

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/25/2022 11:49 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	24
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	10
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	64
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. COVID-19	3	3
Sub Total	6	6
Total	106	70

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Early Phase - 1: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (20 points)

Strengths:

The MetaSocratic Peer Tutoring program targets 2,636 total students. The upper-level students in 10th through 12th grade who are academically proficient in higher math will fittingly tutor low-performing students in grades 9-11 (Abstract, p. e-12). The goal is to help improve their academic outcomes, while increasing the number of students who are proficient in math to pursue a stem career while providing education work-based experiences. For example, the proposed project will help build on a successful Level 1 Foundations of Tutoring pilot program with peer tutors and tutees participating from 20 high schools. Thirty-six peer tutors enrolled in the pilot with thirty-four (94.4%) completing the program and receiving Level 1 certification. With a considerable equity gap in iwho receives tutoring due to the high cost of service vs. the need low-income students, the significance of the proposal has promising demonstration as high schools could develop their own high quality tutoring centers while potentially growing their own future teachers (e-17-20).

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 24

Sub

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework. (10 points)

Strengths:

The proposal's conceptual framework is grounded in metacognition and integrated learning quadrants to support both tutor and tutee academic and personal development from prior Thinkist work (p. e-24).

Weaknesses:

Aside from their own Thinkist Learning Framework, the proposal does not sufficiently describe the quality of its conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities. It only states that it will build upon the Community of Inquiry approach which is their interconnected domains of cognitive, social, and teaching presence which does not sufficiently describe the quality of its conceptual framework (p. e-24)

Reader's Score: 6

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)

Strengths:

The proposal's overall goal is to work with 1,904 tutees and 659 tutors across 25 schools, serving approximately 1,300 high-needs students to achieve four program outcomes. The 4 goals throughout the five-year project period were specific and measurable (p e-31-38).

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not provide adequate specifics on goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project that are clearly specified and measurable (p. e26-27). For example, some of the objectives do not have any percent increases on growth areas.

Reader's Score: 3

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (15 points)

Strengths:

The applicant effectively demonstrates that the existing achievement gaps and the need for improved academic achievement can be accomplished with affordable tutoring. The proposed project will appropriately target a 56% socio-economically disadvantaged population with 47% Hispanic, and 12% ELL (p. e-27-29).

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. 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:

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

1. **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, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)**

Strengths:

Both SDUSD and Thinkist are committed to hiring persons who have typically been underrepresented based on race, skin color, gender, age, or disability, and to serving students who are often underrepresented based on similar demographics. They have a 50% POC and 50% female workforce. Jared Wells has experience with tutoring, test preparation, and educational counseling services to families in San Diego. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel are clearly stated. For example, Sarah Vielma, Director, College, Career and Technical Education and Nate Sachdeva, Director of Partnerships and Work Based Learning, along with many experienced professionals, have extensive tutoring experience and training to ensure the success of the grant (p.e-29-31 and Resumes-e-42-134).

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan, the Secretary considers:**

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

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. (10 points)**

Strengths:

Fiscal agent San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) has successfully managed and executed federal grants which is an indicator that the project tasks will be achieved on time and within budget. (p. e-34-35). The proposed management is adequate to achieve the objectives on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. For example, the budget narrative defines specific responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (Budget Narrative, p. e137-139).

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 3 points).

Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:

- (a) Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.
- (b) Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.
- (c) Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.
- (d) Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.
- (e) High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

Strengths:

The proposal addresses student centered learning models, service and work-based learning, and high-quality career pathways (a, d, e) as allowable CPP 1 services. (p. e-16).

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - 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 and the educators who serve them through:

(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; and

(b) using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

Strengths:

The proposal appropriately describes high-quality tutoring services in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. MetaSocratic Peer Tutoring employs specific strategies for re-engaging and supporting students and families through their tutors (p. e-17).

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/25/2022 11:49 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/26/2022 03:30 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	29
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	8
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	66
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. COVID-19	3	3
Sub Total	6	6
Total	106	72

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Early Phase - 1: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (20 points)

Strengths:

This proposal is built upon a pilot program that operated during the 2021-2022 school year. The project, MetaSocratic Peer Tutoring, was originally developed as a partnership between the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) and Thinkist, PBS (public benefit corporation) (p. e-16). The MetaSocratic Peer Tutoring program demonstrates the following promising new strategies for peer tutors: 1) comprehensive tutor training including social emotional learning, 2) ongoing instructional supports, 3) a learning management platform, and 4) mentorship from tutoring experts (p. e-18).

A unique aspect of this proposal is that not only do the tutees improve their grades, but the tutors benefit in this project as well. Examples include: 1) The tutees' failing grades dropped by over 80% and 2) 91% of the tutors reported feelings less self-critical about not knowing an answer to a question (p. e-19).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses indicated.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 29

Sub

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework. (10 points)

Strengths:

The applicant provides both a narrative and a graphic to demonstrate their comprehensive conceptual framework. The Thinkist Learning Framework fittingly encompasses both affective and cognitive dimensions of learning in online spaces and builds upon the Community of Inquiry approach (p. e-24). The applicant points out the devastating impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had in making most students feel isolated in remote learning environments. The applicants believe that tutor training supports students and especially in online platforms (p. e-24).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are indicated.

Reader's Score: 10

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant lists fourteen objectives that are mostly specified and measurable. For example, one objective states that the percentage of Ds and Fs in math will decrease from 30% in year 1 to only 10% in year 5 (pp. e-25 – e-27).

Weaknesses:

The applicant lists four outcomes, but it is unclear how they relate to each of the four stated goals and objectives. The outcomes are essentially not measurable and primarily a project checklist (pp. e-25 – e-27).

Reader's Score: 4

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (15 points)

Strengths:

The applicant effectively demonstrates that their population of disadvantaged students is large and during the past three years only 40% of their students were able to meet state standards in mathematics (p. e-27).

The SDUSD has 56% of its students in the socio-economically disadvantaged population. Tutoring is typically reserved for middle and upper middle-class students because of the costs involved. This project avoids the cost of tutoring for its students, and it does so with a project that benefits the tutees and the tutors as well (p. e-28).

The need for teachers has never been greater and the SDUSD is “growing their own” with this innovative program by helping students develop an interest in teaching careers (p. e-29).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are indicated.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. 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:

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. 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, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)

Strengths:

Both SDUSD and Thinkist are dedicated to hiring practices that include individuals who have typically been underrepresented based on race, skin color, gender, age, or disability. For example, the Thinkist team is 50% POC (People of Color) and 50% female (p. e-29).

The applicant presents three teams of their key personnel: 1) the SDUSD Team, 2) the Thinkist Team, and 3) the Copia Consulting Team. All three teams have a history of effective collaboration and extensive experience with low-income, high-needs students (p. e-30).

Weaknesses:

The applicant failed to provide hiring practices and employment demographics from both the SDUSD Team and the Copia Consulting Team which slightly diminishes the quality of the project personnel.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 8

Sub

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. (10 points)

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates that it will achieve the objectives on time and within budget based on its extensive experience with other large, multi-year federal grants including 21st Century Community Learning Centers (p. e-33).

The applicant lists major activities, responsibilities, timelines, and milestones. For example, some activities and milestones include: 1) Hire and onboard staff, as noted in budget and Project staffing complete and 2) Ensure that the program is implemented as designed across all campuses and Project systems, baselines, and targets established (pp. e-33 – e-34).

Sub

Weaknesses:

The responsible parties and the timelines are vague and not specific enough which diminishes the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the proposed tasks on time and within budget (pp. e-33 - e34). For example, the applicant plans to hire onboard staff, as noted in budget. The Timelines are Q1 and Q2. More specific dates will support the project proceeding on time throughout the five years.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

- 1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)**

Strengths:

Sub

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 3 points).

Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:

- (a) Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.**
- (b) Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.**
- (c) Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.**
- (d) Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.**
- (e) High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.**

Strengths:

The applicant satisfactorily presents evidence that this project will address (a) and (d). MetaSocratic Peer Tutoring is a student-centered learning model that leverages technology (a). The project also provides the opportunity for tutors to earn community service hours and to earn income as they advance through the higher levels of tutoring (d) (pp. e-21 – e-22).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are indicated.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - 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 and the educators who serve them through:

- (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;**

and

(b) using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

Strengths:

The applicant successfully demonstrates that COVID-19 has not only negatively impacted their own community but the entire country as well by sharing the Biden Administration’s call-to-action to provide tutoring and other learning strategies to address learning loss due to the pandemic (e-17). The applicant successfully addresses (a) by stating that a culminating activity will include surveys of participants and stakeholders to assess and improve the program (e-13) and (b) the MetaSocratic Peer Tutoring program is an evidence-based high-quality tutoring program.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are indicated.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/26/2022 03:30 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/24/2022 06:21 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	19
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	28
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	8
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	64
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. COVID-19	3	2
Sub Total	6	5
Total	106	69

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Early Phase - 1: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 19

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (20 points)

Strengths:

San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) and Thinkist completed a successful pilot which the current proposal is based on. The pilot resulted in improved grades overall, but most impressively, the percentage of Fs was reduced by over 80% (p. e-19). The success of the 2021-2022 project indicates that the current proposal is being built on a promising new strategy that involves the training of math tutors to serve high-need students.

The program also helped participants to normalize confusion when they are learning so that they become less self-critical and embarrassed. The applicant noted that while previous to the pilot program, 66% of participating peer tutors felt stress and anxiety when confused, 91% were less self-critical after the first year of training (p. e-19). Tutoring training that assists students to become more persistent and less anxious is highly needed, particularly for students who lack math achievement.

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided improvement of self-doubt among the tutors but did not share results for the tutees. Knowing whether or not the pilot program had positive effects for the tutees would assist with expectations for improvements with the proposed project.

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 28

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework. (10 points)

Strengths:

Thinkist Learning Framework, which is the conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, was effectively developed using metacognition and integrated learning quadrants. The image on page e-24 assists with understanding how these tenets connect to the affective and cognitive domains and provides examples of each of the quadrants. This approach enlists relationship building and affective strategies while tutoring in an online environment creating a framework that provides both affective and cognitive development for the participants. For example, the Week 1 unit, Building Community, helps students express why they want to be a tutor through sharing in a group (p. e-115) During Week 5, tutors are taught how to praise their tutees in order to develop a growth mindset in them (p. e-117). These are not academic strategies but approaches that build relationships between the tutor and tutee so that academic assistance occurs in an uplifting environment. The framework for the project is excellently utilized in the curriculum and activities and likely to be highly effective.

The logic model on page e-82 clarifies the progression of the project activities to the proposed long-term outcomes which supports the presentation of the framework.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)

Strengths:

Goals and objectives have been clearly identified on pages e26 and e27 and provide a measure to determine success. For example, Goal 3 is: Improve the tutee and tutor experience in the MetaSocratic program. Objective 2 for reaching this goal is: Increase the percent attendance at tutoring sessions each year from 65% in Year 1 to 80% in Year 5 (p. e-26). These objectives are clear and measurable.

Measurements, which call for a baseline amount, have those appropriately designated. In particular, the objective measures for Goal 1 have baseline figures so that a reasonable amount of increase or decrease can be determined. For example, Goal 1 is: Improve student (tutee) academic growth and achievement. Objective 2 for Goal 1 is: Decrease the percent of Ds and Fs in math for grades 9 through 11. There is a baseline measure of 30% which allows for the future percentages to be decreased from 30% to 10% throughout the grant period.

Weaknesses:

Sometimes, the objectives do not clearly connect to the goals. For example, Objective 3 for Goal 3 is: Increase the number of session logs completed by tutors during the session or within 10 minutes of the session being completed (p. e-26). The proposal does not indicate why this would be an appropriate measure that would indicate progress toward the goal.

Reader's Score: 4

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (15)

Sub
points)

Strengths:

Tutoring has been shown to be an effective strategy toward improving student outcomes and will be used with underserved students identified through SDUSD. Underserved students typically do not have the financial resources to obtain tutoring so this project will meet the needs of these students because there will not be a financial impact on the families of the participants.

Because participation will occur through an extended day, students will be able to continue with their regular schedule. The extended day assist with keeping students on-track to graduate, thus maintaining their ability to meet high school credit needs for graduation.

The applicant identifies several needs of both tutors and tutees which this project will successfully address (pp. e-27 – 29). These include, for example, the need for students from diverse backgrounds to pursue STEM careers (p. e-28). The project addresses this need by improving math achievement of students so they will have the foundation to be successful as well as encouraged to pursue STEM careers.

Weaknesses:

Tutoring will occur online, but the applicant has not explained how the participants will have access to the necessary hardware and internet connections to enable participation.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

- 1. 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:**

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

- 1. 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, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)**

Strengths:

Though staff for the project are already hired by both SDUSE and Thinkist, the applicant has addressed the employment of persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented by providing the percentage of Thinkist employees (50%) who fall into one or more of the underrepresented categories (p. e-29).

Key personnel from the three organizations included in the project have been identified with summarized experience. This information shows that all selected staff have strong qualifications related to the project and bring diverse experience and skills to the project. For example, from SDUSD, staff included are experienced with college and career preparation, from Thinkist, staff has experience with large-scale tutoring projects as well as curriculum development related to this proposal, and Copia Consulting brings researchers with experience in qualitative and quantitative research (p. e-29-33) Resumes for these staff members support the strong qualifications (pp. e-42-63).

Sub

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide demographic information about staff from either SDUSD or Copia as they did for Thinkist.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan, the Secretary considers:**

Reader's Score: 8

Sub

- 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. (10 points)**

Strengths:

The proposal suitably identifies SDUSD as being the fiscal agent and have ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the program.

The table on pages e-33-34 designate the school year quarters when activities should occur so that milestones will be reached. For example, to make sure that project staffing is complete (milestone on page e-33), one of the activities is to identify internal project managers (PM) from each of the partners.

Information in the budget narrative provides additional clarification of the responsibilities of those included in the project. For example, Lead Training Instructors will lead peer tutor training classes, provide support to Tutor Mentors, and work with Curriculum Development Director and Training Director (p. e-138). The budget section clarifies the responsibilities for staff.

Weaknesses:

Activities to reach milestones are general, and the proposal calls them Major Project Management Activities. Because these lack detail and activities related to the identification and training of tutors as well as tutees, it's not evident that the project will be completed on time and within budget.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 3 points).

Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:

(a) Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.

(b) Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.

(c) Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.

(d) Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.

(e) High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

Strengths:

The project will provide math tutoring to high-needs, high school students so that they will be able to successfully participate in math coursework during high school. This meets the main criteria for CPP1.

Part (d) is met through the proposal because the tutor participation includes experiential, service learning which may result in a career pathway for the tutors. In addition, the proposed tutoring format is a student-centered learning model using technology and therefore also meets Part (a) of CPP1.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - 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 and the educators who serve them through:

(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; and

(b) using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

Strengths:

The proposed project focuses on underserved students whose math achievement has been highly impacted by COVID-19 by providing trained tutors to work with them. The extended learning time will help the participants meet challenging academic content without tracking.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address part (a) of CCP2.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/24/2022 06:21 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/27/2022 05:53 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	29
Total	30	29

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - EIR Tier 2 - 11: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 29

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)

Strengths:

The applicant provides a comprehensive evaluation plan that focuses on the impact of the project, its implementation, and the overall outcomes. The evaluation methods are clearly focused on meeting the What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards without reservation. The well-developed plan includes two confirmatory impact studies. One assesses teachers and students in the area of mathematics. A second study will focus on social and emotional learning issues. The study further includes a sample of 300 students in a treatment group in comparison to a 300 student size control group employing a randomized controlled trial. An independent external evaluator with extensive experience in assessing projects including large scale EIR studies is part of the plan. The applicant clearly addresses the issue of attrition and contamination through a process to manage attendance and participation using intensive emails, phone calls, discussions, and potential incentives. The strategies will effectively assist the project in producing evidence that will meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 20

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

Strengths:

The evaluation plan includes specific formative feedback focusing on both success and sustainability. The plan will make appropriate data available to assist the staff in making informed recommendations for refining interventions and making other potential changes. The plan includes quantitative research reports at the end of each semester. The independent evaluator will assist in providing ongoing formative feedback to the project staff. The applicant also clearly reports that it will hold biweekly meetings among the stakeholders to ensure critical feedback is gathered and used to benefit the participants.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)

Strengths:

The evaluation plan includes a logic model that identifies in part the resources of the project and the specific activities in which the stakeholders will participate. The model illustrates how the various activities or components interact with each other to achieve the short term, intermediate, and long term general outcomes. The model includes the key components of the project. The various components of the logic model are consistent with the program design and proposed activities.

Weaknesses:

The logic model contains long term outcomes that do not include specific numbers or percentages of change that are expected as a result of the project activities and services. Without that specific information, it is difficult to determine the measurable thresholds that lead to acceptable implementation.

Reader's Score: 4

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/27/2022 05:53 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/27/2022 08:49 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	29
Total	30	29

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - EIR Tier 2 - 11: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: San Diego Unified School District (S411C220083)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 29

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)

Strengths:

The proposed evaluation is a comprehensive and masterful presentation of a randomized controlled trial (RCT) design that can produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations. The evaluator has expertly proposed an RCT to determine the impact of the program on tutor and tutee math achievement and tutor and tutee skills related to social emotional learning. The evaluator correctly blocks randomization by tutor and tutee groups, as well as by school and grade. The evaluators make a compelling argument to consider these two issues as separate impact studies because of the hypothesized logic behind each. The evaluator appropriately specifies that both intent-to-treat and treatment-on-treated effects will be estimated.

The evaluator astutely recognizes that establishing baseline equivalency is not necessary according to WWC for an RCT design, yet they rightly prepare to collect data to demonstrate baseline equivalency in case of attrition or selection bias. The evaluator correctly addresses attrition, recognizing it is the biggest threat to the study. The evaluator highlights overall and differential attrition in terms of what they anticipate based on what they learned from a pilot study. Yet, they adequately identify ways the programmer and evaluator will motivate participants to continue in the study, including the possibility of incentives. Regardless, the evaluator convincingly writes about statistical assumptions and steps to sufficiently address attrition if it were to occur.

The evaluator provides a thorough presentation of a power analysis, including reasonable assumptions with appropriate citations. Their analysis results in the determination of sensible minimum detectable effect sizes (MDES). The evaluator further correctly considers conservative estimates in response to possible attrition and takes appropriate action through sensitivity analyses.

Multilevel modeling that accounts for students being nested in schools is an appropriate analytic design. The evaluator further details a proper analytic model that accounts for the impact of interest as well as other relevant variables. The measures used to measure math achievement and social emotional learning impact are valid and reliable.

Goals scaffold logically and include objectives that are intentional and reasonable. The programmer and evaluator

Sub

also provide measures with the objectives that make success criteria explicit and show how expectations increase annually. The logic model sufficiently details the various inputs, activities, and outcomes embedded in the study.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were identified.

Reader's Score: 20

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

Strengths:

The programmer and evaluator have identified a number of relevant data sources. These data are diverse, both quantitative and qualitative in nature. They allow for considerable triangulation of data. Moreover, the evaluator clearly states the intention to prioritize implementation analysis during the first three years of the evaluation, meeting biweekly with the entire project team to provide updates. The project team will meet regularly, providing the evaluator with consistent opportunities to provide feedback to the programmer that should be sufficient to ongoing improvement. The programmer will also use these meetings to update the evaluator on modifications and change, which is a thoughtful way of maintaining an ongoing feedback loop. Further, the evaluator will conduct annual 360-degree reviews of key project personnel as a strategic way to ensure internal organization and functionality. In addition to these ongoing interactions, the evaluator correctly plans various ongoing reporting strategies, including memos and reports, at regular intervals.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 5

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)

Strengths:

The evaluator skillfully develops an implementation framework that identifies key components for and thresholds at various levels, as well as appropriately notes that tutoring platform log information can be accessed to determine levels of implementation. Implementation fidelity is well framed in terms of adherence, duration, quality, responsiveness, and differentiation. Further, the evaluator correctly specifies that implementation levels will be used in mediation analyses to determine aspects of the program most critical to achievement and social emotional learning outcomes. The evaluator also recognizes the importance of testing Level 2 versus Level 1 tutors on outcomes. A number of moderating variables (e.g., race/ethnicity) are also correctly identified.

Weaknesses:

The evaluator does not clearly articulate what the thresholds are to meet implementation fidelity despite providing considerable information what is expected of a student to become a tutor.

Reader's Score: 4

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/27/2022 08:49 PM

