained will go back to their schools and will be able to utilize their training to affect teaching and learning. (pgs. e28-32)

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses noted.
- (2) No weaknesses noted.
- (3) No weaknesses noted.
- (4) 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:

(1) The applicant clearly demonstrated that the outcomes of the proposed project are likely to result in improvements in teaching and student achievement. The uniqueness of the project is that the project will focus on transforming how school leaders raise math achievement. There are three specific issues that have been gleaned from the research that will guide the transformation: (1) emphasizes the role of building leadership; (2) supports teachers to implement high-cognitive-demand tasks with multiple strategies; and (3) addresses expectations, bias, and culturally relevant methods that will have a strong impact on student achievement. As the applicant indicated the unique project design will align evidence-based mathematical teaching strategies, culturally responsive instruction, and collaborative teaching teams led by effective

school leaders is within itself groundbreaking for district and charter schools. Effective school leaders can have tremendous impact on teaching, learning, and student achievement across whole schools. (pgs. e 31-33)

(2) The applicant effectively evidenced that there is great potential for the proposed project to contribution to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study. While the project is designed to train principals to be better leaders with teachers in the area of math in high need schools, the project will significantly provide evidence that school leaders will demonstrate changes in understanding of math problem solving and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. The project will significantly provide evidence on how school leaders can be effective leaders of school based professional learning communities, if they understand the standards and content. Other contributions to the field of study cold demonstrate how effective teacher coaching and observations could be if leaders understand the content. Based on the established evidence base for tiered systems that suggest that when innovations and practices are embedded within such frameworks, effective implementation, positive student response and sustainability are the result. (pgs. e 28-34)

(3) The applicant successfully demonstrated that the outcomes of the proposed project will be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies. For example, the applicant outlines a plan to make project content available for use after the grant program for other to use. Such as, the program will openly license all new content created with SEED funds and place the materials as free digital content to an instructional resources library. In addition to printed and digital instructional and professional development resources, the project's online learning management system will deliver live training along with pre-recorded, self-paced digital learning modules, videos and case studies. Other workshops, trainings and virtual summits will be available for districts at a cost. (pgs. e34-36)

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses noted.
- (2) No weaknesses noted.
- (3) 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:

(1) The applicant provided clearly defined and specific goals aligned with measurable outcomes to be achieved by the project. The long term goal of MILA is to demonstrate the effectiveness of intensive professional development programs

for school leaders that provide tools to empower teachers at their schools while increasing student achievement in mathematics. The goals, objectives, outcomes and measures (performance measures) are aligned with the impact on principals, students and teachers. (pgs. e 42-47)

(2) The applicant provided a detailed management plan that clearly outlines how the program has the potential to be completed on time and within budget. For example, the applicant provided a timeline for program tasks and activities. The applicant provided aligned milestones for meeting tasks, thus providing a blueprint for project completion and benchmarks for making adjustment. Each task and activity has been assigned to a member of the staff for implementation and completion. The Project Director will be hired upon grant award and the duties of the Director will include direct supervision of all program. The project will create and maintain a Partnership Board, which will include a representative from each partnering agency and school district participating in the project. (pgs. e47-49)

(3) The applicant provided a detailed plan aligned with processes and procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement during the course of the proposed project. For example, the applicant will use two methods to collect performance feedback that will enable continuous improvements to the project, such as data collection and sharing during the pilot and implementation phases. The regular review of project data will allow for reviewing project goals at quarterly benchmarks. Each school will comply with a data sharing agreement. Continuous monitoring will allow project staff to monitor progress, successes and failures and to determine if adjustments are needed. (pgs. e 48-50)

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses noted.
- (2) No weaknesses noted.
- (3) 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:

(1) The applicant provided a detailed discussion of the methods of evaluation and based on a review of the methods; the project has the potential to produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the WWC standards with or without reservations. For example, the evaluation will have four phases all to inform program development. A randomized control trial (RCT) activities will be conducted in Phase 2 and formative evaluation activities that will inform program implementation and principal perceptions of effectiveness will be conducted for the first cohort of principals in Phase 3. Phase 4 includes formative evaluation activities for the second cohort of principals, which consists of the control group from the RCT. The summative evaluation will use a block cluster RCT with 154 principals from the seven participating school districts to investigate the extent to which impacts changes beliefs and practices in leaders and

educators and student math achievement and other related student outcomes. (pgs. e51-53)

(2) The applicant clearly demonstrated that the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. For example, the applicant will use two methods to collect performance feedback that will enable continuous improvements to the project, such as data collection and sharing during the pilot and implementation phases. The regular review of project data will allow for reviewing quarterly benchmarks. Each school will comply with a data sharing agreement. Continuous monitoring will allow project staff to monitor progress, successes and failures and to determine if adjustments are needed. (pgs. e 48-50)

(3) The applicant successfully demonstrated that the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures related to the intended outcomes aligned with quantitative and qualitative data. For example, the applicant provided multiple data sources that are aligned with the performance measures. This information is also aligned in the logic model with the measurable outcomes. The outcomes measured will be relevant and tailored to MILA and produce valid and reliable performance data. The measures in the table below were selected to measure evaluation questions based on the logic model. The data will capture data at the principal, teacher, and student levels, such as state standardized test scores, the NAEP Math student teacher surveys, the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale and the Student Measure of Culturally Responsive Teaching. (pgs. e57-59)

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses noted.
- (2) No weaknesses noted.
- (3) 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:

The applicant successfully demonstrated that the proposed project's core focus is on Math. The project will increase the number of educators prepared to deliver rigorous instruction in math through evidence-based strategies. By training 154 school leaders on the math problem-solving framework, coupled with strategies that promote discourse with teachers and leaders. The framework for the SEED project is the evidence-based Aspiring Principal Program (APP) cohort professional development (PD) program, which has led to statistically significant gains in math achievement in APP-led schools (pgs. e60)

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 applicant clearly demonstrated that the proposed project will include elements that are likely to improve student academic performance. For example, the project is designed to help students build positive mindsets, self-efficacy, ownership of their own learning, and more positive academic self-identities. The goal of the project is to lead efforts to improvements academic self-concept with students which, in turn, increases academic outcomes. (pgs. e61-63)

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:

The applicant indicated that the proposed project will serve school leaders from five states and seven districts or charter schools: Boston Public Schools, Guilford County Schools (NC), Tulsa Public Schools (OK), Ferguson-Florissant School District (MO), Fresno Unified School District and Green Dot (CA), and schools in the Springfield Empowerment Zone (MA). The project will meet CPP 3 – Opportunity (OZ), as we will serve middle schools in qualified OZ census tracts, including 37081012803 where Hairston Middle School is located (Guilford County Schools). We will meet OZ preference by providing MILA services within that census tract for Hairston Middle School in Greensboro, NC.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/23/2020 01:04 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/21/2020 03:24 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: UNBOUNDED LEARNING, INC (S423A200129)

Reader #3: *****

	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 #12 - SEED - 12: 84.423A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: UNBOUNDED LEARNING, INC (S423A200129)

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 plan details who will be served by the grant in the abstract on page e15. This detailed information makes it clear who will be involved in the work as well as delineating the breadth and scope of the project. (#1)

By focusing on math achievement, the plan demonstrates the need for the project while also providing strategies to significantly improve student outcomes. (#1)

The focus on professional development and the training of school principals is a key aspect of the project. As such, this shows a strong commitment to ensuring the project extends beyond training and emphasizes the key role principals play in student achievement. The connectivity of principals to teaching and learning in mathematics is an example of an exceptional approach to address students' needs. (#1)

The plan uses a 15-month training program which includes professional development, a residency program, and 500+ hours of training and support for principals. This intensive focus and the large number of hours principals will commit to the program are excellent ways to ensure success. This commitment to extensive training will allow principals to develop and provide professional development for teachers as well as coaching and leading collaborative teams. As principals are actively engaged in the 15-month training program, this allows them more than sufficient time to develop their instructional leadership skills. (#2)

In addition, the plan provides for comprehensive professional development for all stakeholders involved in the plan including teachers and staff members. The focus on creating a workplace that provides scaffolded and ongoing professional development is a key element of the quality of the project design plan. (#2)

The plan also does an excellent job of providing specific information on what the training will consist of and is complete with timelines. (#2 and #3)

The professional development plan is both comprehensive and provides specific information and details about the

planned activities. (#2 and #3)

Disaggregated data is included that establishes a baseline for the students who will be served by the program. (#3)

The plan includes detailed information on how the information within the plan will be made available to others through the free sharing of materials. The plan also addresses sustainability by including a fee structure for others to access the materials once the grant has ended. (#4)

The plan also includes specific data and information on each of the partner schools including the percentages of socioeconomically disadvantaged and Black/Latinx students. It also provides information on the current math achievement levels of each of the student groups by grade level. The inclusion of these specific and targeted data elements ensures the plan will meet the needs of the targeted populations. (#3)

Weaknesses:

None

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 plan addresses the activities that will be undertaken to train school leaders and teachers in math problem solving strategies and culturally responsive pedagogy. When school leaders better understand math problem solving strategies, and when culturally responsive instructional strategies are employed, teaching improves. There is a direct correlation between improved teaching and improved student outcomes. When campus leaders have an innate understanding of effective math instruction and Culturally Responsive Instruction (CRI) teaching methods, they are better able to support, coach and evaluate teacher performance. This approach to training leaders and teachers in research proven methods will ensure there are improvements in teaching and student achievement. (#1)

The project is designed to create a research-based model that addresses the professional development needs of school leaders. The model will assist school leaders in recognizing and addressing systemic racism and institutional bias. In addition, the model will also focus on content knowledge in math and help leaders develop structures for collaborative instructional planning. The model that is created is a significant and powerful tool which will advance the knowledge and practices in math instruction at the middle grades. (#2)

The project supports student math achievement both indirectly (training of principals) and directly (training of teachers). The focus on developing the competencies of leaders and teachers in effective math instruction and CR teaching strategies through the MILA Model will also advance the theoretical knowledge base on effective practices that lead to

improved student achievement in math. (#2)

The plan includes detailed information on how the information will be disseminated through in-person and online professional development after the grant ends. Online and distance learning is used as a cost-effective way to further the project's goals after the grant ends. In addition, the plan discusses ways in which the model will be licensed for schools and districts to use after the grant is completed. (#3)

Weaknesses:

None

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 project includes goals, objectives, and outcomes that includes clearly defined responsibilities, budget information, timelines and milestones. The specificity of these goals and objectives will ensure the plan is well managed and implemented. (#2)

The plan details specific ways that the team will use communication (i.e., ZOOM, iCloud) and project management tools to ensure the project delivers services in a timely manner. The plan also discusses how the program outcomes and success is measured in a way that the stakeholders are held accountable. This focus on timeliness and accountability will ensure the plan is able to meet the intended outcomes. (#1 and #2)

The plan incorporates strategic partnerships across stakeholder groups, which includes principal and teachers, that will ensure the plan meets its goals and objectives. (#1)

The plan employs Interim Project Data Reports which will determine and guide ongoing feedback. This interim assessment and feedback will ensure the project is engaged in continuous improvement and able to make mid-course adjustments as needed.

Weaknesses:

None

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:

There is evidence in the plan that the success of the project will use and incorporate research-based evaluative tools and methods. Specifically, the project evaluation includes a focus on formative and summative evaluation measures. The use of both formative and summative evaluation measures will ensure that progress toward the intended outcomes of the project will be met. (#1 and #2)

The evaluative measures, including the use of an outside evaluator (HumRRO) will produce evidence of the project's success. This strategy will show that the evaluation is both valid and reliable thereby meeting the WWC standards. (#1)

The evaluation plan has key outcomes that are focused on student math achievement and leader/teacher effectiveness. Since the evaluation plan is focused on the intended outcomes, the evaluation methodology will produce both qualitative and quantitative data. (#3)

The evaluation plan also accounts for attrition which meets the WWC standards. (#1)

The evaluation methodology to be employed is tied directly to the logic model that is being used. The alignment of the logic model to the evaluation plan and questions will ensure the quality of the data generated. (#2)

Weaknesses:

None

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 plan focuses on the development of math educators who are prepared to deliver rigorous math instruction using evidence-based strategies. This approach to training school leaders as well as teachers in math pedagogy and research-based instruction strategies will lead to improved teaching and student achievement. Pages e18-e19

Weaknesses:

None

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:

Through the focus on Culturally Responsive Instruction (CRI), the project utilizes research based instructional strategies that will lead to self-regulation among learners as well as developing student self-esteem and problem solving skills. (Pages e19 - e20)

Weaknesses:

None

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 plan includes partnerships with schools from five states and seven districts or charter schools. The plan includes specific information on the schools and their location in Qualified Opportunity Zones. (Page e20)

The plan also includes the census tract number for the schools within the QOZs.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

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