

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2023 02:46 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Region One Education Service Center (S422B230065)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	17
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	22
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	29
Sub Total	100	88
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Student Access to Resources and Opportunities		
1. Promoting Equity	7	4
Sub Total	7	4
Total	112	97

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - AHC-NA - 5: 84.422B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Region One Education Service Center (S422B230065)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

Strengths:

The Project Legacy and Legends Live provides a rationale and logic model for expanding and improving U.S. history, government, civics, and geography education for students in 14 underserved and high need school districts. This will be done by improving instruction through professional learning for 300 educators who currently are minimally prepared to teach civic education and provide culturally relevant digital instruction. The approach is exceptional as it will target educators in high need areas, survey their credentials and experience, and offer opportunities to enrich their teaching. There is the additional goal of teaching instructors to connect to students by building culturally relevant, digital curricula.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The Project Legacy and Legends Live has the goal of creating "a K-12th grade pipeline of effective American history, civics, government, and geography educators to increase ALL students' academic outcomes, graduation rates and college enrollment" by focusing on "instruction, learning strategies, professional development activities and programs that benefit students from low-income backgrounds and other underserved populations" in 14 isolated rural, low-income, high-need school districts. (p. e16) The project relies on the six characteristics of effective educator professional development: content-based, specific to educators context, equity-based, data driven, foster high expectations and motivation, interactive collaborative digital and technology-based learning. The key components for delivering this approach are Civic Education and Culturally Relevant Digital Instruction. (p. e18) Civic Education "has shown to successfully develop civic skills and encourage the development of civic knowledge and can compensate for a lack of civic resources in the home." (p. e19) Culturally Relevant Digital Instruction will "increase culturally responsive teaching of currently practicing teachers" and give "voice to students who are frequently silent." (p. e21) The targeted audience is 300 teachers on 64 campuses and 26,661 students "from low-income background and other underserved populations." (p. e22-23) Noteworthy is that 24,056 of the students are low income, 19,733 are at risk, and 13,733 are English learners (EL). (p. e27) The logic model explains in detail the inputs, outputs, and outcomes by examining gaps and weaknesses, key components, knowledge gained, and annual outcomes measures. (p. e66) The project relies on 7 major partners who bring expertise in content, professional development, hands-on learning, and evaluation: University of Texas- Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) , Texas A&M University (TAMU), Law Related Education (LRE), Museum of South Texas History (MSTH), Texas Alliance for Geographic Education (TAGE), Humanities Texas (HT), and Evaluation, Grants, and Training Institute (EGT). (p. e63-64) Success for the project is measured by specific targets of increased teacher knowledge, program completion, awarding of advanced degrees, and student performance on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). (p. e12)

Weaknesses:

While the project states that it will address the needs of all students, it is not clear on how EL students will be served. As noted above, the project will serve 26,661 students and 13,733 are EL. How EL students will be helped is not clear. For example in the table "Strategy Formulation Process", English learners are in the column "Needs" yet in the column "Proposed Strategy to Achieve Desired Outcome" states "Ongoing high quality Professional Development to build capacity and accelerate academic proficiency for ELs with services, tutoring, technology." (p. e35) Given the linguistic demands of U.S. history and civics education, the project would benefit from a more expressed strategies for addressing the learning and linguistic needs of these students.

Reader's Score: 17

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. **The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
 - i. **The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)**
 - ii. **The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)**
 - iii. **The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)**

Strengths:

The project addresses the magnitude of the problem by calling for extensive professional development of teachers and education leaders in 14 high poverty districts. The proposal identified the under qualifications of many teachers and the gaps in professional learning experiences and how this affects student achievement. The services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs but the services for English learners are not fully explained.

Supporting Statements:**Strengths:**

The project will focus on the area Texas-Mexico boarder with 8 eight economically depressed counties "with over 1,662,799 residents of which 91% are Hispanic and nearly 77% do not speak English at home." (p. e26) The project will "aid 14 rural isolated districts, their 64 campuses and 300 teachers." (p. e27) Of the 26,345 students to be served, 24,056 are low income and 13,733 are English learners. (p. e27) As for academe performance, the 14 districts are below the state average in history and all subjects. In history, the state proficiency rate is 50% but in 14 districts it is 35%, and as for all subjects, the state is 47% and the 14 districts it is 35%. (p. e29) The gap for college readiness is similar as the state average is 53% of students while the regional average is 39%. (p. e29) Survey data from the districts shows that schools are underresourced as 85% do not have electronic devices for all and 92% do not have culturally linguistically/ethnic books. (p. e30). As for teacher qualifications, "21% of the responding teachers had a History degree, only 6% had a Master's degree and 47% of the responding teachers did not hold a certification in social studies or history." (p. e30) The teacher confidence is lacking as "over 90% of the respondents found that lack of understanding content posed the biggest challenge of teaching American history, civics, government or geography effectively." (p. e31) To address these needs, the project will use "inclusive of strategies to encourage innovative American history, civics and government, and geography instruction and learning approaches face to face, digital and web-based, infused with annual themes, colloquia, pedagogy and study trips." The intent is "to build the capacity in educators to benefit target students from low-income, under-served backgrounds, academically and educationally, toward being active informed citizens." (p. e36)

Weaknesses:

The project does mention addressing the needs of English learners (p. e35) and preparing teachers on "activities that focus on accelerating academic proficiency for ELs." (p. e33). However, it does not show how it will use its existing resources, "Services for English Language Learners" (p. e88), will be used in the context of the proposal.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

- 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. (13 points)**
- ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)**

Strengths:

The management plan explains how the project will achieve its objectives on time and within budget, as responsibilities, timelines, and milestones are clearly expressed. The procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project are extensive.

Supporting Statements:**Strengths:**

The proposal notes the experience of the Region One center in managing federal and state grants (p. e44) and will use Project – L3 Advisory Council (PAC), an advisory council of "partners, superintendents, principals, teachers, project director, parents, evaluator, and community" for planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluation. (p. e43) The timeline and milestones are expressed while designating the position responsible for accomplishing the tasks. (p. e47) Continuous improvement practices "will ensure that feedback from staff, students, participants, and stakeholders drive continuous improvement" as the proposal relies on the USDE model (p. e48). The proposal states: "This information will be compiled, analyzed by the external evaluators, and used quarterly by the Project Director and PAC to review results and make continuous program improvements." In addition to these mechanisms and practices the project will include an external evaluator, EGT Institute, that will include formative and summative reports. (p. e49-50) The evaluation process is summarized in Table 7. (p. e50-51) Because student data will be used, the proposal notes it will maintain confidentiality and be FERPA compliant. (p. e53)

Weaknesses:

The proposal relies on positions that have not been filled: 1 project director, 3 history/civic strategists, and 1 virtual specialist. The director and strategists positions require applicants to have advanced degrees and 5 or more years experience. The virtual specialist requires a bachelor's degree and 3 or more years of experience. (pp. e45-46) These positions may not be readily filled given the competition in the job market.

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, 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. (6 points)
 - ii. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)
 - iii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)
 - iv. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)

Strengths:

The project will be supported with appropriate facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources. The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. The proposal demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success. The proposal demonstrates the relevance and commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

Region One will provide resources such as "overall leadership, budget and programmatic management, partner collaboration, in-kind cost facilitation, curriculum alignment, pedagogy strategies, training and technology, personnel, and training support." As for the 14 participating school districts and their schools, they "will provide guidance and release time for teachers and administrators, student support and learning activities, facilities, travel funds, space, supplies, teacher substitutes, technology infrastructure, computers." (p. e54). Appendix E includes letters of commitment from partnering universities and museums and school district partnership is demonstrated with a letter of commitment that is signed by all 14 district superintendents. (p. e137-153 Appendix E) The budget narrative explains that costs for the project and justifies the request for \$2,997,065 (pp. e320-357) and include the commitment of \$1,245,000 in non-federal in-kind and cash contribution. (p. e358-60) The robust role of each partnering institution is explained in Table 10: Relevance Role and Demonstrated Commitment. (p. e63) As for supporting on ongoing efforts, the proposal includes improving the "target school districts' ongoing financial responsibility and sustainability" through management and productivity initiatives, continued innovation, address ongoing infrastructure needs, and reliable financial management. (p. e60-61)

Weaknesses:

While the costs are reasonable, the proposal does not discuss how the projected budget compares with its funded projects, normal operating costs, or state or national averages.

Reader's Score: 29

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies

to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Strengths:

The roject includes hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students and programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The proposal states the importance of hand-on activities in creating engaging curriculum and educating students in the history of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Exemplary is the proposal practice of visiting historical sites in Texas and Washington DC as shown in Table 6: Field Study Sites. (p. e41) In its logic model, the proposal notes Hands-on Field trips as a Key Component. (p. e66) In addition the one annual themes of its professional learning include Founding of American Liberty. (p. e38)

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)

Under this priority, and 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-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) 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 civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

Strengths:

The project promotes educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. Using rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded approaches, the project is inclusive with regard to race and ethnicity and will support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The proposal states it "will promote education equity by training teachers through multiple modalities (training, PD, annual themes, colloquia, pedagogy and study trips, etc.) to establish, expand, and improve engagement" and "will foster innovative rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status."(p. e23) In sections above, it is documented that the proposal is targeting a high need area of 14 rural districts with academic needs (Table 2. State Proficiency Standards, p. e29).

Weaknesses:

The proposal mentions addressing the needs of English learners and students with disabilities but it does not express in details how those needs will be met.

The proposal minimally mentions raising or elevating voices and it is in reference to League of United Latin American Citizens and Chicanos Por La Causa: "These partnerships assist low-income families in Arizona to recognize that they have a voice in important life matters." (p. e19) The project does not explicitly address this goal.

Reader's Score: **4**

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/07/2023 11:27 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Region One Education Service Center (S422B230065)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	14
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	24
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	30
Sub Total	100	93
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Student Access to Resources and Opportunities		
1. Promoting Equity	7	4
Sub Total	7	4
Total	112	102

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - AHC-NA - 5: 84.422B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Region One Education Service Center (S422B230065)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)
 - (ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

Strengths:

OVERVIEW

The proposed project has substantial evidence to support their ability to provide evidence-based strategies to encourage innovation in civics and government for all academic stakeholders. The program educates students from low income and underserved populations with innovative hands-on strategies and lessons.

The applicant provides a clearly demonstrated rationale through identifying its target audience as K-12 teachers as well as students in need of comprehensive civil education (e15-16).

With a plan of transformative professional development and hands-on instruction the applicant will be able to exceed their goals in civil education and increase students' academic outcomes, graduation rates and college enrollment (e15-16,22,23,27).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not give enough information to support their position of representing an exceptional approach to the priorities. There is a general overview of the activities and instruction offered, but no details to correlate to an exceptional approach.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i. The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)
 - ii. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)
 - iii. The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on

those with greatest needs. (10 points)

Strengths:

OVERVIEW

The proposed project started with a strong foundation by presenting high quality project design with extensive quantitative data to support the rationale. There are multiple data driven examples of how the project will uniquely address the priorities of the competition. Unfortunately, the applicant misses detailing key issues essential for establishing the need for the project.

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

STRENGTHS

- i. The applicant provides a clearly demonstrated rationale by addressing the academic needs of at-risk, low income, rural underserved K-12 students and their families in southern Texas. The proposed project also supports the rationale for the project's emphasis on transformation in the approach to civic and US government (e26-28).
- ii. The applicant provides substantial evidence of the extreme achievement gaps in history and all core subjects as well as the college readiness gap. The proposed project also supplied data to support the weakness in infrastructure through teachers' responses of inadequate content resources to teach history content (e29-30).
- iii. The applicant extensively details how the project seeks to resolve those issues through the comprehensive professional development(e37-43). The service meets the needs of minority, low-income and underserved students. The proposed project provides substantial evidence of the connection between the vast need of the students and the ability of the project to meet the need (e37-43).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

- 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. (13 points)**
- ii. **The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)**

Strengths:

OVERVIEW

The management plan described by the applicant is adequate to achieve the objectives of the proposed project. There is potential for success with the reasonable budget, team whose roles are clearly defined and sufficient timelines. The components which need clarity are the activities which appear to repeat the objective. There are milestones which repeat

the activities instead of making clear distinction of a moment of desired accomplishment within the project.

STRENGTHS:

- i. The goals and objectives for the project are clearly detailed and achievable. The applicant has clearly defined the responsibilities of their management team which are sufficient for completing each activity of the project. The proposed project has incorporated control functions and oversight to ensure efficient and effective implementation. Those functions include staff supervision and, organizational managing software (e 43).
- ii. The applicant has provided substantially adequate procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement. This was established through providing multiple modalities for obtaining feedback from stakeholders. Those methods include but are not limited to surveys, face to face/virtual focus groups, group blogs, and advisory committees (e49).

Weaknesses:

The applicant can strengthen the proposed project by utilizing parents in establishing or execution of the method of obtaining as well as evaluating feedback. Parent participation in the process as well as the sharing of views can have a tremendous impact on policy and procedures in schools.

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

- 1. **The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, 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. (6 points)**
 - ii. **The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)**
 - iii. **The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)**
 - iv. **The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)**

Strengths:

OVERVIEW

The application has provided evidence of substantial adequacy of resources ranging from facilities, costs, support of stakeholders, ability for long-term sustainability, and partner commitment.

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

STRENGTHS:

- i. The proposed project substantially provides support including facilities, equipment, supplies and other resources. Region 1 with its participating 14 school districts has committed facilities, classrooms, transportation and administrative services for the teacher staff and parents of this project. They also have committed to supplying computer and science labs, libraries, technology media, devices, software and textbooks. (e54, Appendix E)

ii. The applicant has established reasonable cost within the proposed project with an annual budget of \$998,851 which translates to 2,997,065 over the extent of the grant they have clarified at the director we'll meet with the finance department records to oversee expenses. The applicant has had multiple grants that they have managed over the years as well as administrative fiscal and database evaluation systems that they have in place for accountability (e55).

iii. The proposed project demonstrates the ability to operate beyond the length of the grant with the applicants multi-year financial and operating model. This model includes revenue projections and sensitivity to control factors which produce change such as student enrollment revenue cost increase in decreases in fund or dead. The applicant financial department practices utilize innovative methods and collaborate to be drivers of transformation. The applicant has vast experience with local state and federal funds and is continuously sharing their model with target school districts to build sustained fiscal capacity (e58-60, Closing Gap Plan).

iv. The applicant has provided substantial evidence of relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the project to assure its implementation and success. The proposed project has the applicant with relationships of two institutions of higher learning five non-profits and 14 high need isolated rule and low-income districts. Each partner has agreed to utilize their expertise resources and skill to strengthen and maximize the efforts of the proposed project (e62-e64).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 30

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Strengths:

Overview:

The application has provided substantial evidence to support their ability to provide evidence based strategies to encourage innovation in civics and government for all academic stakeholders. The program educates students from low income and underserved populations with innovative hands-on strategies and lessons.

Strengths: The applicant plans to utilize professional development for educators as well as history focused field trips. The applicant will utilize History/Civics strategies to coordinate trips that will educate students about the principles of the constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights (e23). The professional development includes strategist led content training and field trip practicums with focus

on U.S. history(e37-39).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)

Under this priority, and 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-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) 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 civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

Strengths:

Overview:

Upon examining the sources of inequity and inadequacy, the applicant has developed a rigorous and engaging approach to learning which is inclusive and innovative.

Strengths: The applicant provided substantial evidence of promoting educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students particularly in K-12 settings including early, elementary, middle and high school in 14 districts (e23). The professional development and classroom application of project based learning to be utilized for the civic program which includes is noted as a rigorous and engaging form of instruction which is inclusive to all underserved students (e23).

Weaknesses:

The applicant fails to provide evidence of how the underserved community members will have access to opportunities of leadership with their community relative to government or civic duties (e23).

Reader's Score: 4

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Region One Education Service Center (S422B230065)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	17
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	23
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	30
Sub Total	100	95
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Student Access to Resources and Opportunities		
1. Promoting Equity	7	6
Sub Total	7	6
Total	112	106

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - AHC-NA - 5: 84.422B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Region One Education Service Center (S422B230065)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

- (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

Strengths:

Overview: Project L-3 proposes to train 300 teachers in history, civics, geography, and government over 3 years to serve 26,000+ students across 14 rural, isolated, and low-income school districts. The project emphasizes a "Theory of Action" logic model of civic education, culturally relevant digital instruction, and professional development as the rationale for offering colloquia and workshops for teachers. The approach proposed is solid, if not exceptional. The strength of the proposal is its broad reach to many districts across Region One.

Strengths : The proposals states that professional development initiatives are effective in training the trainers if certain criteria are planned into the delivery (Page E17). The claimed-for outcomes to this project are impressive, including significant increases in teacher knowledge of US history and civics (Page E66).

An impressive claim for the project is not only that teachers will increase their content knowledge of US history and civics, but also that those teachers who complete the professional development will also increase their ability as communicators to engage students more deeply (Page E66). This is a good example of an exceptional approach, namely, that students will learn better when their teachers can combine increased content knowledge with increased communication skills.

Weaknesses:

The proposal repeatedly states the importance of training teachers in "culturally relevant digital instruction," but never defines that term (Page E21, for example). It is not clear from the proposal how and why "civic education" and "culturally relevant digital instruction" are somehow separate from professional development (Appendix A at Page E66).

Reader's Score: 17

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- i. **The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)**
- ii. **The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)**
- iii. **The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)**

Strengths:

Overview: The teachers and students in Region One schools are underserved in history and civics instruction. The counties in the Region One service area are some of the poorest in Texas, indeed, in the United States. The Rio Grande region has historically been marked by severe inequality in almost every social and economic measure. On the specific gap in history and civics learning by students in Region One schools, the proposal attributes this in part to the pandemic, in part to the emphasis on STEM education, and in part due to the rural, isolated, and low-income features of the schools in Region One. All the schools in Region One are defined as having great needs.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths: The proposal cites recent NAEP data showing only 18% of 8th graders are proficient in US History (Page E16). That is sad but true confirmation of the extent of the problem at the national level. The proposal cites extensive demographic and STAARS test performance data to show the extent of gaps in achievement by students in Region One schools, compared to statewide. Some districts have as few as 22% of students showing proficiency on the History Social Studies achievement tests, when the state average is 50%.

Region One conducted a survey of teachers to find out why there are gaps in delivering high quality social studies instruction to students. The summary numbers presented from what was gleaned in the survey are sobering: what stands out is that 100% of the teachers said they need professional development (Page E30) The teachers are the best judges of where they are lacking and what they need.

The proposal cites data showing that Region One demographic profile is overwhelmingly Hispanic, with Spanish being the primary language that students hear and speak at home, even as they are asked to perform at a high level at school in English (Page E26). Similarly, the students living in the counties in the Region One service area are overwhelmingly poor and at risk (Page E27).

Weaknesses:

None identified

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
 - 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. (13 points)**

ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)

Strengths:

Overview: The management plan is clearly defined and the responsibilities of Region One, its consultants, the districts, and the teachers are clearly outlined.

The proposal states that it will adopt a CIM model for soliciting feedback and making continuous improvement.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths: The management plan has a Region One administrator overseeing the project from the offices in Edinburg, TX. The plan anticipates hiring staff, including a project director at 1.FTE, 3 curriculum "strategists," all at 1.0 FTE, a Virtual Specialist at 1.0 FTE, and an administrative assistant at 1.0 FTE.

All the positions, with the exception of the Region One administrator will need to be recruited in Year One of the project (Pages E44-E48).

There are clear milestones listed for measuring progress on the project (Page E48).

The project proposal pledges to collect survey data from teachers and from student performance as the basis for continuous improvement (Page E49).

The proposal lists a number of highly detailed outcomes that will demonstrate increased learning on the part of teachers and students (Page E25). These outcomes are important because they are both prominent and straightforward to measure.

The proposal hopes that given its expected success, that funding from some agency will be forthcoming for Years 4 and 5 (Page E47).

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not explain why three curriculum strategists are needed, rather than one (or even two or four). It is unclear if the strategists will be assigned different tasks in Years 1, 2, and 3, or if they will be assigned to different districts.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

- 1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, 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. (6 points)**
 - ii. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)**
 - iii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad**

support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)

iv. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)

Strengths:

Overview: Region One stands ready to give adequate support in the form of technical support to the project. Region One was the first LEA established in Texas in 1965 and there is every reason to believe it will be able to supervise the grant over its lifetime and beyond. The costs proposed are reasonable. The partners involved, included IHLs, museums and humanities agencies, as well as the school districts all express strong support for the project in their letters. These are excellent partners recruited from across the State of Texas to help some of the poorest districts in the state.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths: It is significant and worthy of commendation that one of the IHLs, UT-Rio Grande Valley, stands ready to offer instruction to a "cadre" of teachers who want to pursue subject masters degrees in history and curriculum development (Page E37). This is an important incentive for teachers to participate.

The project also envisions paying teachers modest stipends of \$600 per year (Page E332). It is also significant that Region One will offer up to \$415,000 in in-kind support to the project (Page E57).

The appendixes to the proposal show the breadth of programming that Region One undertakes in cooperation with its schools (Pages E67 through E124). The curriculum vitae for the key personnel show that they are well qualified to lead this project. (Pages E126 through E135).

The letters of support from the many partners speak to the preparation and groundwork that Region One has done across the state in putting together an exciting project to which the partners want to join. It is also commendable that Region One has secured a detailed and signed MOUs from the participants on the project (Pages E146-E153).

Weaknesses:

None identified

Reader's Score: 30

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Strengths:

Overview: The proposal will include innovative activities for civic engagement.

Strengths: The workshops, colloquia, and summer institutes for teachers are well-conceived to improve history and civics instruction. The field trips to Houston, Austin, and Washington, D.C. are attractive and should serve as an incentive to teachers to participate (Page E39).

Weaknesses:

None identified

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)**

Under this priority, and 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-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) 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 civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

Strengths:

The project's focus on history and history themes aligned with the Texas state standards in history promises to improve teacher and student understanding of the democratic process. All the districts involved in the project are comprised of mainly Hispanic students.

Weaknesses:

The Competitive Priority Preference calls for proposals to indicate that "student voices" will be heard. This is certainly a concern for South Texas, especially considering the way that Hispanic voices have been marginalized in the Rio Grande Valley since at least 1836, but the proposal would be stronger if it was more specific about *how* those voices will be

heard.

Reader's Score: 6

Status: Submitted

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