Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Massachusetts Amherst (S336S220018)

Reader #1: **********

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	28
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	30
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Educator Diversity	4	0
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Diverse Workforce	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. Meeting Student Needs	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. Promoting Equity	2	0
Invitational Priority		
Invitational Priority		
1. Grow Your Own	0	0
Total	111	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.336S

Reader #1: **********

Applicant: University of Massachusetts Amherst (S336S220018)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. A. Quality of the Project Design (30 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:

(i)   The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.

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

(iii)   The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

(iv)   The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(v)   The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

(vi) 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:

(i) The applicant presents a well-developed rationale for the project that is supported by research. Specifically, research has demonstrated that teachers who receive proper preparation are more likely to be retained in comparison to their underprepared peers. (pg. e.15) Research often shows that teachers of color often don't complete comprehensive preparation programs or pick alternative routes (paraprofessionals). By collaborating with partner LEAs and Paradigm Shift, the applicant will be able to provide high-quality, accessible, and affordable pathways to paraprofessionals of color (pg. e16) The applicant cites multiple sources that indicate a strong rationale for diversifying the teaching profession. Of particular note, having teachers of color has positive impacts on student achievement, which is a likely outcome of this project given the high population of students of color. The logic model is provided and outlined. (pg. e77)

(ii) Goals, objectives, and outcomes are well-defined and measurable. The overarching project goal is identified as "Massachusetts school districts and paraprofessionals will have a tested, accessible, and sustainable model for becoming highly qualified ECE teachers, ready for scaling and continuity across Massachusetts" (pg. e22). To support this goal, one outcome and five objectives are identified (pgs. e242-244). For example, most objectives are centered around the 35 PtTs working in the schools, retention, and achievement of training and certifications (pgs. e23-24).

(iii) Current curriculum standards in the ECE BA program at the host institution are well-aligned with improving teaching and learning and supports rigorous academic standards for students. For example, continuous improvements are made to the ECE licensure program as demonstrated by participants' high achievement as demonstrated by their high passing rates on the state licensure exam (pg. e25). The proposed program aligns with shifts in early literacy instruction across the state by incorporating a framework for Culturally and Historically responsive literacy (pg. e26).

(iv) It is evident that the project was designed based on research that has demonstrated effectiveness related to best practices for equity, inclusion, and the development of teaching skills (pgs. e 32-35). The applicant cites numerous research studies to support the inclusion of project components, including What Works Clearinghouse-Early Childhood section, DEC Recommended Practices (2014), and NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practices (2020) (pg. e32). These research studies and their resulting practices align with best practices related to Early Literacy, Play, Culturally

Responsive Teaching, and Sheltered English Immersion.

(v)   The narrative includes a succinct, but adequate description of how the project will utilize feedback for continuous improvement. For example, the Management and Curriculum committees will review data to determine where modifications are needed. Items that will be utilized as feedback instruments include formative data collected via regular surveys, interviews, and focus groups (pg. e35).

(vi)   Capacity building is well-demonstrated by the applicant. Strategies implemented during the project will be sustained, such as summer professional development activities. Other sustainable items that will continue to encourage capacity building include sustainable access courses and the induction program with an optional BEE (pgs. e39). Other sustainable efforts will include institutional funding for the PtT program. Capacity building is further anticipated via changes in the demographics of staff.

Weaknesses:

(i) While the logic model is provided, it is not fully descriptive regarding resources that will support the project. The rationale is limited in defining inputs. (2 points not awarded)

Reader's Score: 28

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. B. Quality of the Project Evaluation (20 points)

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:

(i)   **The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.**
(ii)   **The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

(i) The project evaluation includes formative and summative methods of evaluation that will provide significant performance feedback and progress measurement. The summative evaluation more closely examines performance data on outcomes (pgs. e40-41). Validity and reliability of data are assured due to established evaluation and data collection protocols.

(ii) The methods of evaluation are appropriate for a thorough evaluation. The applicant will use multiple methods of assessment including surveys, course evaluations, and other assessments of participant performance (pgs. e40-42). The evaluation plan is strong based on the applicant's control of data. All methods of evaluation are appropriate to assess project goals, objectives, and outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **20**

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. C. Adequacy of Resources (30 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:

(i)   **The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.**
(ii)   **The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.**
(iii)   **The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**
(iv)   **The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.**
(v)   **The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.**

Strengths:

(i) The applicant institution provides comprehensive support by providing access to facilities, equipment, technology, and time commitments. For example, the institution's largest commitment is noted from the time commitment of faculty and staff. Other commitments are noted related to tuition waivers.

(ii) The proposed budget is sound and should support project implementation. Costs are in alignment with the accomplishment of activities. The budget is inclusive of all costs needed to operate. The budget is highly detailed (pgs. e217-236).

(iii) Project costs are reasonable due to the applicant's prudent use of resources. For example, the cost share contributions of all partners have significantly reduced costs for project operations (pg. e47-48). In addition, due to the applicant having some infrastructure in place, costs are able to be allocated to areas with the most need.

(iv) Sustainability efforts are well-designed. Much of the project period is used to increase capacity and create sustainable resources that can continue to be utilized beyond the project period (pg. e48). For example, the applicant will continue to implement the program based on partnerships with the school districts and Paradigm Shift. This includes opportunities for practicum experiences (pg. e48). Partner commitments are a key component for the success of the project and contribute greatly to sustainability efforts.

(v) The partnering school districts demonstrate significant commitment to the project due to their provision of hiring PtTs in their schools; providing an induction program to support retention; and funding replacement paraprofessionals during the PtTs' clinical year (pg. e47) Collaborative efforts between the district and the applicant will support marketing, recruitment, and selection of paraprofessionals. Letters of commitment and support are on file that indicate specific resources provided by partners (pg. e164-169).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. D. Quality of the Management Plan (20 points)

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

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

Strengths:

(i) Many of the systems and infrastructure needed for implementation are already in place. The applicant relies on previous experience in implementing ECE Licensure Programs, with a highly qualified staff who has experience in program coordination (pgs. e54-58). The timeline for project activities (pgs. e51-53) defines project activities and specific milestones.

(ii) There are multiple avenues to collect feedback from stakeholders and participants in an effort to improve project procedures. Specifically, the applicant will use data from the two advisory teams (Management Committee and Curriculum Committee). Both teams will meet regularly to evaluate progress and determine if modifications should be considered (pg. e59). Other sources of feedback will come from course evaluations, exit surveys, feedback from supervising practitioners, and feedback from program supervisors.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Increasing Educator Diversity (Up to 4 points).

Under this priority, applicants must develop projects that are designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce through adopting, implementing, or expanding one or both of the following:

a)   High-quality, comprehensive teacher preparation programs in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (eligible institutions under Part B of Title III and Subpart 4 of Part A Title VII of the HEA), Hispanic Serving Institutions (eligible institutions under section 316 of the HEA), or other Minority Serving Institutions (eligible institutions under Title III and Title V of the HEA) that include one year of high-quality clinical experiences)prior to becoming the teacher of record) in high-need schools (as defined in this notice) and that incorporate best practices for attracting, supporting, graduating, and placing underrepresented teacher candidates.
b)   Reforms to teacher preparation programs to improve the diversity of teacher candidates, including changes to ensure underrepresented teacher candidates are fully represented in program admission, completion, placement, and retention as educators.

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

The narrative does not include a discussion of any facets of this Competitive Preference Priority.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. **Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning (Up to 3 points).**

   Projects that are designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educator serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through increasing the number of teachers with certification or dual certification in a shortage area, or advanced certifications from nationally recognized professional organizations.

   Strengths:

   It can be inferred from the general narrative that the project will actively seek to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse and effective educators serving students. 35 paraprofessionals of color will achieve their teaching certification during implementation; thus increasing the percentage of certified teachers of color in school districts that are experiencing shortages (pg. e44-45). For example, in the target school districts, 14.5% and 23% of teachers have emergency or temporary licenses, indicating a teacher shortage (pg. e45).

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 3

1. **Meeting Student Social Emotional, and Academic Needs (Up to 2 points).**

   Projects that are designed to improve students' social, emotional, academic, and career development, with a focus on underserved students, through creating a positive, inclusive, and identity-safe climate at institutions of higher education, through one or more of the following activities:

   a)   **Fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion for underserved students.**
   b)   **Implementing evidence-based practices for advancing student success for underserved students.**

   Strengths:

   (b)The application narrative includes convincing evidence to demonstrate that children's social, emotional, and cognitive development is part of the curriculum for participants. Specifically, the applicant indicates that research informs the inclusion of activities related to opportunities for play for young children (pg. e33) and the implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support as part of an inclusive practice (pg. e34).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 4

1. **Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (Up to 2 points).**

   Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant 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.

   b)   That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include pedagogical practices in educator preparational programs and professional development programs that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status so that educators are better prepared to create inclusive, supportive, equitable, unbiased, and identity-safe learning environments for their students.

   Strengths:

   No strengths noted.

   Weaknesses:

   The applicant does not address this competitive preference priority. (2 points not awarded)

Reader's Score: 0

Invitational Priority - Invitational Priority

1. **Partnership Grants for the Establishment of Grow Your Own Programs**

   Projects that establish Grow Your Own programs that are designed to address shortages of teachers in high-need areas, schools, and/or geographic areas, or shortages of school leaders in high-need schools, and increase the diversity of qualified individuals entering the teacher, principal, or other school leader workforce.

   Strengths:

   Not applicable.

   Weaknesses:

   The applicant does not address the Invitational Priority.

Reader's Score:

Status:
Last Updated:

   0

Submitted 06/06/2022 03:22 PM

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/07/2022 11:30 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Massachusetts Amherst (S336S220018)

	Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	28
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	30
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Educator Diversity	4	0
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Diverse Workforce	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. Meeting Student Needs	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. Promoting Equity	2	0
Invitational Priority		
Invitational Priority		
1. Grow Your Own	0	0
Total	111	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.336S

Reader #2: **********
Applicant: University of Massachusetts Amherst (S336S220018)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. A. Quality of the Project Design (30 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:

(i)   **The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.**
(ii)   **The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**
(iii)   **The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.**
(iv)   **The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.**
(v)   **The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.**
(vi)   **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:

(i) The narrative supports a rationale for the project (pages e14-e22). For example, the applicant cites results from the April 2022 needs assessment to develop goals. Such data supports the need for a project. For example, over 60% of paraprofessionals (61.9% in Springfield, 65% in Holyoke) are identified as people of color, which is significantly higher than the percentage of teachers of color (24.7% in Springfield, 28.7% in Holyoke). In both districts, 20% of the paraprofessionals do not have a BA degree but do have an associate degree. Eighty percent of the paraprofessionals in both districts currently work with no degree, meaning they only have a high school diploma. The program expects to impact these numbers to impact high need students. Specifically, the target district schools have over 80% of students who receive free and reduced lunch.

(ii) The narrative provides robust details the goals, objectives and activities that support three goals of the project. Specifically, the applicant's goals is to have 35 paraprofessionals licensed as highly qualified new ECE teachers, demonstrating comprehensive knowledge and skills in early grade literacy practices, inclusive and anti-racist teaching pedagogy, use of research, and classroom assessment, through a fully online set of courses and an immersive clinical year of experience. The applicant has specific and measurable activities that support the goal. Objectives include course offering and trainings that will enable teachers to achieve certification in critical areas such as early childhood education and English Learner Certification.

(iii) The applicant provides a convincing narrative to encompass activities to build teaching and learning and student success (pages e24-e31) by describing in detail the activities that support the objectives within the project design. The applicant's program will build upon the existing state program that will expand offerings to paraprofessionals. For example, the applicant will offer all coursework online through the institution of higher education's degree completion program; allow paraprofessionals to complete their final clinical year in the same school that they have worked; recognize the experience working paraprofessionals have in the field by waiving early field experiences; and reduce the cost through reduction in required credits and through offering some content in an open access format that would be free to all participants. These activities would expand access for paraprofessionals of color who teach students of color in the target school districts.

(iv) The narrative is abundant for reflecting up-to-date research and effective practice to support the project design (page e32). Research cited underscores that needed for early childhood education programs. For example, the coursework offers various opportunities for teacher candidates to learn and implement research-based practices, suggested by several guidelines and standards such as What Works Clearinghouse-Early Childhood section, DEC Recommended Practices (2014), and NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practices (2020).

(v)The narrative is compelling to describe how the applicant will provide feedback and continuous improvement within the various program activities (early literacy, play, culturally responsive teaching, inclusive practice, and sheltered English immersion). Within these activities, opportunities are provided for feedback and continuous improvement as participants will have the opportunity to evaluate course activities. Specifically, coursework, coupled with field experiences, will help teacher candidates learn and use research-based practices in their classrooms with direct feedback from qualified practicum supervisors and mentor teachers.

(vi) The narrative is substantial for proving methods for sustainability (page e39). The narrative describes train-the-trainer activities where information is shared by persons in the program. Additionally, the applicant will develop a few sustainable open access courses that can be used as professional development and induction resources beyond the grant period. The induction program will provide continued support beyond the life of the grant and will be supported by the participating school districts.

Weaknesses:

(i) The needs assessment narrative is unclear to full denote a shortage of teachers (page e20). Specifically, the applicant

states that state report shows that the state mean percentage of "teaching in-field" was 93.7% across all ages, while the partner school districts were 87.9% and 91.6%. The reference to the needs assessment results that show 14.5 % of teachers in Springfield and 23 % of teachers in Holyoke currently hired with emergency or temporary licenses do not clearly show a teacher shortage. Additionally, data points are lacking for specific numbers or percentages of teachers who lack the ESOL certification. Since this is a program feature, this information is necessary to provide a proper context for the need for the project. The logic model only depicts, as inputs, the funding the applicant is applying for. No inputs are included, for example, that would describe existing resources to the project that leads to the short-term, medium-term and long-term outcomes (page e77).

(i) No weaknesses noted.

(iii) No weaknesses noted.

(iv) No weaknesses noted.

(v) No weaknesses noted.

(vi) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 28

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. B. Quality of the Project Evaluation (20 points)

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:

(i)   The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable

performance data on relevant outcomes.
(ii)   The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate
to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths:

(i) The methods of evaluation are extensive to provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes (page e40-e46). The applicant will retrieve formative data by gathering survey and feedback data from participants. For example, the applicant will measure persistence of teacher candidates in the program. Specifically, measures include exit surveys from all candidates and sub-sample interviews as qualitative data. Course data will document progress and success which will be quantitative data. Surveys of and observational reports will provide more information about challenges to persisting.

(ii) The methods of evaluation are extensively thorough and feasible for the goals, objectives, and activities (pages e40-e46). Multiple measures are used to assess teacher experiences through quantitative and qualitative data. The applicant will track participants who pass the state tests and other credentials. Other measures include how the applicant will track employee retention and how candidates will become efficient.

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses noted.

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. C. Adequacy of Resources (30 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:

(i)	The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.
(ii)	The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.
(iii)	The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.
(iv)	The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.
(v)	The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

(i) Narrative is clearly provided to describe facilities, equipment and supplies to support the project (page e46). Specifically, the applicant states that the College will provide the facilities, equipment, technology, and expert resources to successfully support the project. The applicant states that time commitment is provided form institutional personnel.

(ii) The budget narrative is limited to describe to cover the cost of project activities (page e47). For example, partnering organizations will be responsible for (1) hiring completing PtTs as ECE teachers in their schools; (2) providing an induction program for all PtT teachers hired; and (3) funding replacement paraprofessionals during the PtTs' clinical year. The applicant indicates that key district personnel are serving on the Management Committee and their experienced ECE teachers will serve as Supervising Practitioners for the PtPs.

(iii) The narrative clearly describes this criterion (page e47). Costs shares are provided. Existing activities will be used. This information is the narrative complete.

(iv) The plan is extensive for extending beyond the grant funded period (pages e47-e49). The narrative provides evidence that the project will build capacity and therefore extend beyond the grant funded period. For example, the institution offers an ECE professional licensure program for teachers who hold an initial ECE license and at least three years of teaching experience and complete the district induction program and this will be sustained. In collaboration with the districts, the applicant will encourage current ECE licensed teachers, including the PtT program completers, to professionalize their ECE initial license through our ECE professional license program required by the state after a teacher has an initial licensure for 5 years.

(v) The demonstrated commitments of reach of the partners are strong and relevant for the project (page e49). Letters of commitments are provided for each partner. For example, partners have the commitment to provide monetary and in-kind resources as well as personnel assistance.

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses noted.

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

(iii) No weaknesses noted.

(iv) No weaknesses noted.

(v) No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:	30**

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. D. Quality of the Management Plan (20 points)

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

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

Strengths:

(i) The management plan includes a list of personnel and their qualifications (pages e49-e58, Resumes). For example, the qualifications of the project director appear robust for delivering activities as their activities included coordinating partnership activities and managing the day-to-day activities of the project. Yearly activities are detailed and aligned with the positions who will coordinate them.

(ii) Mechanisms for feedback and continuous improvement are robust to describe (pages e59-e61) how the applicant will ensure feedback. For example, the curriculum committee will meet regularly to ensure all the courses are aligned with the currently state approved program of study and discuss areas that need to be improved in the coursework as well as the field experiences. At each meeting, a committee member will take notes to be documented and shared with the members of the committee and the Project Investigator.

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses noted.

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Increasing Educator Diversity (Up to 4 points).

Under this priority, applicants must develop projects that are designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce through adopting, implementing, or expanding one or both of the following:

a) High-quality, comprehensive teacher preparation programs in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (eligible institutions under Part B of Title III and Subpart 4 of Part A Title VII of the HEA), Hispanic Serving Institutions (eligible institutions under section 316 of the HEA), or other Minority Serving Institutions (eligible institutions under Title III and Title V of the HEA) that include one year of high-quality clinical experiences)prior to becoming the teacher of record) in high-need schools (as defined in this notice) and that incorporate best practices for attracting, supporting, graduating, and placing underrepresented teacher candidates.
b) Reforms to teacher preparation programs to improve the diversity of teacher candidates, including changes to ensure underrepresented teacher candidates are fully represented in program admission, completion, placement, and retention as educators.

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning (Up to 3

points).

Projects that are designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educator serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through increasing the number of teachers with certification or dual certification in a shortage area, or advanced certifications from nationally recognized professional organizations.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly addresses this competitive preference priority (pages e14-e61) by increasing the proportion of well-prepared, diverse and effective educators serving students. Specifically, the applicant will focus on target on the 60% of paraprofessionals and their ability to access course and clinical experiences that will build the capacity of local education agencies.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 3

1. **Meeting Student Social Emotional, and Academic Needs (Up to 2 points).**

   Projects that are designed to improve students' social, emotional, academic, and career development, with a focus on underserved students, through creating a positive, inclusive, and identity-safe climate at institutions of higher education, through one or more of the following activities:

   a)   Fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion for underserved students.
   b)   Implementing evidence-based practices for advancing student success for underserved students.

Strengths:

(a) The applicant clearly addresses this competitive preference priority (pages e14-e61) by implementing social, emotional, and academic needs activities in the activities for teachers and students in each of the supporting goals. The program will provide culturally responsive training opportunities.

(b) The applicant clearly provides SEL activities within the courses to paraprofessionals and teachers. Specifically, new teachers will have the opportunity to provide such techniques in their field experiences (page e15). For example, partnership with Paradigm Shift will provide a multisector and regional collaboration for teacher diversity also ensures new teachers of color are supported and working in welcoming environments.

Weaknesses:

(a) No weaknesses noted.

(b) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 4

1. **Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (Up to 2 points).**

   Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant 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.**

    b)   **That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include pedagogical practices in educator preparational programs and professional development programs that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status so that educators are better prepared to create inclusive, supportive, equitable, unbiased, and identity-safe learning environments for their students.**

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **0**

Invitational Priority - Invitational Priority

1. Partnership Grants for the Establishment of Grow Your Own Programs

Projects that establish Grow Your Own programs that are designed to address shortages of teachers in high-need areas, schools, and/or geographic areas, or shortages of school leaders in high-need schools, and increase the diversity of qualified individuals entering the teacher, principal, or other school leader workforce.

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not promote a "Grow Your Own" culture to meet the requirements of the Invitational Priority. Absent from the narrative is a description of how the program will address shortages of teachers in high-need areas, schools, and geographic areas. Furthermore, the applicant does not describe, in detail, how it will address the shortage of school leaders in high-need schools and increase the diversity of qualified individuals entering the teacher, principal of other school leader workforce. Thus, the applicant does not address this Invitational Priority.

Reader's Score:

Status:

Last Updated:

    0

Submitted 06/07/2022 11:30 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/06/2022 03:27 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Massachusetts Amherst (S336S220018)

Reader #3:   **********

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		

1. Project Design	30	28
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	30
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Educator Diversity	4	0

Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Diverse Workforce	3	3

Competitive Preference Priority 3

1. Meeting Student Needs	2	2

Competitive Preference Priority 4

1. Promoting Equity	2	0

Invitational Priority

Invitational Priority

1. Grow Your Own	0	0

Total	111	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.336S

Reader #3:   **********
Applicant: University of Massachusetts Amherst (S336S220018)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. **A. Quality of the Project Design (30 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:

   (i)   The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.
   (ii)   The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.
   (iii)   The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.
   (iv)   The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
   (v)   The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to

the design of the proposed project.
**(vi) 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:

(i) The applicant describes the theory of change: if the project achieves its outcome, then it sets the stage for meeting the five objectives, and if achieved, will contribute to the long-term goal. The partnership of the applicant institution, two public school districts, and the non-profit organization, Paradigm Shift, will utilize the needs assessment to develop an enhanced alternative hybrid ECE (Prek-2) teacher preparation Pre-Bac pathway for paraprofessionals in high-need schools in western Massachusetts, while enhancing the currently approved ECE program. The applicant demonstrates that the proposed project, Para-to-Teacher (PtT) Pathway Program for Early Childhood Education (ECE Licensure, will be a tested, accessible, and sustainable model for becoming highly qualified ECE teachers, ready for scaling and continuity across Massachusetts. The outcome will be 35 paraprofessionals licensed as highly qualified new ECE teachers. The logic model provides a general description of the situation, inputs, activities, and outputs, leading to outcomes (outcomes; objectives; goals), assumptions, and external factors (pgs. e14-e21; e77).

(ii) The application clearly describes goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project that are clearly specified and measurable. The applicant demonstrates that the goal of the project is that school districts and paraprofessionals will have a tested, accessible, and sustainable model for becoming highly qualified ECE teachers, ready for scaling and continuity across Massachusetts. The applicant clearly describes five (5) measurable objectives, aligned with the measures and data source. The applicant demonstrates the outcome of the proposed project: 35 paraprofessionals will be licensed as highly qualified new ECE teachers, demonstrating comprehensive knowledge and skills in early grade literacy practices, inclusive and anti-racist teaching pedagogy, use of research, and classroom assessment, through a fully online set of courses and an immersive clinical year of experience (pgs. e22-e24).

(iii) The applicant demonstrates how the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. The applicant indicates that the current ECE program in the college of Education (CoE) is a highly rated program leading to the ECE state teaching licensure. The applicant demonstrates that tenured faculty and experienced lectures teach and improve the program with research evidence on preparing high-quality teachers. The students in the ECE licensure program meet high academic standards as demonstrated in their GPA increases after the two years of intensive coursework combined with clinical experiences. The

students that have completed a program of study, which meets the state licensure requirements, will then be required to pass the state teaching licensure exam (pgs. e24-e32).

(iv) The applicant clearly describes the design of the proposed project that reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. The current ECE program is grounded in research evidence in the ECE field with a focus on equity and inclusion (NAEYC Equity Statement, 2019; NAEYC/DEC Joint Statement on Inclusion, 2009). The coursework offers opportunities for teacher candidates to learn and implement research-based practices, based on guidelines and standards, such as What Works Clearinghouse-Early Childhood section, DEC Recommended Practices (2014), and NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practices (2020). The applicant provides research informing the following developmentally appropriate practices: early literacy, play, culturally responsive teaching, inclusive practice, and Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) (pgs. e32-e35).

(v) The applicant provides clear performance feedback and continuous improvement that are integral to the design of the proposed project. The Management Committee and the Curriculum Committee will use existing data sources as well as new formative data collected through regular surveys, interviews, and focus groups, with PtTs and stakeholders, to assess progress, identify supports and barriers in project design, and to implement strategies for improving the project activities to achieve the outcome, objectives, and goal of the proposed project (pg. e35).

(vi) The applicant demonstrates how the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance. The applicant, in collaboration with the partner districts, will build capacity through the development of professional development, and the focus of early literacy, play-based approach, culturally responsive teaching, and inclusive practices. During the grant period, the faculty will encourage the partner school districts to pursue ongoing professional development and increase district-wide capacity building to improve teaching practices. The applicant will develop sustainable open access courses, such as Play and IEP focused courses that can be used as professional development and induction resources beyond the grant period. The induction program includes an optional Bilingual Education Endorsement (BEE) that will provide continued support beyond the life of the grant. The district's commitment to employing and supporting these PtT graduates for at least two years beyond program completion also provides evidence of a model that is sustainable (pgs. e36-e39).

Weaknesses:

(i) The applicant does not clearly describe how the rationale informs the proposed project. The applicant provides a logic model that lacks details as to inputs leading to outcomes (pg. e77).

(ii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iv) No weaknesses were noted.

(v) No weaknesses were noted.

(vi) No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 28

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. B. Quality of the Project Evaluation (20 points)

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:

(i)   The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.
(ii)   The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths:

(i) The applicant demonstrates that the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes. The applicant provides a thorough evaluation plan to provide information about the achievement of goals, objectives, and outcome, through formative assessment of the project's implementation, and summative assessment of the project's outcome. The project staff will collect annual and semi-annual from the project stakeholders. The Management Committee, the Curriculum Committee, and the other team members will use this information to determine any barriers to project success and to develop and implement strategies for reducing those barriers. The applicant provides information on the following data that will be collected and analyzed for the program: stakeholder input, PtT participants' course evaluations, supervising practitioners' annual surveys, program supervisors' annual surveys, and annual stakeholder focus groups (pgs. e40-e46).

(ii) The applicant clearly describes how the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. The applicant demonstrates that the summative performance data aligns with the outcome, objectives, and goals. The applicant describes the data connected to Measure 1: Certification/Licensure, including subject matter knowledge, passing the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) tests, Professional Standards for Teachers (PST), and assessing technology use and classroom assessment of knowledge and skills. The applicant demonstrates the data connected to Measure 2: Shortage Area Certification, Measure 3: One-Year Persistence in Program, and Measures 4 and 5: One- and Three-Year Employment Retention (pgs. e40-e46).

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses were noted.

(ii) No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. C. Adequacy of Resources (30 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:

(i)   The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.
(ii)   The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.
(iii)   The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(iv)   The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.
(v)   The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

(i) The applicant clearly describes the adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. The applicant is the lead organization in the partnership and has the existing institutional infrastructure to support this parallel PtT pathway. The applicant will provide the facilities, equipment, technology, and expert resources to successfully support the project. The College of Education has contributed substantial cost share through time commitments of all faculty personnel for curriculum development, evaluation implementation, and all other necessary activities for achieving the primary outcomes (pgs. e46-e47).

(ii) The applicant describes a budget that is adequate to support the proposed project. The application describes a comprehensive and detailed line item budget and budget justification for the following line items: personnel, fringe benefits, supplies, contractual, other, and indirect costs (pgs. e47-e49; e217-e241).

(iii) The applicant provides costs that are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. The applicant indicates that the project budget is considerably less than it would be for creating an entirely new licensure program, because of the high-quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) program at the applicant organization, and the cost share contributions of all partners. The applicant indicates that the existing faculty expertise, facilities, and processes, the budget is sufficient to achieve the outcome, objectives, and the goal of the proposed project. The development of a tested model that will support paraprofessionals of color to become licensed, high-quality ECE teachers will be a value to the state, contributing to the diversity goals of both districts and to the state (pgs. e47-e48).

(iv) The applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. The faculty will encourage the partner school districts to increase district-wide capacity building to improve teaching practices. For the professional development program, the project will collaborate with districts and share expertise on improving teaching quality to address their professional development goals and to build courses for the induction program. The applicant will develop a few sustainable open access courses that be used as professional development and induction resources beyond the grant period. The applicant institution will continue to support teachers to receive Bilingual Education Endorsement (BEE) during their induction program in collaboration with the partner school districts after the grant period. The applicant institution will continue to provide the proven high-quality PtT program based on ongoing partnerships with the partner school districts and the paradigm Shift organization and extend the partnerships to other school districts (pgs. e47-e49).

(v) The applicant describes the relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. The applicant describes the partnership consisting of two departments of the applicant institution, two school districts, and the non-profit organization, Paradigm Shift. The partner school districts are committed to supporting the PtT program. They will market, recruit, and select paraprofessionals of color for the PtT program. The school leaders will also participate in the program management team and the curriculum Committee, to improve the PtT program during the grant period. The districts will collaborate on professional development workshops for teachers who will be supervising teachers of the paraprofessionals in the PtT program and members of the districts' induction team. During the induction year, provided by the school district, these new teachers wil become licensed with their BEE, as well as have access to open access courses that will include a focus on dual language. One of the partner school districts will be providing all PtTs who have successfully completed their program a guaranteed position within the

district. The other district will invite all of the PtTs who have successfully completed their program to apply for and be considered for any open position in the district (pgs. e47; e49).

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses were noted.

(ii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iv) No weaknesses were noted.

(v) No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. D. Quality of the Management Plan (20 points)

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

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

Strengths:

(i) The applicant describes a detailed 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. The applicant describes the key personnel and their qualifications, roles, and responsibilities for the proposed project. The applicant describes a timeline, including a yearly overview of the program elements to be carried out to prepare prospective new teachers with strong teaching skills (pgs. e49-e58).

(ii) The applicant describes adequate procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. For example, to improve the project procedures, the project will collect input from the two advisory teams, the Management Committee, and the Curriculum Committee. These two advisory teams consist of the PI of the proposed project, the Para-to-Teacher (PtT) program coordinator, core teaching faculty, University Without Walls (UWW) liaison, and leaders from the partner school districts. The project management team will meet monthly to monitor the progress across all areas of the project and review formative evaluation data to promote continuous improvement. The curriculum committee will meet regularly to ensure all the courses are aligned with the currently site approved program of study and to discuss areas that need to be improve in the coursework as well as in the field experiences (pgs. e49-e51).

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses were noted.

(ii) No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. **Increasing Educator Diversity (Up to 4 points).**

   Under this priority, applicants must develop projects that are designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce through adopting, implementing, or expanding one or both of the following:

   a)   High-quality, comprehensive teacher preparation programs in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (eligible institutions under Part B of Title III and Subpart 4 of Part A Title VII of the HEA), Hispanic Serving Institutions (eligible institutions under section 316 of the HEA), or other Minority Serving Institutions (eligible institutions under Title III and Title V of the HEA) that include one year of high-quality clinical experiences)prior to becoming the teacher of record) in high-need schools (as defined in this notice) and that incorporate best practices for attracting, supporting, graduating, and placing underrepresented teacher candidates.
   b)   Reforms to teacher preparation programs to improve the diversity of teacher candidates, including changes to ensure underrepresented teacher candidates are fully represented in program admission, completion, placement, and retention as educators.

   Strengths:

   Overview:
   The applicant did not address the Competitive Preference Priority 1: Increasing Educator Diversity.

   (a) N/A

   (b) N/A

   Weaknesses:

   (a) N/A

   (b) N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. **Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning (Up to 3 points).**

   Projects that are designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educator serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through increasing the number of teachers with certification or dual certification in a shortage area, or advanced certifications from nationally recognized professional organizations.

   Strengths:

   Overview:
   The applicant addresses Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Grow to Strengthen Student Learning.

   The applicant clearly addresses Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Grow to Strengthen Student Learning. For example, the applicant indicates that 35 paraprofessionals will be licensed as highly qualified new ECE (Prek-2nd) grade teachers, demonstrating comprehensive knowledge and skills in early grade literacy practices, inclusive and anti-racist teaching pedagogy, use of research, and classroom assessment, through a fully online set of courses and an immersive clinical year of experience (pg. e23).

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 3

1. **Meeting Student Social Emotional, and Academic Needs (Up to 2 points).**

   Projects that are designed to improve students' social, emotional, academic, and career development, with a focus on underserved students, through creating a positive, inclusive, and identity-safe climate at institutions of higher education, through one or more of the following activities:

   a)   **Fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion for underserved students.**
   b)   **Implementing evidence-based practices for advancing student success for underserved students.**

    Strengths:

   Overview:
   The applicant clearly addresses Competitive Preference Priority 3: Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs. The proposed program will develop teacher candidates' strong teaching skills to improve children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development by using empirically based practice and scientifically valid research related to teaching and learning.

   (a) N/A

   (b) The applicant clearly addresses Competitive Preference Priority 3: Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs. The applicant clearly describes implementing evidence-based practices for advancing student success for underserved students. The proposed program will develop teacher candidates' strong teaching skills to improve children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development by using empirically based practice and scientifically valid research related to teaching and learning. The coursework will offer various opportunities for teacher candidates to learn an

   implement research-based practices, such as What Works Clearinghouse-Early Childhood section, DEC Recommended Practices (2014), and NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practices (2020) (pgs. e32-34).

    Weaknesses:

   (a) N/A

   (b) No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 4

1. **Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (Up to 2 points).**

   Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant 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.**

   b)   **That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include pedagogical practices in educator preparational programs and professional development programs that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status so that educators are better prepared to create inclusive, supportive, equitable, unbiased, and identity-safe learning environments for their students.**

    Strengths:

   Overview:
   The applicant did not address Competitive Preference Priority 4: Promoting Equity in Student Access to

Educational Resources and Opportunities.

(a) N/A

(b) N/A

(a) N/A

(b) N/A
Weaknesses:
Reader's Score: 0

Invitational Priority - Invitational Priority
Partnership Grants for the Establishment of Grow Your Own Programs

Projects that establish Grow Your Own programs that are designed to address shortages of teachers in high-need areas, schools, and/or geographic areas, or shortages of school leaders in high-need schools, and increase the diversity of qualified individuals entering the teacher, principal, or other school leader workforce.
1.
Overview:
The applicant did not address the Invitational Priority: Grow Your Own.

N/A
Strengths:

N/A
Weaknesses:
 Score: