

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/09/2022 07:29 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium Inc (S310A220039)

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: Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium Inc (S310A220039)

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 a thorough discussion to explain the conceptual framework underlying the proposed research and activities. For example, the project's conceptual framework for family engagement is based on two basic assumptions: (1) families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development; and (2) the complex intersections of race, socioeconomic status, gender/gender identity, religion, ethnicity, disability, and language must be addressed to facilitate engagement. The applicant aligned the project with the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships and additional research show that student development and academic achievement improves when schools demonstrate a commitment to equity and fairness and ensure that staff, students, et al., 2014; Mapp & Bergman, 2019; Oakes, 2018). The conceptual framework is based on four key elements: culturally sustaining pedagogy, multi-directional practice, asset-based approaches, and the collective benefits of family engagement. These represent systems level strategies. (pgs. 9-12)

(2) The applicant provided extensive research citations indicating which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge. For example, along with the activities, the project will conduct Home Visits through one of the proposed programs with partner Parents as Teachers (PAT). The research indicated that home visits facilitates trust, relationship-building, and engagement during the early years. Home visits are linked to lower school truancy and better reading outcomes (Chandler, 2015). The applicant detailed their project services that will be aligned with a two-pronged approach to family engagement and draws upon the work of Karen Mapp and Eyal Bergman (2019) whose dual capacity-building framework sets the standard for effective family, school, and community engagement. CEFAM's project, Working Together: Families and Teachers Working Together to Promote Academic Success is guided by the dual capacity-building model. CEFAM will help schools and districts develop APTT awareness and readiness for implementation via in-person and virtual training sessions in Portland and Lewiston. All best practices will be integrated into all aspects of professional development, curriculum, assessment, and evaluation, and provide the scaffolding for deep, lasting policies and practices of improved family engagement and equitable educational services. (pgs. 10-15)

(3) The applicant strongly demonstrated that the proposed project design has the potential to build capacity beyond the period of Federal financial assistance. For example, the applicant explained how the project evidence-based strategies will be institutionalized for long-term capacity and results in policy, practice, and commitment from stakeholders. Rather than facilitating individual events, CEFAM will work with the SEA, LEAs, and other key stakeholders to promote

sustainability through systemic targeted interventions, strategies, and analysis. Each CEFAM initiative works to change attitudes, build knowledge and skills, and create systems change. For example, using a Whole Family Approach, CEFAM will partner with provide parent education programs including Head Start and Early Head Start. Similarly, designing and implementing Maine's state family engagement birth through grade twelve framework will provide a comprehensive strategic document that can be used and revised by the SEA beyond the five-year grant period. (pgs. 16-1

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 an extensive and detailed management plan that clearly outlined and provided a blueprint as to how the project will achieve the objectives of the proposed project. The management plan included a detailed chart that unified their system of implementation and operational tasks and activities. Milestones were provided for each entry. CEFAM will act as a coordinating hub for regional and statewide family engagement efforts by SEAs by creating and sustaining partnerships and leveraging network expertise. For example, in Year 1 of the project the management team will collaborate to revise a vision statement for the network and access and identify the needs of the network as well as the needs of individual organizations. (pgs. 18-21)

(2) The applicant successfully demonstrated that the project has in place and will continue to devise procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement. For example, the applicant will utilize the Continuous Improvement for Equity (CI4E) model, which offers a systematic and disciplined approach to tackling educational inequities by analyzing systems and learning for improvement. The purpose is to disaggregated data to identify areas with high-need districts and pays specific attention to barriers that may impede high-level achievement of underserved students. Data sharing will be incorporated in feedback loops and data collection processes to attain success. At the start of each project, and semi-annually thereafter, program staff and partners will consult with the evaluation team to identify data that can determine expected change. All parties will collaborate on data collection to measure the efficacy of continuous improvement efforts and potentially guide the creation of new evidence-based practices. These findings will enable the review, refinement, and expansion of high-level services and products to better serve students and families. (pgs. 21-23)

(3) The applicant effectively demonstrated that the project has in place and will continue to devise processes and procedures for ensuring high-quality products and services during the implementation of the proposed project. For example, the applicant will utilize the internal CI4E process ensures the quality of the organization's products and services. The agency will observe the practices for designing and developing TA products and services across all projects for a thorough testing of new products and services prior to use. Some of those practices include: (1) pre-implementation, all products and services are subjected to a thorough quality review using the latest research, standards for accessibility, and instructional design, (2) prior to release, publications will be reviewed by a leadership review team of knowledgeable content and editorial experts, as well as key consultants and advisory committee members. (pgs. 23-25)

(4) The applicant clearly demonstrated that the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate for meeting objectives of the proposed project. For example, the Project Director (0.8 FTE) will oversee all responsibilities related to project programming, budgetary functions, and logistical aspects of the program. The Senior Family Engagement Specialists (0.8 and 0.7 FTEs) will provide TA and training, monitor activities, and work closely with LEAs, community-based organizations, families, schools, program partner staff, and the Maine Department of Education (MDOE). The Data and Evaluation Specialist (0.2 FTE) will lead the formative and summative evaluation of the program. (pgs. 25-28)

(5) The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed project will ensure a diverse perspectives are included during the project planning and implementation. For example, the project will collaborate with the SEA and other partners to assemble an Advisory Committee in the first year. The Advisory Committee will provide feedback on ongoing projects and initiatives; generate opportunities for potential collaboration with organizations; identify regions of focus within the state; and empower underrepresented stakeholders of diverse social identities and backgrounds. The Advisory Committee will be comprised of mostly families, as well as teachers, early childhood professionals, CBOs, parent training and information center staff, and members of the LEAs, and MDOE. (pgs. 29-31)

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 clearly describes the qualifications, training, and experience of the project director. For example, the Project Director is currently the Senior Education Equity Specialist. She provides project management, budget oversight, technical assistance, training, and evaluation services on a range of projects related to educational equity and family engagement. She has worked with educators and policy-makers in schools, districts, and state departments of education to build effective systems, policies, and practices that advance equity, student achievement, and support culturally responsive family engagement. She holds an M.S. in Education from the University of Pennsylvania and a B.A. in Philosophy with an interdisciplinary focus on social inequality, in African and African American Studies and Women's Studies. (pgs. 31-32 and the Appendices)

(2) The applicant clearly describes the qualifications, training, and experience of key project personnel. For example, the Senior Family Engagement Specialist will provide technical assistance and training support. She is a 38-year veteran in public education and leader in education equity and family engagement with expertise in building capacity of school, district, and state education department personnel to engage authentically with families and community members. She is currently a doctoral candidate and holds an M.A. in Special Education and a B.A. in French.

Further, the Senior Educational Equity Specialist will provide program and content support for CEFAM. She will support the grant by providing technical assistance and training for SEAs, LEAs, and schools to improve instructional practices, student engagement, and family and community engagement to create supportive learning environments for all learners.

The Data and Evaluation Specialist will lead the development of data collection instruments, gathering of data, and its analysis. She currently serves as the evaluation lead on equity needs assessment for a school district in New England. She holds a B.S. in Psychology and an M.Ed. in Educational Psychology. (pgs. 31-32)

(3) The applicant successfully indicated several consultants will play an integral part with the implementation of the project. Among those consulting will be NAFSCE, the national membership association for family, school, and community engagement that provides outreach to families and communities through its family engagement leadership network, family engagement specialists, national and statewide systemic work, and resource library. WestEd will collaborate to provide the Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT) model of family engagement. Maine Community Action Partnership (MeCAP) is a statewide network that comprises ten community action agencies across Maine that advocate for and support low-income ME families. MeCAP agencies provide childcare, student readiness services, family development/parenting education, and adult financial literacy. (pgs. 32-34 and the Appendices)

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 applicant effectively demonstrated commitment of each partner to ensure successful implementation of the project. For example, the partnership includes a consortium of five local, statewide, and national family engagement and parent education organizations to leverage resources and services. Some of those committed are as follows: the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE), Parents as Teachers (PAT) at Maine Children's Trust, Maine Community Action Partnership (MeCAP), Maine Parent Federation (MPF), and WestEd. The partner organizations have all demonstrated their commitment to the implementation and success of CEFAM through their letters of support, executed memorandums of understanding, and project scopes of work. CEFAM partner resources will enable successful, efficient, and Technical Assistance services. For example, program partners are committed to: (1) providing the necessary training and capacity building of SEAs, LEAs, and schools participating in the project; (2) monitoring fidelity of implementation; (3) providing coaching and technical assistance to clients in the implementation of the project; and (4) providing data to document progress and results of the projects. The majority of the program partners are prepared to contribute to the matching fund requirement. For example, NAFSCE has committed to matching funds of \$7,000 in year one and \$12,000 in years two-five. Parent Powered has committed \$2,094 in years one-five. Maine Parent Federation has committed \$6,531 in years one-five. MeCAP has committed \$2,273,180 in matching funds for years one-five. (pgs. 33-35 and Appendix)

(2) The applicant clearly demonstrated that the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives and project design. For example, the project will leverage existing relationships with Maine LEAs, schools, and community-based organizations to increase levels of engagement and improve the quality and quantity of services. Since MAEC first launched in 2019, they have conducted approximately 473 high-impact activities to date designed to build a statewide infrastructure for systemic family engagement and support for SEA- and LEA-level leadership and capacity-building. The total projects also include 177 high impact activities designed to ensure that parents are trained and can effectively engage in activities that will improve student academic achievement. SFEC reached 916 parents between 2019 to August 2021. In response to COVID-19, from July 2020-June 2021, its online learning platforms reached over 10,000 viewers. MAEC served as the Maryland State PIRC for five years, during which they provided services both directly and indirectly to an average of 100,013 low-income families, 7,765 limited English proficient families, and 56,800 minority families. (pgs. 34-36)

(3) The applicant clearly evidenced that the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and

the anticipated results. For example, the applicant indicated a proposed cost of \$812,543. The project's targeted regions comprises 277 school districts, with 610 schools. The state educates 170,145 students, of whom 20,417 are students of color, 16,279 are young children, 63,464 are eligible for free or reduced lunch, 6,370 are limited English proficient or Multilanguage Learners, and 30,503 are identified as special education students. With this project the applicant estimate reaching 50,000 underserved and culturally diverse parents, 10,000 educators, and four-10 parent advocacy groups during the first year, with an expected growth rate of 1.5 each year. Most resources will be targeted towards schools and communities comprising predominantly disadvantaged and underserved students. (pgs. 36-40)

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:

The applicant successfully demonstrated that the project is seeking to increase the quality and quantity of high-impact, culturally responsive FE services, including increased SEA capacity to build a statewide infrastructure for systemic family engagement and increased LEAs/schools/ECE provider capacity to support students' social-emotional needs exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 mortality rate is almost twice as high for those that live in rural communities and the applicant estimates that 20% of the state's 180,000 pre-K to grade 12 students lack functional internet at home. As delineated in the conceptual framework the project is designed to ensure cumulative and sustainable positive impact on young people and their families. Successful implementation will require a transformational strategy, especially as the

Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated already existing inequities. CEFAM identifies and addresses Maine's demonstrated needs and leverages its partners' and advisors' knowledge and extensive experience in the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy and practices to achieve high-impact family engagement. (pgs. 8-14)

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:

The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed activities will be divided into a multi-tiered system of technical assistance that will address all six objectives, geared towards educators, families, community-based members, and students and education levels from birth to 12, in order to create and sustain an equitable and transformational family engagement statewide infrastructure. Through innovative programs and equitable collaborations, staff and partners will work with stakeholders to identify and dismantle inequitable practices and policies that harm underserved families. The project will partner with the Maine Department of Education (MDOE) to finalize and implement the statewide family engagement framework with a specific emphasis on engaging underserved community members thus providing students with more equitable access to resources and opportunities. Additionally, the project conducts equity audits with school districts and schools, using the Equity Audit Tool, to review policies and practices that hinder student academic achievement and well-being. We respond to the needs of various communities and use our understanding of those needs to develop content. For example, MAEC recently developed the toolkit, 21st-Century Learning at Home: A Guide for Families and Caregivers of English Learners to Support Project-Based, Deeper Learning at Home (See Appendix A-10), during the pandemic to provide families of ELs with resources to support learning at home. (pgs. 8-14)

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 Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc. (MAEC) proposes the Consortium for Engaging Families Across Maine (CEFAM) as the Statewide Family Engagement Center, partnering with the Maine Department of Education, and the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement; Parents as Teachers at Maine Children’s Trust; Maine Community Action Partnership; Maine Parent Federation; and WestEd. (Pgs. 2-3)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 05/09/2022 07:29 PM

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Last Updated: 05/09/2022 09:30 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium Inc (S310A220039)

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: Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium Inc (S310A220039)

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 application clearly demonstrates that the project plan is grounded in the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships. This alignment is clear in that CEFAM is committed to actively supporting children's learning and development and that demographics and identities need to be considered and addressed in order to support engagement efforts. The application relays that the framework posits that students development and academic achievement improves when schools consider and commit to equity and fairness. Thus, the project will emphasize and build in culturally-sustaining pedagogy, multi-directional practice, an asset-based approach, and collective benefits for family engagement. (pp. 2-3)
- 2) The application adequately documents several proposed programs and forms of engagement that are evidence-based and/or evidence-informed. CEFAM will utilize Home Visits through Parents as Teachers (PAT), to facilitate trust and relationship-building in early education. A Whole Families approach will be incorporated from CEFAM's partnership with Maine Community Action Partnership (MeCAP). Furthermore, Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT) will be presented by WestEd to build capacity for educators and parents. Parent Powered's Ready4d Trauma Informed program will serve as an evidence-based family engagement curriculum that will provide education on trauma and the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). (pp. 5-6)
- 3) The application provides an appropriate plan for building capacity across stakeholders and yielding results that will extend beyond the scope of the grant. Specifically, CEFAM's virtual website will provide an extensive repository of resources for stakeholders to access and utilize moving forward. CEFAM will build client capacity by implementing evidence-based strategies to impact long-term changes in policy, practice, and commitment. CEFAM will work with SEAs, LEAs, and other stakeholders to advance sustainability through interventions and analysis. By providing a Whole Family Approach to parent education programs, such as Head Start and Early Head Start, children and families will be more engaged early on and student achievement will be impacted earlier on. (pp. 19-20)

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 application clearly describes a detailed management plan. The management plan provides a timeline that aligns the project goals and objectives with the year of occurrence, responsible person(s), and project milestones. Objective 1 will be supported through a needs assessment regarding family engagement practices and through the development of a professional learning community between Maine Department of Education (MEDOE) and other statewide family engagement centers (SFECs). Objective 2 will be supported through CoP training on equity and culturally responsive family engagement, decision-making process, and policy development and through APTT training sessions to facilitate parent-teacher workshops. Objective 3 will be supported via the creation of a network listserv and social media groups, online network meetings, and the development of a diverse advisory committee. Objective 4 project activities include the implementation of NAFSCE's Virtual Reframing Academy, community asset-mapping, and the creation of the CEFAM website. Objective 5 project activities include conducting home visits, facilitating parent workshops, and providing facilitation for parent advocacy training via Mano en Mano. Lastly, Objective 6 project activities include delivering the Ready4k program to address trauma. (pp. 16-19, 21-23)

2) The application clearly indicates that MAEC will utilize Continuous Improvement for Equity (CI4E) model as a framework for understanding and analyzing educational inequities. The following forms of engagement will ensure feedback and continuous improvement: differentiated services and supports for SEAs, LEAs, and schools based on areas of need and via a co-constructed model, technical assistance training and resources that are specific to the client's needs, a diverse network of researchers, technical assistance providers, and trainers that will deliver high quality services and

projects. Furthermore, the application notes that data collection and feedback loops, such as through evaluation and discussion via the Advisory Committee will keep project staff and partners informed and will allow for modifications moving forward. (pp. 23-24)

3) The application clearly documents the mechanisms for ensuring that high-quality projects and services occur as a result of the proposed project. For example, thorough vetting of products and services will occur through a quality review process with the leadership team and content and editorial experts. The application notes that CEFAM staff will regularly review feedback and evaluation data and will conduct periodic reviews of the data input into CEFAM's database, QuickBase. (pp. 24-25)

4) The application documents reasonable time commitments for the project director and other key staff members. Specifically, the project director will commit .8 FTE, and will oversee the project programming, budgetary transactions, and logistical aspects of the project. The senior family engagement specialists will commit .8 FTE and .7 FTE, and will provide technical assistance training and work closely with a variety of agencies and organizations. The data and evaluation specialist will commit .2 FTE, and will provide the formative and summative evaluation components of the project. (p. 25)

5) The application clearly indicates that diversity in perspectives will actively be sought and included in decision-making process throughout the duration of the project. For example, CEFAM has identified a diverse group of partners for ongoing collaboration efforts. The Advisory Committee will support diverse voices through diverse representation from parents, educators, school staff, LEAs, SEA, students, and community members on the committee. The Advisory Committee will provide ongoing feedback on programming activities and will identify new potential collaborations with organizations. (pp. 25-26)

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 application fully documents the qualifications and training and experience of the project director. The project director has experience in project management, budget oversight, and training and technical assistance. They have worked with nine school districts throughout Maine to expand family engagement practices. Furthermore, they have a Master's degree in Education. (p. 27)
- 2) The application thoroughly documents the qualifications of the key project personnel. The training and experience identified for each staff member is appropriate. The senior family engagement specialist has 38 years in public education and is currently a doctoral candidate in a School of Education. In addition, they hold a Master's degree in Special Education. The second senior education specialist has more than 10 years of experience as an elementary teacher in public schools and charter schools. They also hold a Master's of Education in School Leadership and a Master's degree in Curriculum and Teaching. The data and evaluation specialist has evaluation experience in equity assessments and audits, and more than 10 years working in research, evaluation, data management, and statistical programming. (pp. 27-28)
- 3) The application provides detailed descriptions of the subcontracted agencies. All identified agencies present relevant experience to their indicated roles within the project. The agencies include: NAFSCE, WestEd, Maine Community Action Partnership (MeCAP), Maine Parent Federation (MPF), Family to Family Health Information Center, Statewide Family Network, Maine's Maternal and Child Health, Parent Powered, and Maine Families. Furthermore, the application notes that CEFAM will engage multiple family engagement consultants and collaborating organizations. These additional organizations include: Learning Works, The Center for Grieving Children, Tree-Street Youth, Maine Indian Education, Southern Maine Partnership at the University of Southern Maine, Maine Curriculum Leaders Association, Multilingual Mainers, Capital Area New Mainers Project, Mano en Mano, ProsperityMe, Greater Portland Immigrant Welcome Center, and Portland Empowered. (pp. 29-31)

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) As noted above, the application thoroughly documents the list of partnerships and collaborating agencies. Letters of commitment and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are included in the appendix section of the application. All partner organizations have provided commitments of support and documentation of their project contributions. (pp. 32-35, Appendix Letters of Support)

2) The application provides a detailed budget narrative. Costs appear reasonable given the scope of the collaborating agencies and project activities. The application notes that several partners have committed to matching funds. Specifically, NAFSCE has committed to \$7,000 in year one and \$12,000 for years 2-5. Parent Powered has committed to \$2,094 in years 1-5. Maine Parent Federation has committed to \$6,531 in years 1-5. MeCAP has committed to \$2,273,180 in years 1-5. MAEC provides relevant data to showcase their successful experience with coordinating another SFEC center in MD/PA since 2019. (pp. 35-36)

3) The application describes costs that are reasonable in relation to the expected number of persons to be served and the anticipated results and benefits of the project. Given that MAEC expects to reach 50,000 underserved and culturally diverse parents, 10,000 educators, and four 10-parent advocacy groups in the first year of operation, costs appear justifiable. MAEC also notes an expected growth rate of 1.5 per year. The virtual SFEC website will provide ease of access for users, and will include content and resources in Spanish, as well. Thus, as the application notes, cost per additional user of the website is zero. (p. 37)

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:

c) The application demonstrates a commitment to increasing the capacity of local education agencies (LEAs) and schools to be able to support students' social emotional learning (SEL) needs (e16). This commitment is represented in Objective 6. (p. 7) Furthermore, CEFAM will provide access to culturally responsive pedagogy and practices in order to support family engagement, which will help disrupt some of the current educational inequities due to Covid-19. (p. 3) The application notes that results from CEE and CAFÉ programs identified four priority at the beginning of the pandemic, which include: building stronger relationships between students and teachers, centering equity, strengthening connections with families and communities, and being flexible to student and family needs. (p. 11) Thus, CEFAM will provide webinars, workshops, and communities of practice to help navigate the long-term impact of Covid-19 on student achievement and family needs. For example, CEFAM will partner with Parent Powered and the Center for Grieving Children to provide trauma-informed education to parents and to link students to bereavement resources. (p. 12)

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 demonstrates a commitment to educational equity and adequacy in resources for underserved students and families transitioning to elementary school, middle school, high school, college, and career. (p. 13) For example, a collaborative partnership with Parents as Teachers (PAT) will provide supports for Native families. Through the development and distribution of trainings, publications, and webinars, CEFAM will work to understand how bias and privilege impact families and schools.

b) Anti-bias training, via the Communities of Practice (CoP) model, will be provided to educators by CEFAM. Furthermore, CoPs will provide a space to elevate the voice of families, and will work to provide equitable partnerships. CEFAM will also partner with WestEd to offer Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT), which is an evidence-based program to encourage collaboration between parents and teachers in order to increase student achievement. (p. 14)

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 documents an extensive plan to engage in a variety of cross-agency partnerships to support family engagement opportunities across Maine. Specifically, the application notes that CEFAM will partner with the Maine Department of Education (MDOE), the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE), Parents as Teachers at Maine Children's Trust (PTMCT), Maine Community Action Partnership (MCAP), Maine Parent Federation (MPF), and WestEd. Furthermore, the applicant, Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC) and MDOE will coordinate all technical assistance and training services for CEFAM. Cross-agency collaboration is also evident through Communities of Practice (CoP) and the Advisory Committee, which will consist of a variety of stakeholders, including the University of Southern Maine, school leaders, and educators for CoP, and parents, students, representatives from LEAs, schools, community-based organizations (CBOs), and business for the Advisory Committee. (p. 15)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/09/2022 09:30 PM