

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2023 03:30 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	36
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	7
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	58
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	63

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

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

Strengths:

The proposed project involves the development of a promising strategy that is built upon an existing strategy. The proposed project (Validated Induction Network Expansion or VINE) involves the development of an innovative strategy that aims to expand the current mentoring model (Alaska Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP) into rural and urban areas statewide and beyond (E17). The applicant has offered sufficient evidence of the significance of its proposed project. They support this by offering data that indicates that teacher turnover in Alaska (AK) was over twice the nationwide average in academic year 2020–21 at 22% vs 10%. In addition, the research data indicated that the highest rates were in rural/remote schools (31%) (E14). This higher level of teacher turnover has led to higher state costs and less quality instruction (E16) and has resulted in below standard student educational outcomes (E18). The ASMP has been successful in partially addressing the state's ability to mentor and retain new teachers in an effort to improve teacher instructional delivery and student educational outcomes (E19). The ASMP was also successfully implemented in Montana and the VINE seeks to continue that implementation there as well as in Alaska because of the similarities in the target populations (Native & Indigenous) (E18).

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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

Reader's Score: 36

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

The proposed project has clearly identified the barriers to improving recruitment, retention and support for teachers in the target areas (E18-20). The proposed project has also identified a specific strategy to address those barriers (VINE) but inadequate funding, lack of strong policy and program standards, oversight, and comprehensive and timely support prevents implementation reaching the scale that is proposed in the application (E19). To address these challenges to scale up; they plan to utilize three strategies that will expand ASMP eligibility to support NAK teachers; support, inform, and provide resources to districts and schools to help boost capacity to meet the needs of NAK teachers; and promote ASMP's validated mentoring model to heighten local and state stakeholder buy-in (E21). The correct identification of the barriers and the development of these strategies increases the likelihood of improving student outcomes and increasing the program to the scale identified in the application.

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 10

2. (2) 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.

Strengths:

The applicant has developed a management plan that will effectively achieve the objectives of the project on time and within budget. The management plan's effectiveness increases with the inclusion of clearly defined responsibilities of key personnel and a comprehensive timeline with specific milestones. For example; the management plan to will likely accomplish the objectives because it employs an efficient organizational structure that will consist of two oversight and three implementation groups (E26). Each of these groups are staffed with personnel who have been assigned clearly defined responsibilities. For example, project oversight and implementation will be led by the university Outreach Office; a Leadership Team, Advisory Team along with other personnel within the organization (E27). There are also key personnel listed along with duties and responsibilities that clearly articulates where each individual fits in the implementation and oversight of the proposed project (E29-31). For example, the Principal Investigator (PI), provides project oversight; liaises with federal VINE Program staff and university administration. (E30). The milestones within the timeline are specific and achievable. For example, the milestones focus on scale-up, expansion, implementation and evaluation and are linked to doable demonstration activities (E41-43). The budget is aligned with the project goals, which are linked to the demonstration activities (E46). These components of the management plan indicate a higher likelihood of accomplishing project tasks.

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

3. (3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant has sufficiently demonstrated their capacity to bring their proposed project to scale to the level described in the application. Evidence of this capacity begins with their listing of key personnel, who have the experience and training to implement the proposed project (E78-85). For example, the Principal Investigator has over twenty years of experience in grant management (E79). Several of these personnel have held similar management positions and have experience in the state of Alaska and the areas to be served (E78-85). The applicant has developed a comprehensive budget that is sufficient to support the implementation of the proposed project. It highlights the resources requested as well as the matching institutional resources (E203).

Weaknesses:

The applicant fails to adequately describe how the proposed project will work through their partners and stakeholders in the implementation of the project. For example, VINE will collaborate with area tribal education groups on the importance of mentoring for the success and retention of all teachers, and especially those NAK teachers working in tribal regions (E86), but there is limited information on how the mentor teachers will be selected and trained and if they will come from the tribal education groups.

Reader's Score: 8

4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths:

The applicant has identified several mechanisms to broadly disseminate project information that will likely lead to replication and further development. This dissemination will range from informational outreach to stakeholders, to presentations at conferences, to publications in academic journals (E32). They will also include; stakeholder outreach, conference presentations, academic journals publications, newsletters, and advisory informational sessions (E33).

Weaknesses:

The applicant has listed a number of mechanisms for dissemination, but does not sufficiently offer an explanation on how these efforts will lead to further development or replication. The distribution appears to be more academic and concentrates on sharing between entities that will not actively lead further development and replication (E33).

Reader's Score: 8

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

There is a very high likelihood that the products from the proposed project will be distributed and utilized effectively in other settings. To accomplish this, the applicant will produce a guidebook for how to replicate quality mentoring in new settings (E35); share the scaled-up program and its resources with Montana (E34) and distribute the mentoring model to all Alaska school districts upon request (E34).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 7

Sub

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

Strengths:

There is sufficient evidence that the applicant has developed a conceptual framework which supports its proposed demonstration activities. Their Theory of Change is centered upon the assertion that their intervention of high-quality mentoring will lead to positive teacher outcomes, which will translate into improved student outcomes (E36). The logic model illustrates the inputs/activities/training offered to teachers that will create a safe climate and engaging environment of learning in their classrooms (E36). The logic model includes four specific outcomes: safe learning environment, increased teacher retention, improved student achievement & statewide support for teachers (E36). The premise is that increased job satisfaction will lead to improved teacher retention. The applicant uses relevant research to assert that the development of an effective mentoring program will increase retention.

Weaknesses:

There was an absence of research that supports or indicates a clear correlation between teacher retention and increased student outcomes or a safe learning environment. The logic model outcome of statewide support of teachers is not defined and therefore cannot be measured.

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

The applicant has developed clear goals for the proposed project which are in direct alignment with the purpose of the grant. The project goals center upon the utilization of an effective mentoring model that increase teacher retention and performance, which leads to increased student outcomes (E18). The applicant states that the guidance offered by the mentors will utilize a strong cultural focus that will create safe classrooms where every student is validated and has equitable access to learning (E42). The project will reference the Alaska's Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools in mentor and teacher mentoring to ensure an integration of Native ways of knowing and cultural relevance and sensitivity (E42).

Weaknesses:

The objectives lack clarity and are not specific and measurable. The performance measures are not specific and measurable. The applicant fails to indicate when these objectives will be implemented during the life of the grant (E211-213). The applicant does not include any numerical goals for the performance measures. The lack of specificity does not allow for the determination of the success of the proposed project (E211-213) The logic model includes four specific outcomes (Safe learning environment, increased teacher retention, improved student achievement & statewide support for teachers). (E211-213) There is no connection between the logic model outcomes and the objectives and performance measures.

Reader's Score: 2

Sub

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

Strengths:

There is evidence that the design of the proposed project is appropriate and will likely moderately address the needs of the target population. The rationale for designing an effective mentoring model to improve teacher retention and performance is supported by relevant research (E18).

Weaknesses:

It is difficult to determine the level of effectiveness of the proposed project due to the lack of clarity in important components of the application.

Reader's Score: 3

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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

Sub

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

Strengths:

The University of Alaska-Fairbanks is designated as a Minority-Serving Institution and the proposed project plans to offer services to educators who will work with indigenous people and their communities as educators (e17).

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2023 03:30 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2023 07:39 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	36
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	8
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	59
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	64

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant clearly describes how this program is a promising strategy to address teacher retention in rural areas. This project is an expansion of I3. The Validated Induction Network (VINE) expands the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP) (e14). It is an intensive mentoring model based on the New Teacher Center system. The program started as a mentoring and model program for new teachers, but the need now extends to not only those newest in the profession, but also for teachers new to Alaska. Out of 1000 teachers hired between 2013 and 2018, 600-840 teachers were not from Alaska. The teacher turnover rate is 23%, with turnover at 31% in rural and remote areas (e16). VINE is a validated mentoring model that helps teacher develop cultural sensitivity and competence to engage Native students and communities. Other states with significant rural and native populations could adapt the VINE program to support students and teachers in a cost effective model.

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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

Reader's Score: 36

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant clearly describes their barriers and proposed strategies to scale. The applicant states that the VINE scaling would focus on success for teachers regardless of prior teaching experience, origin of teacher certification, and the local context. The three barriers clearly identified are (e20): limitations of ASMP not supporting experienced teachers; lack of school district capacity to support teachers not from Alaska; and limited stakeholder awareness or buy-in regarding the value of mentoring. The three scaling strategies (e21) are to expand ASMP to include teachers not native to Alaska; support and provide resources to districts to increase the capacity to serve teachers not native to Alaska; and promote the validated mentoring model to increase stakeholder buy-in. Supporting districts with information and resources will be done at the leadership level and the teacher level.

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 10

2. (2) 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.

Strengths:

The management plan is appropriate. A leadership team for the project will be responsible for program implementation, changes, and scaling. The VINE advisory team will be composed of members of tribal native educator groups, district superintendents, school board members, teachers, and university faculty. An appropriate organization chart is provided. Key project staff include the Principal Investigator, two co-PIs, researcher, VINE coordinator, staff in the Office of Technology, and external evaluator. A timeline is provided (e188) that states the project objectives, benchmarks, and the time period they are to be implemented over the grant period. Benchmarks (milestones) include recruiting committee members, implementing the mentoring quality-check for fidelity, and recruiting and assigning VINE mentors to schools. One of the co-PIs will be responsible for fiscal and administrative oversight. The other roles of the key project personnel are also described and appear adequate to achieve the objectives of the proposed project.

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

3. (3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

Strengths:

A comprehensive learning plan will be used to establish the processes and tools for timeline and actionable data to inform the program strategy development, course correction, and overall success (e31). Internal learning tools will include protocols for conducting before- and after-action reviews for core program activities and feedback surveys for training and workshops. The external evaluator will provide quarterly memos of evaluation progress and recommendations for project adaptation (e32).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide a thorough discussion around the qualifications of the project personnel, financial resources, or management capacity (e30). More information is needed to describe how the project staff will bring the project to scale, and their qualifications to do so. The applicant also does not describe the partnerships they will

Sub

engage in to scale this project in the state (e29). It is not clear if the applicant is going to deliver the services, or if they will utilize their partners to help develop the services and program.

Reader's Score: 8

4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths:

The dissemination plan is mostly acceptable. The applicant states several strategies (e32) they will use to disseminate program information around teacher retention, classroom instructional practice, student achievement in math and reading, and social-emotional learning. Dissemination strategies include informational outreach to stakeholders, presentations at conferences, and publications in academic journals.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant states various dissemination methods such as newsletters, conference presentations, and journal publications, it is not clear how the dissemination methods will specifically support further project development or replication. Additional information regarding how dissemination will impact the expansion of the project is needed to fully address this criterion.

Reader's Score: 8

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

There is a high utility of the program products and their potential for use in other settings. The applicant states that objectives four and five incorporate expanding the project to another state to understand how the model works in different context, document the expansion to support implementation nationwide, and develop materials for sharing (e33-e34). The target state for expansion is Montana, as it has similarities to the Alaskan context and a request for a validated teacher mentoring model (e42). A letter of support from Salish Kootenai College in Montana on the Flathead Indian Reservation is provided (e139).

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 8

Sub

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

Sub

Strengths:

A logic model is provided that aligns the program elements to the activities, outcomes, and anticipated impact (e37). The logic model is divided into ASMP and VINE to delineate the different outcomes and impact for each strand. The Theory of Change for the project is that ASMP's validated components of high quality mentors and supportive interactions with mentees will yield positive teacher outcomes of a sense of belonging, less isolation, confidence, and culturally competent instructional practices (e36).

Weaknesses:

There is a lack of relevant research cited for the conceptual framework of the project in order to fully address the criteria (e36). Additional information regarding the basis of the theory of change that is stated is needed. A more clear correlation between teacher mentoring and student achievement should be provided.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a table that aligns the project goals and objectives to the outputs, outcomes, and measures (e38-e42). Project goals include: scale the validated ASMP mentoring model statewide to cost-effectively expand the project's reach to serve NAK regardless of teacher experience; and expand ASMP to another state (Montana) to improve quality instruction, enhance student achievement, and increase teacher retention.

Weaknesses:

More specificity is needed with regard to the project objectives and outcomes. There are five project objectives listed that are aligned to the project goals. The project objectives are not measurable or timebound. As an example, the second objective is to create and implement a scaling plan to expand ASMP implementation to NAK. The third objective is to increase long-term sustainability of ASMP to serve new-to-state teachers statewide. The logic model lists four outcomes, but there is no connection to the logic model outcomes and the performance measures (e211).

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

The proposed project will use the validated ASMP mentoring model to expand it to the state of Alaska (e41). It will serve new teachers, as well as teachers moving to the state. The overall focus is improving teacher retention and student achievement. Exceptional teachers will be chosen to serve as mentors where they will receive extensive, ongoing training in evidence-based teaching and mentoring. The strong cultural focus of the project will help create safe classrooms where every student has equitable access to learning (e42).

Weaknesses:

It is not clear to what extent the design of the project will successfully address the needs of students. While the program is described somewhat, there is a lack of data regarding student achievement and how this program will impact that (e42). Additional information to verify how the design of the project will address the needs of students is needed.

Reader's Score: 3

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

Sub

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

Strengths:

The applicant is a minority serving institution with a student body that is 21% American Indian/Alaskan Native (e17). The applicant therefore meets the criteria for this competitive preference priority.

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2023 07:39 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2023 06:05 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	12
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	32
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	9
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	53
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	58

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 12

Sub

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

Strengths:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks offers valid evidence to expand the Validated Induction Network Expansion (VINE), its Alaska Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP). The University has proven the effectiveness of the project when it piloted the program in Montana. As such, the ASMP project will expand upon the University's New Teacher Center system for teachers New to Alaska (page e14) by extending supports into rural and urban areas within the states of Alaska and that support its experienced and new teachers in the state of Alaska (page e15 – e16). Overall, this application seeks to retain and develop teachers and advance current knowledge of best practices in the field of education. If successful, such understanding of mentoring would further advance fundamental understanding of the ASMP model and provide participants, regardless of prior teaching experiences, a high level of support throughout their school year in an effort to retain teachers in remote areas, as indicated on pages e21, which would have a high impact on student achievement.

Weaknesses:

The project fails to provide recently published evidence related to the proposed work. For example, the applicant provides minimal information regarding other successful mentoring programs that are grounded in current research that may align with some of VINE's strategies.

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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

Reader's Score: 32

Sub

1. **(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.**

Strengths:

The University of Alaska Fairbank clearly identified three strategies that specifically address particular barriers that prevented the university from reaching the level of scale for the VINE project. As highlighted on pages e20 – e21, those three key barriers included: (1) an expansion of the mentoring program to teachers new to Alaska (NAK), (2) limited awareness and buy in of mentoring, and (3) no capacity to support new teachers to Alaska (NAK). As highlighted on pages e20 – e21, the University of Alaska has provided strategies/solutions to address the key barriers that align appropriately with the University's strong desire to minimize the teacher shortage in the state. For example, most NAKs, are recruited from the Philippines. The University recognizes that additional support for this core group of teachers should primarily focus on an acclimation to the cultural dissonance, geographic isolation, and multigrade classes, and quality of instruction. The University's answer to this call is to 'foster success' by supporting, informing, and providing resources to the participating districts to boost capacity to address the needs of NAKs (p. e23). Their strategy to support veteran teachers and NAKs through a blended approach of webinars and placed based teaching, offers an innovative way to extend reach into remote indigenous teaching areas of Alaska and Montana.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not offer sufficient clarity on the effectiveness on one of the strategies it will use to scale the project. For example, the proposal cites three key strategies to scale the projects that are teacher focused yet speak very little about how the impact of the mentoring program for teachers will positively impact student achievement in each participating district. Additionally, all of the proposed solutions are interconnected to the point where if one fails, the others may not successfully be carried out.

Reader's Score: 9

2. **(2) 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.**

Strengths:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks provides a management plan that demonstrates its commitment to achieving the objectives of the Validated Induction Network Expansion (VINE) project for all participants. The applicant outlines the objectives and goals for each year of the VINE project. In its budget, the University of Alaska Fairbanks provides a budget narrative (e203) and addresses how resources will be allocated appropriately for key personnel, travel, benefits, equipment, training, and supplies. The roles of each group of the management team is highlighted and provides an overview of each of the groups: project oversight, leadership team, VINE advisory team, project implementation team, technology support, and evaluation team (pages e26 – e27). A detailed project outline was provided (e188 – e189) that granted key insight into goals, benchmarks, and key objectives of the project.

Weaknesses:

The proposed timeline does not include dates (e188-e189), specificity about persons responsible for implementing the goals, nor specificity about how to achieve the goal. Failure to thoroughly explain this information may prevent the project from being completed on time and within budget.

Reader's Score: 3

3. **(3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional**

Sub

level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates that members of the team are highly qualified to adhere to the requirements of this project and provide necessary support to ensure successful implementation of the project as outlined in the grant application. For instance, key personnel for this project covers a wide range of expertise ranging from higher education settings to K-12 educational setting (page e27). The University of Alaska Fairbanks provides a detailed explanation of each person's role as it pertains to these intricacies of the grant. This is done through the explanation of each key team: project oversight, advisory team, project implementation, technology support, implementation, evaluation, and leadership (e26 – e27). Finally, among the innovations of VINE's ASMP is its strategic inclusion of university faculty, industry practitioners, and other economic actors as resource providers (e79 – e130).

Weaknesses:

Although the personnel highlighted in the proposal are very competent and well-recognized in their fields, some key collaboration/partners from successful mentoring programs in other rural and remote areas around the US could further strengthen the team. Project staff that could bring project to scale, but some lack the qualifications to do so. (e41 – e42)

Reader's Score: 8

4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks outlines a detailed plan of action for disseminating information about this initiative to its stakeholders. The strength lies in sharing the information through various platforms such as presentations at conferences, journal publications, quarterly newsletters, and peer reviewed journals such as the American Educational Research Journal and the Journal of American Indian Education (e32 – e33).

Weaknesses:

The applicant discusses the use of a digital platform for its participants but fails to include it as a mechanism for disseminating information to its participants. Additionally, a deeper explanation of the guidebook replication and the timeline for creating it (pages e33 and e35). Additionally, it is unclear what methods will be taken to replicate the project.

Reader's Score: 7

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks is providing a mentoring program that will be used effectively in the states of Alaska and Montana. As part of this expansion plan application, one key point of pride is its execution of the model in Montana, a state that shares similar demographics as Alaska. By sharing the ASMP mentoring model/framework, data collection processes and reporting with the state of Montana, the lesson learned will provide an opportunity to carefully document the protocols for quality mentoring and help improve teacher attrition rates, quality instruction, and student achievement nationwide.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a conceptual framework, the ASMP/VINE's Theory of Change, that serves as the foundation for its project (page e36 – e37). A key element of the ASMP/VINE Theory of Change is its attention to how key elements such as the mentoring model, positive teacher outcomes, and strategic alliances with collaborative partners, will impact student learning and create safe learning environments that promote a sense of belonging and connection for both teachers and students. In addition, related to the framework's simplicity there is also the strength of providing a simple summary of the model in a coherent way that builds consensus and understanding among all stakeholders involved in the project.

Weaknesses:

The applicant's conceptual framework lacks clarity on key concepts of the design and its purpose. For instance, on page e37, in the impact section of the framework, the applicant does not provide an explanation of how the team anticipates measuring teacher retention through its VINE project. The absence of teacher retention may limit the applicant's ability to measure the impact the project has on improving student achievement (page e37). Additionally, although the University of Alaska Fairbanks provides compelling research, the proposal does not demonstrate that the research is directly aligned with conceptual framework. When the conceptual framework is clearly identified, it will then be possible to demonstrate how the activities are aligned.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks includes a clear framework that outlines the extent to which its goals, objectives, and outcomes can be achieved through the VINE project. The applicant provided an overview of the Professional Learning Series for Year One for Mentors (e200) that provided an explanation of how the program will use data to inform instruction, assess growth and deepen practices, observe, and give feedback, and create equitable learning spaces (e200). Additionally, the applicant highlighted its goals, strategies, outputs, and measures, further demonstrating its commitment to successful implementation of its expansion program. Overall, objectives are measurable. Pages e38 – e41 provides a chart that outlines the goals, objectives, outputs and inputs, and measures in a meaningful way.

Sub

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide an overview of how the Professional Learning Series for Year Two for Mentor would be implemented during its expansion year. Failure to include an overview of how the plan will be executed in Year Two could prevent the applicant from achieving its specified goals. The proposal does not provide quantifiable measures to determine students' progress as result of successful mentoring. On pages e38-e41, the applicant also fails to provide clarity on how long term follow up and compliance will be addressed throughout the span of the project. Finally, the logic model identifies four outcomes, but there's no connection between the logic model and its performance measures (e211 – e213). These should be evident within the model.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks designed a VINE project that successfully addresses the needs of its unique population. The VINE/ASMP project was designed by the University of Alaska Fairbanks to meet the needs of 20,000 high needs students in grades K-12 from rural and remote areas of Alaska (page e10). One strength of the application is that it uses a validated mentoring model to expand across the state of Alaska. Its main purpose is to improve teacher retention and student learning outcomes. On pages e182 – e187, the application provides teacher turnover and retention rates, increased vacancies, student performance, and K-12 enrollment data by ethnicity to support why and how it determined the target population for this project. It also places emphasis on a strong cultural focus that indicates safe and securing learning practices for the teachers and students.

Weaknesses:

The application does not provide a clear selection process for the veteran teachers it identifies as part of this proposal. Failure to include the protocols for selection would strengthen the project and ensure that it stays true to its objectives. Additionally, the application fails to include the community within the framework. The parents of students being served, and community members should be integrated from the start to advise on project objectives and design.

Reader's Score: 3

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

Strengths:

N/A

Sub

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

Strengths:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks maintains a strong partnership with tribal colleges and minority serving institutions that serve minority students in the state of Alaska and Montana. Key supporting letters were provided by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, the A+ Indian Education (Montana Office of Public Education), and the Salish Kootenai College (pages e133 – e163). Based on the letters of support, the partners clearly articulate the level of support that will be offered to the University of Alaska’s Mentoring Program, which includes but is not limited to supporting all levels of implementation, utilizing a rigorous experimental RCT design that will allow evaluators to compare outcomes from K-12 teachers in Alaska and Montana who will receive mentoring through the University of Alaska (page e139), and offer classroom management strategies, curriculum development, and instructional techniques to the participants.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **5**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/14/2023 06:05 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2023 03:35 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	29
Sub Total	100	29
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	105	29

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

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

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Sub

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) 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.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

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

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 29

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

Strengths:

The well-developed evaluation plan seeks to address the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservation (page e45). The applicant will conduct a multi-cluster random control trial (RCT) to assist the schools within each district who are using a new model to assist new teachers. This effort will be compared to districts that continue to use the current plan. Focusing on two study groups, the applicant identifies one using the new model and a second that is continuing the current program. This process will assess student progress and teacher outcomes relative to improved academic achievement. Using the state achievement tests, the applicant will use the fall assessments as baseline data for comparison to the spring summative assessments. The evaluation plan will be conducted by an independent evaluation team led by a professional organization (RTI) with extensive experience in evaluation.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear from the information provided how the applicant identified a baseline for an attrition rate of teachers at 20% (page e46). The attrition rate for schools is unclear. Also unclear is what steps the applicant will take if attrition rates exceed the 20% mark. The issue of bias needs to be further explained and how the plan minimizes bias and what they will do if bias emerges.

Reader's Score: 14

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that it will produce a replication guidebook to assist others implementing the project in a new setting (page e35). In addition, the applicant also indicates that it will document the implementation process, assessment, and other issues to assist in adoption (page e53). The applicant further indicates it will make available all aspects of the project including surveys and interviews, information from mentors, teachers, and other participants. Also available will be the results of focus groups conducted with teachers, parents, and community members. These activities are effective strategies suitable for potential replications.

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a responsible study of mediators (e.g., teacher cultural competence, instructional skills, sense of isolation, and teaching confidence), and how they potentially influence the implementation of the project and produce results (pages e48). In addition, the applicant also uses its narrative discussion and its logic model (page e169) to describe how the various components of the project interact with each other to achieve appropriate outcomes. The model provides a sound approach that will articulate a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

The applicant clearly describes how the project staff will meet monthly to discuss performance feedback and to identify any problem that needs to be addressed (page e52). The applicant further emphasizes a willingness to share information and evaluation results with others in order to ensure an effective implementation of the project. The applicant further notes that this collaborative approach and a continuous improvement strategy of periodic assessment will help ensure that the evaluation as well as the implementation of the program will be effective in achieving intended outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2023 03:35 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2023 08:51 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	40	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	30
Sub Total	100	30
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	105	30

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: University of Alaska Fairbanks (S411A230004)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

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

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Sub

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) 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.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

4. (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

5. (5) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

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

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 30

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

Strengths:

The evaluation methods are effectively designed and will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations. A school-level multisite cluster randomized controlled trial (RCT) will be used to assess the impact of the mentoring model on teacher and student outcomes. The study design involves using district as a block which will help ensure comparability among schools on group characteristics (pg. e45). To assess project impact, multilevel models will be used which will factor in the clustering of teacher within schools and students within classrooms (pg. e50). For example, to examine student academic achievement and social-emotional learning outcomes, a three-level fixed effects model will be used (pg. e190).

The applicant's plan to minimize potential attrition is acceptable in that project staff will provide ongoing, clear communication about study expectations and will offer stipends to participating teachers (pg. e45). The RCT study sample is sufficient and an appropriate approach was used to calculate effect size and estimate power for the analyses (pg. e50). The evaluation will be conducted by an experienced, external evaluation firm that has designed rigorous cost-effective, implementation, and experimental impact research in K-12 schools, and currently serves as the external evaluator for the applicant's mid-phase grant (pg. e27).

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 15

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

Strengths:

The evaluation is sufficiently designed to provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication in other settings. The applicant will develop purposeful scaling strategies that will help others replicate the model regardless of prior teaching experience, rural or urban setting, or local context (pg. e20). Within the mixed methods evaluation, various data sources will inform their scaling strategies including survey and interview responses, focus group responses, analysis of program and financial data, and case studies (pg. e53). Additionally, a guidebook will be produced on how to replicate mentoring in other settings. The book will be generic with needed steps for implementation and examples from the project's participating states (pg. e35).

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant effectively describes the key project components, mediators, outcomes, and measurable thresholds for acceptable implementation. The first project goal is to scale their mentoring model, which includes a cultural awareness component, to reach all non-Alaskan teachers. The second project goal is to expand the mentoring model to another state via a pilot study (pgs. e17-18). The project's five objectives are clearly aligned to these two goals: determine the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of the mentoring model, create and implement a scaling plan, increase long-term sustainability of the model to serve new teachers, learn how the model works in a different state, and document the expansion to help other states adapt the model (pgs. e38-41).

The evaluation plan clearly features both mediators and moderators. Specifically, a component of the RCT is that the influence of several mediators (teacher cultural competence, instructional skills, sense of isolation, and teaching confidence) on student outcomes will be examined (pg. e43). Project outcomes are relevant to the project's goals and objectives; they are organized by positive teacher outcomes and pilot study outcomes (pg. e37).

The applicant presents an extensive list of measurable thresholds for acceptable implementation of multiple indicators for three project components: highly qualified mentors, mentoring support for teachers, and support for schools. For example, the acceptable threshold for use of formative assessment tools during or after each mentoring session is that 90% of mentees will use at least two tools (pg. e198).

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

The evaluation methods are satisfactorily developed to provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward project outcomes. The research questions are thoroughly designed to substantially inform the evaluation and are nicely aligned with project objectives (pgs. e43-45). For example, to evaluate expansion scaling strategies, one of the research questions asks what program, teacher, student, and school factors support or impede implementation of the model (pg. e44). The evaluation team will conduct interviews with teachers, mentors, school and district staff, families, and community members about perceptions of the program. These findings will inform program adaptations, particularly to cultural competence, and, ultimately, to the field about ways to adapt and adopt the model effectively (pg. e54).

A comprehensive learning plan will be implemented to develop processes and tools for data to inform the project (pg. e31). The leadership team will meet quarterly to assess progress toward project goals, monitor activities, review data and preliminary findings, engage in lessons learned from project data, and identify action steps and course corrections for the next quarter based on formative data and feedback (pg. e26). The evaluation team will oversee and implement all learning, evaluation, and data collection activities; the team will meet bi-monthly to coordinate the activities. In addition, an evaluation team liaison will help maintain constant communication with the implementation team to ensure an accurate shared understanding of progress, processes, and protocols as well as collaborate on continuous program improvement cycles (pg. e27).

Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Sub

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2023 08:51 PM