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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Perry Township Schools (S374A230036)
Reader #1:   **********

		Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Need for Project			
1. Need		20	20
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		25	23
Quality of the Management Plan			
1. Management Plan		25	25
Adequacy of Resources			
1. Resources		30	25
	Sub Total	100	93
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority 1			
1. Promoting Equity		5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2			
1. Diverse Workforce		5	5
	Sub Total	10	10
	Total	110	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - TSL Panel - 4: 84.374A

Reader #1:   **********
Applicant: Perry Township Schools (S374A230036)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Need for Project (20 points)

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

(i)   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.
(ii)   The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.

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

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

Strengths:

Overview:
The applicant has demonstrated a need for the project. The project has identified gaps/weaknesses in a district that serves a high number of economically disadvantaged students, students who are English language learners, and gaps in achievement for Black and Hispanic students primarily in literacy(e18).

Strengths:
(i)   The proposal has adequately identified gaps and weaknesses. Perry Township Schools serves one of Indiana's most diverse populations. Thirty one percent of the district's students are English language learners with 4,000 students speaking 79 different languages (e18). These students are scoring lower on assessments than their peers in ELA. The teaching population is decreasing and has cultural backgrounds and experiences that do not match the student population (e19-21).
The proposed project will build on or integrate with efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by the community, State and Federal resources. The applicant has an existing relationship with NIET TAP system to enhance educator effectiveness and create a performance-based compensation system. The project wishes to build on their current investment with NIET TAP but have a more intensive focus on those student subgroups, and ELL students within the area of literacy (e21-25).
(ii)   The applicant has implemented an effective educator program at Marian University ensuring a diverse pipeline of well-prepared teachers. The applicants have created a career ladder which has resulted in internal applicants moving into different positions (e21-25).
(iii)   The project includes the continuing and improving NIET TAP System model and using it to drive all human capital management system functions. NIET TAP has a strong track record of success in raising student academic achievement and closing gaps for high-poverty students. The project's goals and strategies align with the state of Indiana's plan to ensure access to effective educators (Excellent Educators for All Initiative). The project will continue the use of NIET's EE PASS system which is dedicated to improving teacher practices and student achievement (e25-26).
(iv)   The design of the project is appropriate to meet the specific needs of the districts underperforming groups and bridge the educational gaps for Black and Hispanic students. The applicant proposes to create an inclusive and equitable

learning environment that empowers every student to thrive academically and personally by targeting interventions, fostering cultural sensitivity (e29-30)

Weaknesses:

(i)   No weaknesses noted.
(ii)   No weaknesses noted.
(iii)   No weaknesses noted.
(iv)   No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. **Quality of the Project Design (25 points)**

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

   (i)   The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.
   (ii)   The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.
   (iii)   The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

   Strengths:

   Overview:
   The applicant presented a clear rationale for the proposed project. Perry Township schools has partnered with NIET to enhance its educational systems to improve teaching and learning outcomes for student subgroups and specifically students who are Black, Hispanic and English language learners. The proposed project includes a high-quality literature review, the use of appropriate methodological tools, evaluation, and performance feedback to stakeholders (e36-42).

   Strengths:
   (i)   The project will support teachers in increasing skills in teaching literacy by aligning systems such as professional learning, evaluation, coaching, performance-based compensation, recruitment, placement, and career pathways. A literacy specialist will be provided to assist and collaborate with teachers. The applicant proposes to implement cluster groups, individualized coaching, school level instructional and leadership teams (e30-34).
   (ii)   The applicant presented a high-quality literature review, citing TAP's extensive record for effectiveness that spans across multiple states. A high-quality plan for the implementation of the project was implemented. NIET's teaching and learning standards rubric aligns with Indiana's expectations for college and career standards. (e36-39)
   (iii)   The project evaluation will be led by NIET's Research and Evaluation Department, which has extensive experience supporting large-scale evaluations of education programs. The evaluator from NIET will work closely with project personnel to provide timely data and to assess the overall impact of the program. The evaluation process will include ongoing communication (monthly & quarterly meetings) (e39).

   Weaknesses:

   (i)   No weaknesses noted.
   (ii)   The literature review focuses on the work of NIET and the TAP teaching and learning rubric. The proposal would

benefit more from a more thorough literature review on teaching techniques for English language learners. (e36-39)

(iii)   No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the Management Plan (25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

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

Overview: The quality of the management plan is adequate to achieve the objectives of the proposed project and remain within the desired budget. The personnel who have been selected to complete the work have expertise and are committed to collaborating to meet the goals set forth in the project. The proposed project is within budget.

Strengths:
The applicant is partnering with NIET who has experience serving as fiscal agents for large grants. The applicant has provided a timeline for milestones that should be completed within the life of the grant. Each project task has a responsible party attached to it. Reports will be generated quarterly to monitor progress and review progress towards outcomes. The proposal included resumes and qualifications of key personnel (e45-48, 59-81) If funding is granted, an TSL advisory committee will be formed to include the project director, district administrators, school leaders and teacher representatives (e42-48).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. Adequacy of Resources (30 points)

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i)   The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.
(ii)   The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.
(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 multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

Strengths:

Overview:
It is likely that this project will result in either a system change or improvement. The project aligns with both state and district priorities and is using the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric, which is an official evaluation tool of the state of Indiana. The project is likely to build local capacity to improve services for the targeted population. There are resources to operate beyond the grant however, there is no multi-year management and operating plan. (e48-54)

Strengths:

(i)	It is likely that the project will result in system change because of the partnership with NIET, the use of evidence-based practices, and the focus on targeted support. The project aligns with the priorities set by both the school district and the state. The Teaching Standards Rubric provided by NIET has been used with success in various districts across the state, and the plan aligns with the Indiana equity plan and state policies to augment the teacher workforce and student achievement (e48-49).

(ii)	The project has a strong potential to build local capacity because the collaboration between Perry Township Schools and NIET focuses on enhancing educational systems and improving teaching and learning outcomes for ELL and underrepresented populations. This partnership will help to develop teacher leaders and strengthen support systems for principals. The inclusion of a literacy specialist will enhance instructional practices and improve educational outcomes for the target population (e49-51).

(iii)	The applicant has demonstrated that there will be resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, evidenced by funding from Perry Township SD (more than 50% in-kind) (e51).

Weaknesses:

(i)	No weaknesses noted.
(ii)	No weaknesses noted.
(iii)	The plan does not include a multi-year management and operating plan (e48-54)

**Reader's Score:	25**

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 1:**
   Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (Up to 5 points).

   Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students.

   **a.	In one or more of the following educational settings:**
   **(1)	Elementary school.**
   **(2)	Middle school.**
   **(3)	High school.**
   **(4)	Career and technical education programs.**

   **b.	That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or more of the following:**
   **(1)	Increasing the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, in-field, and effective educators, and educators from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds or the communities they serve, to ensure that underserved students have educators from those**

backgrounds and communities and are not taught at disproportionately higher rates by uncertified, out-or-field, and novice teachers compared to their peers.

(2) Improving the retention of fully certified, experienced, and effective educators in high-need schools or shortage areas.

Strengths:

Overview:
The applicant proposes a project that is designed to promote educational equity and availability of resources to underrepresented groups. The project proposes to increase literacy for English language learners while also closing achievement gaps for Black and Hispanic students (e13).

Strengths:
The project will serve students in K-12 grades. The district has a high population of English language learners and economically disadvantaged students. (e13)
The project is designed to increase literacy for English language learners and to close the achievement gap for Black and Hispanic students through the improvements in the human capital management and compensation systems (e18-30).
The project is using NIET's Tap system of performance-based evaluation to support and inform recruitment, retention, professional learning, career advancement, placement, dismissal and compensation of teachers and principals (e18).
The project has added a literacy specialist to grow the capacity of teachers in using high impact instructional strategies that have been proven effective in improving literacy skills for students with the highest needs (e31).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:
Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning (Up to 5 points).

Projects that are designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through building or expanding high-poverty school districts' capacity to hire, support, and retain an effective and diverse educator workforce, by developing data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator diversity.

Strengths:

Overview: The project seeks to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students, by building schools districts capacity to hire, support and retain an effective and diverse educator workforce.

Strengths:
The applicant proposes to improve its human capital management and compensation system in order to recruit and hire more effective educators who are qualified to meet the needs of the students. The project partners with universities to implement educator effectiveness programs and teacher residencies to create a teacher pipeline (e52). The applicant proposes to hire a literacy specialist to improve literacy skills for student population (e.31)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **5**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/31/2023 10:20 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Perry Township Schools (S374A230036)
Reader #2:   **********

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	23
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	30	25
Sub Total	100	93
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Diverse Workforce	5	4
Sub Total	10	9
Total	110	102

Technical Review Form

Reader #2:   **************

Applicant: Perry Township Schools (S374A230036)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. **Need for Project (20 points)**

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

    (i)   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.
    (ii)   The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.

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

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

    Strengths:

    i. The proposed project highlights the specific gaps or weaknesses in services and infrastructure, which include a high percentage of English Language learners, low academic success, in comparison to other groups. (pg. e18)

    i. The plan provides opportunities for growth by demonstrating a very clear and graphic depiction of the mismatch between teachers (87% who are white) and the ethnicity of the students they teach. The project plan highlights "research, which shows the importance of teachers of color in raising academic performance and improving test scores, graduation rates, and aspirations to attend college among students of color." (pg. e20)

    i. The project plan highlights the needs to strengthen instruction and the methods to increase teacher instruction and performance to impact student achievement. (pg. e19)

    ii. The proposed project will integrate with and build on similar efforts from a prior TSL grant awarded to NIET in collaboration with Perry Township and two other districts to improve relevant outcomes. (pg. e17)

    ii. The project will use community, state, and federal resources to support the plan. For example, federal resources and resources such as NIET and TAP and the teacher residency /education pipeline with a university partner, to recruit and support teachers. (pg. e18)

    iii. There is evidence that the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. This is evidenced by recommendations from the Indiana' governor's Next Level Teacher Compensation Commission, the Indiana state plan for ensuring equitable access to effective educators known as the Excellent Educators for All Initiative/ Recommendations for strengthening the teacher workforce will be employed, employing innovative coaching and professional development, which are essential for the success of the program. (pg. e25)

iv. The design of the proposed project successfully addresses the specific need of the target population. The applicant provides details regarding the percentage of EL and illiterate students and addresses how the academic needs of students, will be measured and met. (pg. e30)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. **Quality of the Project Design (25 points)**

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

   (i)   The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.
   (ii)   The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.
   (iii)   The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

   Strengths:

   i. The proposed project demonstrates a sound rationale, as the data indicates that more teacher professional development is needed, to strength instruction. In addition, there is a need to improve the teacher evaluation system and reduce the number of teacher turn-over and retention. (pg. e34)

   i. The proposal's goals are clearly delineated, framed by four key RQs and measured using both quantitative and qualitative assessment methods: (1) assessing and ensuring the fidelity of the project's implementation and sustainability; (2) analyzing the impact of the project on teachers' performance (3) analyzing the impact of the project on the principal and school leaders; and (4) analyzing the impact on student achievement. (pg. e40)

   i. The district plans to employ a literacy expert to focus on low ELA achievement to help move students forward. (pg. e33-34).

   ii. The plan is high quality and makes a direct link between the literature and the goals which link the four measurable RQs to of the project plan. (pg. e36-39)

   iii. The design provides a thorough plan for project implementation that includes the use of methodological tools, such as quarterly reviews, progress plans, progress toward objectives and other quantitative and qualitative methods - to ensure successful achievement of project goals. Moreover, the TAP system and the use of the NIET rubric, have demonstrated prior evidence of success. (pg. e41)

   Weaknesses:

   ii. The design of the proposed project includes a review of the relevant literature, throughout the project design. However, the literature review falls short in not providing a more extensive data/review regarding the connection between teacher professional development and student success. (pg. 36-39)

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the Management Plan (25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the 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 project design includes clearly defined responsibilities for key participants. (pg. e45)
 The project provides timelines, for accomplishing the project tasks, within specific times. (pg. e44)
 The project notes milestones for accomplishing project tasks, with appropriate dates/timeframe. (pg.45)

 The project design provides a management plan that is adequate to achieve the objectives of the proposed project, by demonstrating that it will stay on budget within the 3-year period of the grant. (pg. e47, e101)

 The NIET group has previous experience serving as fiscal agent in the past. (pg. e56)

 There is a key focus on monitoring the progress of EL students. (pg. e42-48)

 Key personnel have the appropriate credentials and experience, to support the project's goals. (pg. e56)

 Advisory Committee is composed of teacher and school leaders, ensuring extensive buy-in, planning and support. (pg. e42-48)

 The Logic Model is consistent and aligned with the proposed project plan. (pg. e56)

 Weaknesses:

 No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. Adequacy of Resources (30 points)

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i)   The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.
(ii)   The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.
(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 multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term

success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

Strengths:

i. There is evidence that the proposed project will result in system change and improvement. The applicant highlights a prior TSL grant award received, in collaboration with NIET, which will lead to improved teacher practices and student achievement. (e.17)

ii. By developing Teacher Leaders, the project encourages ongoing professional development and ensures teachers have a vested interest in a successful process. The proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population, as teachers and district leaders are part of the process. (pg. e49)

ii. The project demonstrates that it has resources, such as the hiring of a Literacy Specialist, focused primarily for EL and students of color, to increase student performance in literacy. As well there is a strong partnership with the Perry Education Association, a partnership with Marian University, and the University of Indianapolis, to teach and grow a qualified teacher workforce – which will aid in building capacity. (pg. e52)

ii. There is evidence of a demonstrated commitment of partners, such as Perry Education Association, local universities, NIET and community partners - as well as evidence of broad support from stakeholders, which is critical to the project's long-term success. (pg. e52)
iii. A limited sustainability plan is referenced to support and extend the grant past the 3-year lifetime of the grant. Federal funding will be used as a method to sustain the project beyond the length of the grant. (pg. e50, e54)

Weaknesses:

iii. There is limited information regarding the project's success beyond the length of the grant, with limited discussion of a multi-year financial and operating plan. (pg. 54, e101)
Many of the letters of support provided, especially from teachers, are duplicates. (pg. e82-e239)

Reader's Score: 25

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 1:**
   Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (Up to 5 points).

   Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students.

   a.   In one or more of the following educational settings:
      (1)   Elementary school.
      (2)   Middle school.
      (3)   High school.
      (4)   Career and technical education programs.

   b.   That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or more of the following:
      (1)   Increasing the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, in-field, and effective educators, and educators from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds or the communities they serve, to ensure that underserved students have educators from those

backgrounds and communities and are not taught at disproportionately higher rates by uncertified, out-or-field, and novice teachers compared to their peers.
(2)   Improving the retention of fully certified, experienced, and effective educators in high-need schools or shortage areas.

Strengths:

1. The applicant demonstrates that the proposed project is designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students, specifically in a k-12 high-needs setting, by providing additional resources to students, and striving to hire staff from diverse backgrounds. (pg. e. 20)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:
Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning (Up to 5 points).

Projects that are designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through building or expanding high-poverty school districts' capacity to hire, support, and retain an effective and diverse educator workforce, by developing data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator diversity.

Strengths:

The project design proposes to augment the human capital management and compensation system, to hire and train teachers, particularly to teach the targeted sub-group of EL leaners. One key strategy used to accomplish this is the hiring of Literacy Specialist. (pg e13; e13-30)

Weaknesses:

It is unclear how the project is designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students. It is also not clear how the district will build upon methods to increase hiring, support and retention of an effective and diverse educator workforce, by developing data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator diversity. (pg. e22).

Reader's Score: 4

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/31/2023 07:08 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Perry Township Schools (S374A230036)
Reader #3:   **********

		Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Need for Project			
1. Need		20	20
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		25	23
Quality of the Management Plan			
1. Management Plan		25	25
Adequacy of Resources			
1. Resources		30	26
	Sub Total	100	94
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority 1			
1. Promoting Equity		5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2			
1. Diverse Workforce		5	5
	Sub Total	10	10
	Total	110	104

Technical Review Form

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

Applicant: Perry Township Schools (S374A230036)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. **Need for Project (20 points)**

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

   (i)   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.
   (ii)   The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.

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

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

   Strengths:

   Overview:
   The project, intended to strengthen the human capital management system and create pathways to a more diverse teaching staff, will serve 16,000 students, 1000 teachers, and 100 administrators in 24 high-need schools. (e242-243) High numbers of students are economically disadvantages and are non-English speaking. The students often have low performance, especially in literacy. Additional gaps to be addressed are alignment of the human capital management and compensation systems and a need for a qualified educator workforce that more clearly aligns to the demographics of the student population. (e17-30)

   Strengths:
   (i)   Specific gaps and weaknesses in services and infrastructure have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project. One such gap is the disconnect between numbers of students of diversity and numbers of teachers who are ethnically diverse. The high-need district for the project has a large population of English Language Learners with 4000 students speaking 79 languages. These students often fall far behind their peers in ELA proficiencies (e18). The educator workforce is dwindling and does not match the student demographics, which has been proven to be a key factor in student success. (e17-21) To remediate this weakness, the applicant intends to strengthen the human capital management system. In doing so, pathways to recruit and hire a more diverse teaching staff will be made available. (e13) An additional strategy is to help raise the student's scores on the State literacy assessment. The applicant plans to employ a Literacy Specialist to help train and support the teachers of the high-need students. (e13)
   (ii)   The proposed project will integrate with related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources. Previously funded projects incorporated the National Institute for Excellence in Teacher (NIET) TAP system of evaluation and professional development to enhance educator effectiveness programs and to create an initial performance-based compensation system. The current proposal seeks funds to align and continue this work (e21-25). The applicant will utilize strategies, such as increased literacy training for teachers, and increase recruitment and hiring of diverse educators to address the targeted gaps recognized that effect the performance by the subgroup of minority students. The applicant also plans to continue and build upon a University partnership that has helped to establish a teacher residency program, again

targeting recruitment and hiring of a more diverse workforce. (e21-25)

(iii)   The proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. The applicant has partnered with NIET to utilize the TAP system in enhancing the human management and compensation systems in the district. Funding will allow the district to align and enhance its human capital and data management systems, expand, and improve performance-based compensations, and improve instructional practices and, particularly, performance of subgroups. The project also aligns with State policies on education compensation. (e25-29)

(iv)   The design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population and other identified needs. The human capital management system will be enhanced to strengthen procedures used to recruit, hire, train, and retain high-quality teachers, especially those from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Focusing on retaining, training, and compensating effective teachers, recruiting a more diverse teacher workforce that more closely parallels the demographics of students, and focusing on meeting the needs of a highly diverse student population are all practices that will address the current needs of the district. (e29-30)

Weaknesses:

(i)   No weaknesses noted.
(ii)   No weaknesses noted.
(iii)   No weaknesses noted.
(iv)   No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. Quality of the Project Design (25 points)

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

(i)   The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.
(ii)   The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.
(iii)   The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

Overview:
The applicant has designed a project that should address the needs that were highlighted in the proposal. A clear rationale is presented that highlights and builds upon two main goals. The strategies are supported by a review of the relevant literature, a detailed plan to successfully administer the project strategies with appropriate methodological tools and provide continuous improvement through thorough evaluation and ongoing feedback to stakeholders. (e36-42)

Strengths:
(i)   The applicant has clearly demonstrated a sound rationale for the project. The goals of the project are to enhance education systems and improve teaching and learning for students, especially those in the targeted subgroups. The project will support teacher skills especially in literacy, support building principals' leadership skills in working with teachers and students and strengthen district-level processes and structures that promote professional learning and collaboration. (e30-36)

(ii)   The design of the proposed project includes a thorough review of the relevant literature. Research presented shows the success of the TAP system that is serving as a framework for the project. A high-quality plan for project

implementation was presented. Appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives were provided. One such tool was the NIET TAP performance rubric which has been validated and proven reliable within the applicant's home State. (e36-39; e256-271)

(iii)   The methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. NIET will serve as the evaluation team and has extensive research and evaluation experience. Four key questions will drive the evaluation through the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. Evaluators will work with project key personnel to provide continuous and thorough assessment of the project with ongoing feedback to stakeholders. Feedback will be in the form of meetings, papers, reports, and presentations. (e39-42)

Weaknesses:

(i)   No weaknesses noted.

(ii)   The literature and research review centers on much of the work of the NIET group, in particular the TAP teaching and learning instrument. The application would benefit from a more exhaustive literature review on other aspects of the project such as strategies for high-need, second language learners. (e36-39) Additionally, there is a lack of evidence in the literature correlating the use of professional development with increases in student achievement. (e34-36)

(iii)   No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the Management Plan (25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

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

Overview:
The quality of the management plan makes it likely the applicant will achieve the objectives on time and within budget. The plan was thorough providing for project tasks, responsible persons, and milestones. Key personnel have the experience required to successfully complete a project of this magnitude. (e42-48) A Logic Model showcases inputs, strategies, observable results and measurable change was presented. (e56)

Strengths:
The applicant and the NIET group have had previous experiences serving as fiscal agent for large grants.(e41-42) A management plan was included that describes the procedures of the project by task, responsible parties, and milestones for each year of funding. To activities that heighten the likelihood of success for this project are the hiring of a literacy specialist to train teachers to better meet the needs of the target population and the use of senior trainers from NIET to periodically consult with and support the districts and their staff. (e43-45) There is a significant focus on monitoring the achievements of the subgroup of ELL students targeted. Key personnel are listed showcasing appropriate qualifications for the tasks given. Resumes of key personnel were provided. (e45-48; e59-81) An Advisory Committee of key personnel and district representatives will be created to systematically review the status of the project. (e42-48)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. Adequacy of Resources (30 points)

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i)   The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.
(ii)   The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.
(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 multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

Strengths:

Overview:
It is likely that the proposed project will result in system change and improvements according to the goals of this project. Local capacity should be improved with heightening educator practice and higher achievement levels of students, especially the targeted subgroup. Resources are in place to support the project to its fruition. A multi-year management and operating plan was not found. (e48-54)

Strengths:
(i)   It is likely that the proposed project will result in a system change and improvement. The project has local and state support, dedicated personnel, and will utilize a proven system of management. The proposal is comprehensive in its focus on education workforce support, commitment to evaluation, and creating positive outcomes for the targeted, underperforming students. (e48-49)
(ii)   The proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population. The project will develop teacher and teacher leader capacity and align human management and compensation systems to help prepare district personnel to meet the needs of the targeted population. Hiring a literacy specialist was promoted as a major commitment to improving the instructional practices needed to support student achievement, especially for the subgroup of students. (e49-51)
(iii)   The applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. For instance, the 50% match requirement is exceeded and procedural changes within the district have already taken place. (e240-241; e282-299) There is a demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. Two examples are such commitment are from the President of the Education Association and from university partners. (e51-54; e82-239)

Weaknesses:

(i)   No weaknesses noted.
(ii)   No weaknesses noted.
(iii)   A multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan was not found. Many of the letters of support provided, especially by the teachers, were duplicate letters which lessens the indication of commitment by those teachers. (e82-239)

Reader's Score: 26

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:
Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (Up to 5 points).

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students.

a.   In one or more of the following educational settings:
(1)   Elementary school.
(2)   Middle school.
(3)   High school.
(4)   Career and technical education programs.

b.   That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or more of the following:
(1)   Increasing the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, in-field, and effective educators, and educators from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds or the communities they serve, to ensure that underserved students have educators from those backgrounds and communities and are not taught at disproportionately higher rates by uncertified, out-or-field, and novice teachers compared to their peers.
(2)   Improving the retention of fully certified, experienced, and effective educators in high-need schools or shortage areas.

Strengths:

Overview:
The applicant has demonstrated that the project is designed to promote educational equity and availability of resources to underrepresented groups. The plan is in compliance with the State's equity plan and policies. (e48) Strategies are based upon the projects intent to strengthen human capital management and compensation systems so that an educator workforce that more closely matches the demographics of students can be recruited, hired, trained, and retained. Research has shown that this strategy raises student achievement.(e18-30) The schools served are high-need schools within the district at all three educational levels. (e13; e18-30)

Strengths:
a.   The educational settings are all high-need elementary, middle, and high schools that serve a high population of socioeconomically disadvantaged and ELL students as required by the funding agency. (e13; e243)
b.   The project intends to increase the number and proportion of highly qualified educators from underrepresented groups to more clearly match the demographics of the students, especially the targeted subgroup population. Through the improvements in the human capital management and compensations systems, the applicant intends to heighten the retention of fully certified and effective educators. (e13: e18-30)

Weaknesses:
a.   No weaknesses noted.
b.   No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 2:**
   Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning (Up to 5 points).

   Projects that are designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through building or expanding high-poverty school districts' capacity to hire, support, and retain an effective and diverse educator workforce, by developing data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator diversity.

   Strengths:

   Overview:
   The project intends to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators to resemble the demographics of the school more closely, in particular the targeted subgroup population. The project will allow the schools to strengthen their human capital management and compensation system to be able to recruit, hire, train, and retain a more ethnically diverse educator workforce. Research has shown that student achievement scores can benefit from match educator with student demographics. Raising the student's literacy score on the State's literacy assessment by at least 3% is the target of many of the interventions. (e13; e18-30)

   Strengths:
   The applicant seeks to augment its human capital management and compensation systems to be able to recruit, hire, and train effective educators qualified to meet the needs of the student population, especially the targeted subgroup of ELL learners. One change that will be incorporated is focused recruitment materials and strategies that target individuals interested in teaching and who are from ethnically diverse backgrounds. The applicant will follow that with systematic training, coaching, and opportunities for education advancement. One key strategy to help ensure higher quality literacy teaching and learning is to employ a literacy specialist. (e13; e18-30) The applicant intends to raise student ELA scores on the State assessment by 3% points per year in the black and Hispanic subgroups who have large language deficits. (e13)

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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