

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/10/2022 11:04 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: West River Foundation (S310A220026)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	15
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	20	20
Sub Total	80	80
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. CPP3	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. CPP4	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Total	89	89

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SFEC Tier 1 Panel - 4: 84.310A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: West River Foundation (S310A220026)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. A. Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 points).

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 there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.
- (2) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
- (3) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

Strengths:

(1) The applicant provided detailed evidence that the proposed project has developed the conceptual framework that will guide the work of the project. For example, the project will integrate evidence-based strategies emphasizing Mapp's Dual Capacity-Building Framework. The Dual Capacity Framework is built on a foundation of evidence that link family engagement to student outcomes. In addition, the Family Voice project will apply the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach with evidence-based activities that address trauma-informed practices (TIP), culturally-responsive practices, social-emotional learning (SEL), and the Dual Capacity Framework. The conceptual framework is additionally aligned with the Logic Model that will be used by project staff and evaluators to monitor progress and achievement of objectives, milestones, and outcomes. For example, the theory of action includes inputs and outputs aligned to the two project goals as well as short-term, mid-term, and long-term outcomes which serve as a living framework to measure program implementation and effectiveness. (pgs. 2-4)

(2) The applicant strongly demonstrated that the proposed project services is aligned with up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. For example, the project using data from validating the reliability and efficacy of their prior best practices use of Family Friendly Walk Through (FFWT) instruments. Success was demonstrated through an increase in participation and engagement by families and on through the integration of family engagement strategies in educational and community-based settings. The proposed research study's rationale is informed by research findings suggesting the interventions and strategies are likely to impact students' academic and developmental growth. (pgs. 5-7) The project has three long-term outcomes: (1) Families are actively engaged in their students' developmental and academic growth; (2) students have targeted support in their developmental and academic growth; and (3) family engagement efforts are coordinated across the state.

(3) The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed project design the capacity build on prior results with the potential to extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance. The applicant has shown that they have a long history of providing professional development to educators and supports to families in which they are building on the primary focus of increasing family involvement through educational opportunities, trainings, and leadership programs. For example, the project is focused on long-term, systemic training and technical assistance in collaboration with the South Dakota Department of Education (SDDOE) to reach LEAs with emphasis on Title 1, Title III, Title IV, Title VI Programs, schools identified as needing improvement, rural schools. Family Engagement Champions and Beyond Champions

cohorts demonstrate the SD SFEC structure for building capacity and producing sustainable results. The SD SFEC will provide cradle-to-career support for students, educators, parents, families, and community-based organizations in all 149 public school districts (136,468 students) as well as Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and private/Tribal school districts. (pgs. 9-11)

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. B. Quality of the Management Plan (up to 20 points).

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 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.**
- (2) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**
- (3) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project.**
- (4) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**
- (5) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.**

Strengths:

- (1) The applicant provided a detailed and comprehensive management plan that thoroughly outlines how the project will achieve the objectives of the proposed project. First, the applicant has over 40 years of experience providing innovative and comprehensive services in education and experience administering federal and private education grants of similar size and scope and procedures and tools are in place to track expenditures, monitor progress, provide updates and reports, and ensure compliance. The timeline details milestones, dates for completing tasks and activities. Persons with responsibilities have been included. (pgs. 10-14)
- (2) The applicant provided consistent evidence that policies and procedures are in place for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement. For example, the management team and other key stakeholders will meet a minimum of every six weeks throughout the duration of the project. A member of the external evaluation team (SAI) will join team meetings as needed. Meeting with staff will be held individually monthly. The evaluators will engage in monthly evaluation calls with SD SFEC leadership, quarterly virtual data discussions, as well as attending the Advisory Committee meetings. The

applicant demonstrated in the timeline various feedback and continuous feedback loops in the timeline. All staff will be trained on the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) process of continuous improvement. (pgs. 14-16)

(3) The applicant successfully evidenced that they have identified processes and procedures for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project. For example, processes are in place to review resources and evaluate trainings, utilizing the Checklist for High-Quality Professional Development. The SD SFEC website and social media accounts will be regularly maintained and updated to put up resources and collect feedback from stakeholders. The SD SFEC also distributes a monthly internal newsletter to all partners and a quarterly external newsletter to more than 1,500 subscribers. Staff will collaborate with stakeholders including schools; community, regional, state, and national agencies; and other SFECs to acquire and disseminate resources of the highest quality and receive feedback to ensure all products and services are high quality.

(4) The applicant adequately demonstrated that the time commitments of the key project personnel are adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project. For example, the West River Foundation Director (.80 FTE) and the West River Foundation SFEC Co-Project Director (.5 FTE) and the Principal Investigator (.15 FTE) K-12 Pillar Lead: (.90 FTE). All time commitments are appropriate to provide oversight. (pgs. 3-5 budget narrative)

(5) The applicant effectively demonstrated that the project will include a diversity of perspectives in the operation of the proposed project. For example, the applicant indicated that the SFEC's Advisory Committee will include families, representatives of education professionals with expertise in improving services for disadvantaged children; representatives of local K-12 schools, including students; representatives of the business community; and representatives of SEAs and LEAs, including BIE/BIA/Tribal schools. The applicant included a list of the current SD SFEC Advisory Committee members in the Appendices and the list is representative of a diverse group. (Appendices pgs. 22-26)) The project will develop two diverse subcommittees: one consisting of families only and one consisting of upper grade-level students. Subcommittees will provide overall project guidance and routinely communicate with project staff to ensure resources, trainings, and other supports/services developed or acquired are family friendly, high quality, and aligned to the identified needs, especially for underserved students and families. (pgs. 15-19) The Advisory Committee will meet twice per year. The Advisory Committee and subcommittees will also provide regular input via surveys, participate in trainings to ensure they are high quality, preview resources, and regularly communicate with project staff. (Appendices pgs. 22-26))

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. C. Project Personnel (up to 15 points).

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, in determining the quality of the management plan and project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factors--

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or

principal investigator.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

Strengths:

(1) The applicant provided adequate responses to demonstrate the qualifications, training and experiences of the project director or principal investigator. The applicant indicated the proposed project will be maintaining key personnel in leadership roles such as, the Principal Investigator (PI) and the Co-Project Directors. For example, the PI serves as the Deputy Executive Director. She has extensive leadership development, education innovation, and grant management experience. She is the PI for the current \$5 million SD SFEC grant. She earned her EdD in Educational Administration and her Master of Science in Human Resources and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Business Education. (pgs. 21-22)

(a) Co-Project Director (Co-PD) has served as the current SD SFEC Co-Director since 2018. She will continue to oversee the full implementation and the day-to-day work of the grant. Under her leadership, SD SFEC has become the go-to group for family engagement opportunities, trainings, and support throughout South Dakota and has been recognized nationally and internationally. She holds Master of Science in Strategic Leadership.

(b) Co-Project Director (Co-PD) will continue to work to provide technical assistance and support on parent and family engagement to all SDDOE schools identified as needing improvement. She also supervised and supported the 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool programs in three elementary schools. She provides services focused on assisting families and educators to improve and support engagement that worked to improve the academic achievement of all students. She holds a Master of Science in Administration, University of South Dakota, and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. (pgs. 22-23)

(2) The applicant provided adequate responses to demonstrate the qualifications, training, and experiences of the key project staff. For example, various five K-12 positions called Project Leads have over 20 plus years of experience working with various educational programs and grants. All have a Masters degree in Education or Social Services related programs. Some of the experiences included facilitating the Family Friendly Walk-Throughs (FFWT) with school and family teams to develop school-specific goals for family engagement success. Working with external evaluators to conduct the validation study of FFWT checklists, surveys, and process. Developing and leading the Family Engagement Champions program to guide cohorts of educators in implementing research-based methods for family involvement in their own schools. All of the K-12 leads have experience and have served with the prior SFEC grant, thus bringing a wealth of knowledge and skill. (pgs. 23-27)

(3) The applicant provided adequate responses to the qualification, training, and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors. For example, the applicant will contract with an Internal Evaluator & Data Collection Specialist. This person will consult with the school district to support the interpretation of state and district level data and assist in the development of data-driven, evidence-based professional learning plans with monitoring and adjustment or improvement components. They will also assist with evaluation of the SD SFEC, providing and analyzing surveys, data, and reporting. The leader of the evaluation has an Education Specialist certificate and his EdD in Educational Administration and MS in Counseling. (pgs. 28-31)

Weaknesses:

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

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. D. Adequacy of Resources (up to 20 points).

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

(1) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and the anticipated results and benefits.

Strengths:

(1) The applicant effectively demonstrated the commitments of partner in the proposed project and outlined thoroughly how they will contribute to the success of the project. The applicant provided several letters of support and the MOU in the Appendences. Each MOU includes the partner's Financial, Programmatic, and Long-Term Sustainability agreements. For example, West River Foundation, as the fiscal agent, will provide all financial oversight of the project via donated time. The BHSSC will provide services and support to oversee project management of all budget expenditures and project goals, objectives, and activities. (pgs. 30-32 and the Appendix)

(2) The applicant provided a detailed budget narrative and to demonstrate how the costs are reasonable and relevant to the objectives, design, and significance of the project. For example, 65% of the funds will be serving LEAs, and schools that serve high concentrations of disadvantaged/underserved students. Thus, staffing and stipends are the two largest budget categories designed to accomplish project objectives and increase the potential for participation and significance. Although of not cost the grant, the applicant has successfully demonstrated commitment with the amount of in-kind services that will be offered. (pgs. 33-36)

(3) The applicant adequately demonstrated that the costs to operate the grant is reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served. For example, the project will serve approximately 50,000 individuals through 12 major activities and countless resources at an estimated cost of less than \$100 per person. The grant will provide supports to 149 public school districts in the state and will expand and enhance services to reach other school entities such as BIE, BIA, and private/Tribal. The applicant indicated that an average of \$38,000 per year in participant stipends ranging from \$50/hour to \$500 per individual is budgeted to incentivize and compensate time spent participating in activities. Stipends are necessary to reach target audiences, especially families from marginalized communities, who otherwise would not be able to attend. (pgs. 32-36)

Weaknesses:

(1) No weaknesses noted.

(2) No weaknesses noted.

(3) No weaknesses noted.

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2-- Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty (up to 3 points).

Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students (as defined in the notice inviting applications, NIA) and the educators who serve them, through one or more of the following priority areas:

- (a) Conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families.
- (b) Providing resources and supports to meet the basic, fundamental, health and safety needs of students and educators.
- (c) Addressing students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic need through approaches that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status.

Strengths:

The applicant effectively addressed CPP2 and indicated that the South Dakota schools and communities continue to struggle with ongoing effects of COVID-19. South Dakota pediatricians are reporting an increase in long-haul COVID-19 symptoms among children and adolescents. The proposed SD SFEC will provide coping and adjusting strategies for students, their families, and school faculty/educators, including strategies for teachers to adjust and meet the needs of students struggling with these long-haul symptoms and ways that families can support their children as they cope with the traumatic effects and disrupted learning resulting from the pandemic. (pg. i)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Competitive Preference Priority 3

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3--Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources, and Opportunities (up to 3 points).

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that it proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students--

- (a) In one or more of the following educational settings:
 - (1) Early learning programs.
 - (2) Elementary school.

- (3) Middle school.
- (4) High school.
- (5) Career and technical education programs.
- (6) Out-of-school-time settings.
- (7) Alternative schools and programs.
- (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities; and
- (9) Adult learning.

(b) That is designed to examine the sources of inequities related to, and implement responses through, one or more of the following:

(1) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives)).

(2) Increasing student racial or socioeconomic diversity, through developing or implementing evidence-based policies or strategies that include one or more of the following:

- (i) Ongoing, robust family and community involvement.
- (ii) Intra- or inter-district or regional coordination.
- (iii) Cross-agency collaboration, such as with housing or transportation authorities.
- (iv) Alignment with an existing public diversity plan or diversity needs assessment.

Strengths:

The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed project will implement and enhance systemic and effective family engagement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvement in student development and academic achievement. The SD SFEC will emphasize evidence-based practices and resources that impact disadvantaged/underserved students and families, which includes economically disadvantaged learners, English learners, minorities, students with disabilities, homeless children and youth, children and youth in foster care, military- or veteran-connected students, and migrant students. Students include those in early learning environments (B-5), K-12, and adult learners.

The project will address equity concerns for the state's transient and/or homeless, ELL students, Native American, and military students. In addition, the project will bring together educators, families, and tribal leaders who work with Lakota students throughout the state to ensure that the students have access to high quality, rigorous, and relevant educational resources, and opportunities. The SD SFEC will also provide culturally-relevant resources to educators and families and will offer educators professional development opportunities focused on integrating those resources with culturally-responsive teaching methods. Educational settings will include early learning, K-12, out-of-school time, and adult learning.
(pg. ii)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Competitive Preference Priority 4

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4--Strengthening Cross-Agency Coordination and Community Engagement to Advance Systemic Change (up to 3 points).

Projects that are designed to take a systemic approach to improving outcomes for underserved students in the following priority area:

(a) Establishing cross-agency partnerships, or community-based partnerships with local nonprofit organizations, businesses, philanthropic organizations, or others, to meet family well-being needs.

Strengths:

The applicant successfully demonstrated that the proposed project will engage cross-agency coordination and community engagement are integrated throughout the project to gather input from community-based organizations (CBOs), grant partners, and other statewide organizations, e.g., South Dakota PTA, the Associated School Boards of SD (ASBSD), School Administrators of SD (SASD). Project personnel will partner with other grant-funded efforts and collaborate with stakeholders to provide opportunities to coordinate efforts, leverage resources, ensure ESSA alignment, and provide input into the direction and outcomes of education and family engagement initiatives to support the learning of children at home, in school, and in their community. In addition, the statewide Advisory Committee will include family, cross agency, and community-based representatives. (pg. ii)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: West River Foundation (S310A220026)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	15
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	20	20
Sub Total	80	80
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. CPP3	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. CPP4	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Total	89	89

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SFEC Tier 1 Panel - 4: 84.310A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: West River Foundation (S310A220026)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. A. Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 points).

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 there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.
- (2) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
- (3) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

Strengths:

- 1) The applicant thoroughly explains the use of the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships, which will support the described family engagement programming and activities identified in the application. Additionally, the application provides a detailed logic model that provides the inputs, outputs, and short-term, mid-term, and long-term outcomes that align with the project goals and objectives. The project will utilize Family Friendly Walk-Through (FFWT) instruments to help construct an evidence base that links student learning and social-emotional development. Furthermore, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach will be utilized to help identify appropriate professional development (PD) topics that will support student achievement. (pp. 2-8)
- 2) The application thoroughly identifies several evidence-based and evidence-informed programs that will be utilized to increase student, family, and school engagement. In addition to the aforementioned family engagement practices, the applicant will implement TIP via the Transforming Education's Trauma-Informed SEL Toolkit, culturally-responsive practices, and SEL trainings and resources. Appropriate citations and references are included in the application. (pp. 4-8)
- 3) The proposed project presents a thoughtful plan to build capacity through the implementation of the program design, evidence-based and evidence-informed programming and activities, and through ongoing collaborations and partnerships that involve systemic training and technical assistance. Given that the applicant expects to reach 50,000 participants through project activities and resources, the potential to increase capacity and reach throughout the state is likely. (pp. 8-11)

Weaknesses:

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

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. B. Quality of the Management Plan (up to 20 points).

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 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.

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

(3) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project.

(4) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

(5) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

Strengths:

1) The application documents a quality management plan, including a chart that provides a detailed list of the project goals, objectives, and key activities that are aligned to the Dual Capacity Framework. The application provides further evidence of the management plan in a second chart that clearly details the key personnel, their defined responsibilities, project milestones that each person is responsible for, and timelines and frequencies of meetings, communication, and the implementation of Family Engagement Champions, Beyond Champions, FFWTs, and Courage to Lead for Families trainings. (pp. 12-18)

2) The application thoroughly documents that all staff will receive training on the Plan-Do-Act (PDSA) process of continuous improvement, which will enhance program activities over time. Furthermore, the application relays the following mechanisms for gathering feedback and utilizing feedback for continuous improvement: collecting baseline data as a comparison standard, collecting feedback from surveys, focus groups, Family Voice chats, using Quality Assurance Rating (QAR), and meeting with the SD SFEC Advisory Committee to examine data and determine necessary changes. (p. 19)

3) The application notes that the project clearly demonstrates high-quality products and services by reviewing resources and evaluating trainings via the Checklist for High-Quality Professional Development. The ongoing collection of data from the SD SFEC website and social media accounts will aid in the determination of the quality of resources and services provided. The application further elaborates that professional staff will vet all materials produced to ensure they are professional and family-friendly. (p. 20)

4) The application provides convincing evidence that time commitments allotted for the principal investigator (PI), co-project directors, and additional key staff are adequate to support each of their respective job responsibilities. The PI and Co-PDs will each dedicate more than .50 FTE to the project. (budget narrative pp. 3-4)

5) The application fully documents that the applicant will utilize the Advisory Committee to incorporate diverse

perspectives into the ongoing feedback loops. Furthermore, SFEC's advisory committee will include families, education professionals, representatives from schools, students, representatives from businesses, representatives from SEA, and representative from LEAs. Additionally, the grant will fund two sub-committees, which will include one consisting of families only and another of upper grade-level students. These additional committees will provide further insight into personal and lived experiences and family engagement needs to ensure diverse viewpoints are centered. The application notes the Family Voice project and Family Voice chats will provide another outlet for families to share their perspectives. (pp. 21-23)

Weaknesses:

- 1) No weaknesses noted.
- 2) No weaknesses noted.
- 3) No weaknesses noted.
- 4) No weaknesses noted.
- 5) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. C. Project Personnel (up to 15 points).

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, in determining the quality of the management plan and project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factors--

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.**
- (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**
- (3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.**

Strengths:

1) The application demonstrates that the principal investigator (PI) and co-project directors (Co-PDs) have significant training and experience with family engagement work, cross-agency coordination, community engagement, advancing systemic change, maintaining and expanding old and new relationships, and program development and management. The PI has a doctoral degree in educational administration and currently services as Deputy Executive Director for BHSSC. They have significant leadership, education, and grant management experience to fulfill the responsibilities of this role. One Co-PD has a master's degree in strategic leadership and has served as SD SFEC's co-director since 2018. A second Co-PD has a master's degree in administration and extensive professional experience in parent and family engagement and educational program management. (pp. 23-26)

2) The application provides evidence of appropriate training and experience from key project personnel that will support SD SFEC project activities. The Birth-5 Lead position has more than 20 years of experience at BHSSC. They also hold a B.S. in Applied Psychology. The K-12 and College and Career Lead has experience facilitating Family Friendly Walk-Throughs (FFWT), leading Family Engagement Champions program, and has experience facilitating workshops on trauma and supporting students. They hold a master's in education for school counseling. The Tribal Liaison and Family

Voice Lead position has a doctorate in educational administration and 30+ years of professional experience in education. The Diversity Specialist has a specialist degree in educational administration and has served in various professional educational roles. The Learning Specialist has a Master of Science in school counseling and is a certified trauma-informed educator and has significant experience in TIP, SEL, and working with Native learners. The Internal Evaluator and Data Collection Specialist has a doctorate in educational administration and has experience consulting with school districts in understanding state and district level data and developing professional learning plans. They also have experience with research and evaluation. (pp. 27-29)

3) The application provides a detailed description of the qualifications and experience of the consulting and evaluation team. The Courage to Lead for Families Facilitators hold graduate degrees in curriculum and instruction and have experience facilitating a variety of programming for underserved populations. Additionally, the SAI Evaluation Team has presents with significant experience with evaluation and data collection, and have participated in US ED projects. The Coaction Collective LLC will provide consulting services and will also serve as a partner for SD SFEC. They hold a Master of Education in curriculum and instruction and have experience with capacity building with schools and non-profits. The RDA/Special Education positions have experience with developing and implementing data and school improvement policies. Lastly, the Education and Workforce Development Director has experience with program and employee management and adult basic education training. (pp. 29-30)

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. D. Adequacy of Resources (up to 20 points).

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

- (1) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.**
- (2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**
- (3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and the anticipated results and benefits.**

Strengths:

1) The application demonstrates a clear commitment from the aforementioned partners. Letters of commitment describing the type of support generated from the partnership and memorandum of understandings (MOUs) are included. The applicant, West River Foundation, will serve as the fiscal agent. BHSSC will provide project management services and will include a staff at 6.8 FTE. SDPC will support the grant management team and will plan statewide initiatives for students with disabilities and their families. SDDOE will collaborate directly with BHSSC and SDPC to support schools in South Dakota through the development of family engagement resources and through promotional aspects of the project. SAI will serve the project as the external evaluator and will collaborate with the internal evaluator. (pp. 32-33, e80-100)

2) The application presents a clear and reasonable budget narrative and a budget form that align with the project goals, objectives, and design. The budget narrative provides a clear breakdown of expenses, including notated quantities. The application makes it clear that 65% of grant funds will be allocated for LEAs, schools, and community-based organizations (CBOs) that focus on underserved students. The application notes that grant funding will support 6.8 FTE, which includes a total of 16 positions. The application thoroughly explains the rationale for allocating \$38,000 per year for participant stipends. This allocation will further support equitable access for underserved and disadvantaged populations. (pp. 33-34, budget narrative p. 1-10)

3) The costs presented in the budget forms and the budget narrative are reasonable, as the project is expected to reach 50,000 individuals via 12 activities and will provide extensive resources at an estimated cost of \$100 per person. The application notes that SD SFEC is currently providing some type of support to 149 public school districts. Thus, the project will allow expansion of services for Native American and Tribal students and families. (pp. 34-36)

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2-- Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty (up to 3 points).

Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students (as defined in the notice inviting applications, NIA) and the educators who serve them, through one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families.

(b) Providing resources and supports to meet the basic, fundamental, health and safety needs of students and educators.

(c) Addressing students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic need through approaches that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status.

Strengths:

a) The applicant thoroughly addressed Competitive Preference Priority #2. The applicant conducted listening sessions to better understand the impacts of Covid-19 and to assess the needs of students and families. The results showed that communication is a critical component of family engagement programming. (p. 23)

b) The application clearly documents that the South Dakota Statewide Family Engagement Center (SD SFEC) will provide strategies for teachers and schools to meet the needs of students experiencing long-haul Covid-19, as well as ways that

families can support disrupted learning. The application notes that the trainings offered to teachers will be culturally-relevant to the populations impacted by Covid-19. (e14, e17)

c) By offering additional trainings regarding social emotional learning (SEL) and trauma-informed practices (TIP), the applicant will be able to further support underserved students from a whole child perspective in order to help students and educators develop more collaborative and supportive relationships. The applicant clearly describes how they will utilize Transforming Education's Trauma-Informed SEL Toolkit to create learning environments for students who have experienced trauma to explore their strengths and develop positive relationship with peers and adults. (pp. 6-7)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Competitive Preference Priority 3

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3--Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources, and Opportunities (up to 3 points).

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that it proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students--

(a) In one or more of the following educational settings:

- (1) Early learning programs.**
- (2) Elementary school.**
- (3) Middle school.**
- (4) High school.**
- (5) Career and technical education programs.**
- (6) Out-of-school-time settings.**
- (7) Alternative schools and programs.**
- (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities; and**
- (9) Adult learning.**

(b) That is designed to examine the sources of inequities related to, and implement responses through, one or more of the following:

- (1) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives)).**
- (2) Increasing student racial or socioeconomic diversity, through developing or implementing evidence-based policies or strategies that include one or more of the following:**

- (i) Ongoing, robust family and community involvement.
- (ii) Intra- or inter-district or regional coordination.
- (iii) Cross-agency collaboration, such as with housing or transportation authorities.
- (iv) Alignment with an existing public diversity plan or diversity needs assessment.

Strengths:

a) The application specifies that the applicant will give voice to ethnically diverse students and their families, transient and/or homeless students, ELL students, Native American students, military students, and underserved students with regard to promoting equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities. The applicant will focus on students in early learning environments, K-12, out-of-school time, and adult learning. (e18)

b) Through the Family Voice project and the use of culturally-relevant resources, the applicant will ensure students have access to relevant educational resources and equitable learning opportunities. Additionally, the applicant will implement a family leadership retreat series titled Courage to Lead for Families, which will help families participate in their child's academic growth and help them advocate for their children in schools. Furthermore, families will have the opportunity to participate in family literacy events offered in collaboration with SD SFEC and SD Association for Lifelong Learning (SDALL). (e18, p. 8-10)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Competitive Preference Priority 4

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4--Strengthening Cross-Agency Coordination and Community Engagement to Advance Systemic Change (up to 3 points).

Projects that are designed to take a systemic approach to improving outcomes for underserved students in the following priority area:

(a) Establishing cross-agency partnerships, or community-based partnerships with local nonprofit organizations, businesses, philanthropic organizations, or others, to meet family well-being needs.

Strengths:

a) The application clearly explains that the applicant and fiscal agent, West River Foundation, will partner with the SD Department of Education, Black Hills Special Services Cooperative, and SD Parent Connection to develop the SD SFEC. (e13) As noted in the application, Black Hills Special Services will provide services and manage budget expenditures, goals, objectives, and program implementation in collaboration with SD Parent Connection (SDPC). (p. 1) The application also indicates additional cross-agency collaborative efforts with South Dakota PTA, the Associated School Boards of SD (ASBSD), and School Administrators of SD (SASD) to support a variety of family engagement programming and activities. (e18) Collaborative efforts with SDDOE and local education agencies (LEAs) will focus on systemic training and technical assistance for schools needing assistance. (p. 9) As mentioned previously, the application identifies a collaboration between SD SFEC and SDALL to provide support for adult education, particularly literacy education. (p. 10)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

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