

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/06/2023 09:12 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	25
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	10
<b>Sub Total</b>	70	63
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	5	4
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. Workforce Diversity	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	7	4
<b>Total</b>	77	67

# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - EIR Early-Phase - 6: 84.411C

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

Applicant: Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

## 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 factor:

Reader's Score: 20

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant proposes to build upon its previous math education Mathematical Reasoning with Connections (MRWC) model of a specialized math curriculum for 12th grade students and professional learning for teachers by incorporating a new inclusive approach and extending the math course to all 11th grade students, as opposed to a sub-group of higher performing students. (e19)

Based on the success of the 12th grade math program strategies, teachers, administrators, and students requested a similar course for the 11th grade. The proposed Making Connections in Mathematics (MCM) program for 11th grade students will be a promising new strategy to bring underperforming grade 11 math students to grade level and provide an alternative option to approach 11th grade math (an additional course to the standard 2 math courses). (e20)

The applicant clearly discusses the implementation of new and innovative pedagogical strategies, such as the use of Building Thinking Classroom strategies, in which students work in groups of three at vertical non-permanent surfaces with an engaging task, encouraging mathematical discourse, and providing the conditions for deep mathematical thinking. (e21)

The applicant presents a detailed description of its newly developed professional learning trainer certification program that will support the districts' adoption of the proposed project and support the increasing number of teachers who teach the program each year, (e25)

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 20

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly describes a conceptual framework that supports the ultimate goal of the proposed project, which is to change student attitudes towards math and towards themselves as learners and doers of math. (e22-e23) The evidence base of the three main components (Standard for Mathematical Practices, meaningful discourse, and empowering instructional strategies) of the conceptual framework are well described and aligned with the project activities. (e22-e23)

The applicant presents a comprehensive logic model that emphasizes the theoretical basis and components of the conceptual framework and clearly delineates the key project inputs, activities and outputs, short-term outcomes, and long-term outcomes. (e153)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 10

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly presents five program goals and 12 specific objectives each with specific outcomes. All of the expected outcomes for goals 3-5 are specific and measurable, and the goals, objectives, and outcomes are in good alignment with each other. (e26-e28)

**Weaknesses:**

Most of the expected outcomes for goals 1 and 2 related to teacher and student achievement outcomes are not measurable with clear baseline or target data. (e26-e28)

Reader's Score: 3

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

**Strengths:**

The proposed project is notably designed to meet targeted math education needs and encourage 11th grade high school students to pursue additional math coursework that puts them on track to be eligible to apply to a four-year college in the state of California and to expand their future post-secondary opportunities. (e18)

The applicant clearly presents two promising strategies that are appropriate, innovative, and will meet the needs of

**Sub**

the target population, such as the incorporation of both administrator and counselor professional learning. These two strategies can build capacity and deepen understanding of the proposed project for these two key school personnel. (e25)

The applicant clearly describes the ease of use and accessibility of two math-related technology platforms to enhance learning, engage teachers and students, and help with absenteeism. (e25)

**Weaknesses:**

Given that the proposed project is focused on enhancing professional learning for math teachers, the applicant does not adequately describe how the project will meet and address specific needs for teachers. For example, there is no information on the background demographics of the teachers or a discussion of the prior gaps in teacher professional learning. (e28-e29)

**Reader's Score: 12**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

**1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factor:**

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Sub**

**1. (1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)**

**Strengths:**

The two lead content development experts have strong qualifications, including doctoral degrees in mathematics and relevant training and experience with math education. They are faculty from the partner minority-serving institutions of Cal State University, San Bernardino and Cal Baptist University. (e29)

The applicant clearly indicates that more than 50% of project team members are from underrepresented groups (e31) and 66% of Riverside County Office of Education staff are black, indigenous and/or people of color (BIPOC). (e230)

The applicant provides a comprehensive chart of key project personnel, their project team roles and responsibilities, and their percent time on the project. (e32-e33)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not specifically address how they will encourage applications for employment from members of under-represented groups, especially considering they will be hiring additional Content Development and Implementation Team (CDIT) members. (e239)

Sub

Reader's Score: 8

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

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

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

1. **(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

**Strengths:**

The application narrative clearly discusses the organizational, fiscal, and administrative capacity of the applicant organization, including monthly budget monitoring, procuring matching funds, and successfully managing 23 school districts and 435,000 students. (e34)

The applicant clearly identifies a three-tiered management and leadership structure, with detailed roles and responsibilities and weekly, monthly, and annual schedules for team meetings. (e35)

The applicant presents a thorough management plan with clearly laid out quarterly and annual timelines for project activities and milestones, with specific staff and organizations responsible for each year of the grant period. The project activities and milestones are clearly aligned to the project objectives and will allow the project to be completed on time and within budget based on the timelines provided. (e35-e37, e239-e245)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 10

**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 clearly describes working with faculty from four minority-serving institutions (two 4-year colleges and two community colleges) as content developers and writers for the proposed math curriculum. Two of the primary content developers are faculty at the 4-year colleges. (e29, e33)

**Weaknesses:**

The application could have been strengthened by including more evidence of a stronger partnership with the college and community college institution rather than just the faculty. For example, the applicant could have described what the institution is doing to support the proposed project or provide an MOU of the commitment at the institution level. (e29, e33)

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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 2 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, through adopting or expanding comprehensive, strategic career and compensation systems that provide competitive compensation and include opportunities for educators to serve as mentors and instructional coaches, or to take on additional leadership roles and responsibilities for which educators are compensated.**

**Strengths:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

**Reader's Score: 0**

---

**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 09/06/2023 09:12 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/06/2023 12:49 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	25
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	10
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	5	4
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. Workforce Diversity	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>67</b>



# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - EIR Early-Phase - 6: 84.411C

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

Applicant: Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

## 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 factor:

Reader's Score: 20

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The proposed project plans the development of promising strategies for empowering mathematics teachers to motivate high-needs students to succeed in high school math (e18). It is very good that the strategies build on existing strategies (e.g., standards-aligned lessons, equitable and engaging teaching practices, meaningful mathematical discourse, formative assessment, professional learning (PL) sessions; e21) and input from teachers and students on the team's current project called Mathematical Reasoning with Connections (MRWC) (e17).

The distinction between MRWC and the proposed project is clearly explained and highlights the goal of the proposed project being inclusive of underperforming students from earlier grades than 12 (e19-20).

Research evidence is well-presented to rationalize project elements such as enabling inclusive ownership and self-assessment through formative assessment, and teachers' use of students' assets (as part of empowering underperforming students) (e22-25).

#### Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 20

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

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

**Strengths:**

Theories (mathematical habits of mind, growth mindset, formative assessment, mathematical discourse, teacher efficacy and student self-efficacy) in which the conceptual framework is grounded are well-described in the logic model (e153) and in text with references (e22-24).

The project inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes are clearly summarized in the logic model (e153).

**Weaknesses:**

While professional learning of principals/administrators is based on findings from their current project (MRWC) and the need is reasonable, it is not clear how it is aligned with the conceptual framework.

Reader's Score: 8

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

**Strengths:**

Some project goals, objectives, and outcome measures are well-aligned with each other, and some outcome measures are measurable (e22; e25-28; e267-270). For example, alignment among Goal 3: "Increase the number of Inland Empire teachers receiving MCM training and the number of students successfully participating in coursework taught by MCM teachers", objective 3a: "Provide PL for math teachers from target schools in Years 2-4 of the grant" and outcome measures 3a1: "Up to 35 teachers from target schools will receive MCM training in Years 2-4 (fully operational cohorts) of the grant, with at least 100 teachers trained by the project completion." The other two measures, 3a2: "At least 85% of target group teachers will attend 100% of the planned PL" and 3a3: "At least 85% of teachers will be satisfied with the PL and coaching support provided by the project and its ability to improve their mathematical teaching practices (e27) are clearly described.

**Weaknesses:**

Improvements specified in some performance measures in Goal 1 ("Improve teacher instruction, pedagogical skills, and content knowledge through continuous professional learning") seem too minimal considering the significant commitment planned in the proposed project. For example, "Objective 1c: Increase the level of teacher professional confidence to teach advanced math content and prepare students for college-level math. Expected Outcome 1c: Target teacher professional confidence to teach advanced math content and prepare students for college level math will increase by at least 5% when comparing their perception before MCM participation and upon teaching for at least a year, as measured by MCM Teacher survey." (e26) Considering the importance of Goal 1 on teacher knowledge, pedagogy, and teaching, a higher % should be specified.

Project objectives and performance measures for Goal 2 do not include specificity in terms of high-needs students. For example, if performance measures include data from high-needs students specifically, that would give insights into the project's impact on high-needs students.

Reader's Score: 3

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

**Sub  
points)**

**Strengths:**

It is excellent that the application describes target student populations well with details about their lower income family status including those experiencing homelessness, English learners, and/or foster children (over 71%) who are at risk of failing in high school or in college (e13, 28).

It is also good that needs of target student populations are listed in terms of not only race/ethnic and economic diversities but also their lack of readiness for college mathematics (only 7% of Grade 11 students in the target counties are prepared for college mathematics; e18). Needs were also identified based on voices of teachers and students heard through the team's existing partnership on MRWC (e20).

It is excellent that importance of mathematics is specifically connected to target students in that their success in math achievement is especially important because it overwrites the effect of socioeconomic status and race/ethnicity (e29).

The application describes target teachers as being frustrated with curriculum practices that are not inclusive of and responsive to students of color (e18); the application appears to be well situated to address target teachers' frustration.

It is excellent that specific equitable approaches are planned. For example, equitable and engaging teaching practices will be used according to the new CA Mathematics Framework. It is also noted that "understanding and respecting student identities is central to achieving equity in math education" (e23). Teacher use of students' assets is planned in professional learning (e24), which is also great in that it reflects asset-based approaches (that has potential to motivate and empower underperforming students).

**Weaknesses:**

Information about target teacher populations is rather minimal. For example, the application needs to elaborate teacher demographics, teaching experiences, and other relevant information about the pool from which 100 teachers will be recruited.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factor:**

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Sub**

- 1. (1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)**

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The quality of the project personnel is very good in that the team consists of members with a variety of expertise and experiences (e30-31; e230-235) especially including extensive experiences working with members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. For example, the Project Director is a bilingual Latina who has 27 years of experience in education working with working with school districts for equity in education.

Over half of the team members are from “underrepresented groups including, African American, Mexican-American, Latinx, Chinese American, or multi-racial”, which is great in that diversity on the team reflects target populations they aim to serve (e31).

**Weaknesses:**

The application does not describe specific efforts in increasing opportunities for employment for the content development position among groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Sub**

- 1. (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

**Strengths:**

The project management is well-thought-out to plan for milestones, activities, and tasks through the course of the project (e32-35; e225-258). For example, weekly meetings and monitoring are well-planned in that they would be instrumental to recording progresses and keeping up with necessary actions.

The project team also plans to write up quarterly reports, which can be effective not only in monitoring progresses and action items but also in reflecting on summarized and synthesized written products.

It is excellent that the management plan details defined roles and responsibilities (e35; e225-227).

It is also excellent that the management plan details how the objectives of the proposed project will be achieved efficiently on time and within budget (e34). The team’s prior collaboration experience with their i3 project will be leveraged for efficient project management. Budget will be monitored monthly as the team has done for their prior grants for the past five years.

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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:**

It is very good that the project team plans to work with four minority-serving institutions (MSIs) (e14) as partners. Faculty members from MSIs will engage in content development for the project (e33).

**Weaknesses:**

The specifics of the partnership with MSIs beyond individual faculty members are not explained. MOU indicating institutional partnerships would have strengthen the application.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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 2 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, through adopting or expanding comprehensive, strategic career and compensation systems that provide competitive compensation and include opportunities for educators to serve as mentors and instructional coaches, or to take on additional leadership roles and responsibilities for which educators are compensated.

**Strengths:**

Not addressed.

**Weaknesses:**

Not addressed.

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

---

**Status:**           Submitted

**Last Updated:**   09/06/2023 12:49 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/01/2023 03:06 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	25
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	10
<b>Sub Total</b>	70	63
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	5	4
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. Workforce Diversity	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	7	4
<b>Total</b>	77	67

# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - EIR Early-Phase - 6: 84.411C

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

Applicant: Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

## 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 factor:

Reader's Score: 20

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant proposes to build on the promising results of an i3 project. They will focus their efforts on the critical grade 11 year of mathematics instruction – aiming to work with about 3,000 students and over 100 teachers from two large school districts that include rural communities of southern California. The applicant makes a compelling case for a need to focus their efforts on this often-neglected age/grade of mathematics instruction. They base their focus on research demonstrating that persistence of 11th grade students in math is critical for future success in college (p. e18). Compounding this problem is an exodus of educators, especially single subject mathematics instructors, from the profession since the pandemic. Hence the significance of their focus on empowering math teachers with instructional strategies who that have some evidence of helping empower and motivate students to succeed in high school math and beyond. The difference between the proposed project and the prior-funded project whose results it aims to build upon is that they will be targeting underperforming students in 11th grade as opposed to “C or better” students in 12th grade.

#### Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 20

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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



**Reader's Score: 25**

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant proposes an strong excellent conceptual framework based on evidence based strategies that include: professional learning opportunities for 11th grade instructors across two large school districts; a professional learning network consisting of participating instructors; professional learning opportunities for school administrators who will be key in school adaptation of the instructional philosophy; professional learning opportunities for school counselors; trainer certification for professional learning instructors/facilitators; a train-the-trainer model to help sustain ongoing professional learning activities across the partner schools/districts; and technology integration to help with student engagement as well as helping facilitate the formative assessment process (e24-e25). The conceptual framework is further detailed and depicted in a more comprehensive format in the logic model provided on e153. The logic model connects project inputs to corresponding project activities, short-term outcomes and long-term outcomes. These are all logically connected to the overall project conceptual framework.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant outlines five over-arching goals (pp. e26-e28) with some corresponding specific and measurable objectives and outcomes that serve to measure progress toward those goals. For example, goal #5 is to develop a train-the-trainer model that develops at least 10 teacher leaders who will be certified to train future teachers in the proposed project curriculum. The aligned objective is to develop a trainer certification workshop that supports district adoption and sustainability of the project curriculum. An expected outcome of this activity will be that at least 10 teacher leaders will attain the certification (e28). To good extent, overall, the proposed goals, objectives and outcomes are clearly specific and measurable.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant includes certain outcomes that lacked specificity and measurability. For example, most of the expected outcomes for goals 1 & 2 are not measurable with clear baseline and target data. Expected outcome 1a states that target teachers will report “significantly higher levels of subject-matter competence upon completion of professional learning...” (e26). Outcomes such as these would be strengthened by including specific baseline measures and intended changes such as describing where teachers currently are performing on a measure such as subject-matter competence, and where they expect them to be after the proposed intervention (e.g. scoring a certain percentage higher on such a measure following program interventions.).

**Reader's Score: 3**

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

**Strengths:**

The proposed project is designed to improve 11th grade mathematics instruction in an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse region of southern California. Students in the region are predominately high-need (over 71% on free or reduced lunch); many attending high-minority schools (Riverside County student population is

**Sub**

81.1% non-white and San Bernardino County is 83.9% non-white), with high population of students who are currently, or were previously, classified as English Learners (RC:35.2%; SBC: 32.5%) (p. e28). To very good extent, the applicant’s proposed project design is intended to meet the needs of the target population.

**Weaknesses:**

Although the student population is adequately assessed (e28-e30), little discussion was spent describing the population of teachers that would be potential participants. It is unclear how many 11th grade math teachers would make up the population pool at both participating districts. A discussion addressing teacher data disaggregated by demographic data would be helpful in understanding this important part of the target population.

**Reader's Score: 12**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factor:**

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Sub**

- 1. (1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes a skilled and highly qualified personnel team to implement the project at various levels. The Project Director is a former teacher and principal with several years' experience working at the county office of education. She has advanced degrees in Education and experience working collaboratively across districts. Led by the Project Director, the Math and Professional Learning Content Development and Implementation Team (CDIT) will meet twice a month for the first two years and monthly in years 3 - 5. Leadership meet weekly and twice a year with the Advisory Committee to ensure all grant activities, goals, and requirements are on track (pp e32-e33). The qualifications of the key project personnel are relevant and appropriate to the needs of the project.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant fails to sufficiently outline a specific hiring process that would help encourage applications for employment from groups that have traditionally been underrepresented. It is unclear what steps the County Office of Education takes to encourage a diverse and representative range of applicants.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Sub**

- 1. (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant outlines a clear and comprehensive management plan that includes a partnership management structure with key responsibilities (p. e35), a project implementation table outlining key project milestones (pp. e35-e37), and clear descriptions for how they intend to incorporate feedback for continuous improvement, recruit student and teacher participants, and disseminate insights from the research being conducted. Timelines are adequate and help ensure the proposed project can be implemented on time and within budget.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 attempts to demonstrate their partnerships with minority -serving institutions by proposing a partnership with faculty from four partners who are minority serving institutions including Cal Baptist University, Cal State San Bernardino, Chaffey College and Riverside City College. Although the specific roles of college faculty are clearly outlined on the Key Team Member Roles and Responsibilities table (e32-e33), it is not clear what role the institution will play in the proposed partnership.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not present enough evidence of work being conducted in partnership with the minority-serving institutions listed. Although commitment from partner IHE faculty are described and included as a description of the partnership (e32-e33), it is not clear the extent of the partnership beyond that. The applicant does not include specific memoranda or agreements between the partner institutions that delineates a true partnership that goes beyond the participation of faculty in the development of curriculum to actual institutional ties with reciprocal benefits between the project, the partner institution and the proposed project activities.

Reader's Score: 4

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 2 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, through adopting or expanding comprehensive, strategic career and compensation systems that provide competitive compensation and include opportunities for educators to serve as mentors and instructional coaches, or to take on additional leadership roles and responsibilities for which educators are compensated.

**Strengths:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

Reader's Score: 0

---

**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 09/01/2023 03:06 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/28/2023 02:57 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

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

	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Scored</b>
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	25
<b>Total</b>	30	25

# Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - Early-phase Tier II Panel - 11: 84.411C

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

Applicant: Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 25

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The proposed impact evaluation utilizing a quasi-experimental comparison group design for the proposed study design has the potential to meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with reservations. Appropriate considerations have been included to establish baseline equivalence with the inclusion of acceptable statistical adjustments (when appropriate) to assure baseline equivalence requirements are fulfilled. The presented analytical models based on reliable and valid measures of project outcomes using hierarchical linear modeling incorporating the nested structure of the design with relevant covariates and random teacher effects has the potential to produce evidence of effectiveness. The inclusion of incentives for control teachers to ensure continued participation will help to minimize attrition of control teachers (p. e38). Additionally, the proposed evaluation plan includes measures of calculated statistical power for detection of minimum detectable effect sizes (p. e40-e43).

#### Weaknesses:

The narrative does not clearly include methodology for identification nor does the applicant provide a relevant discussion of potential confounding factors to the study.

The proposal outlines matching by grades (p. e40) to establish baseline equivalence in the event of high attrition. To meet What Works Clearinghouse standards, the matching should be based on a pre-test measure in the same domain as the proposed outcome measures for the study to ensure the comparison groups achieve baseline equivalence.

Reader's Score: 18

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

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The proposed external evaluation team has sufficient experience and training to be capable of successfully conducting an evaluation for a project of this magnitude. In addition, there are adequate plans for reporting and disseminating the evaluation findings.

Additionally, the evaluation plan includes a formative evaluation of an implementation fidelity study. This includes relevant implementation and impact evaluation research questions (p. e41) targeted at multi-level data collection utilizing both attendance logs, meetings, and reports to establish fidelity of implementation (p. e44).

**Weaknesses:**

The likelihood of successful implementation and completion of scheduled evaluation activities is low. The level of resources and staff committed to ensure proper data collection and analysis may not be adequate for the proposed scope of the evaluation activities (p. e36-e37). The comprehensive activities assigned to the external evaluator to provide adequate performance feedback and periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes for a project of this magnitude appears to constitute more time than is allocated for the existing personnel. The amount of the total project budget dedicated to the external evaluation amounts to only 7.75% of the federal funds and only 6.4% of the total proposed budget. It is not clear that these resources are sufficient for the evaluation activities as described.

**Reader's Score:** 2

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

**Strengths:**

The narrative provides a clear articulation of the proposed mixed-methods study of two key components. Specifically, the narrative describes a program implementation fidelity analysis and impact analysis of project effectiveness of teacher and student outcomes using a quasi-experimental comparison group design (p. e39) with the inclusion of relevant covariates and mediators (p. e42).

The proposed evaluation includes relevant measurable thresholds for acceptable implementation for all of the logic model components in alignment with project targets with respect to stated goals and objectives (p. e26-28, e153). The application materials include detailed descriptions of impact outcome measures (p. e249) relevant to stated project outcomes.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

---

**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 09/28/2023 02:57 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/28/2023 03:10 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	24
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	24
<b>Total</b>	30	24



# Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - Early-phase Tier II Panel - 11: 84.411C

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

Applicant: Riverside County Office of Education (S411C230040)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

Reader's Score: 24

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant has a research plan designed to meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) with reservations. There is no randomization in the selection of intervention and control units; therefore, as noted by the applicant, the highest WWC designation that can be achieved with the planned research design is WWC with reservations. The research design being planned is a quasi-experimental design (QED), assessing baseline equivalency after matching on other appropriate covariates (pg. e39). The applicant addresses several important factors related WWC standards. First, attrition was adequately discussed, but it is only relevant in ensuring enough units are maintained based on the power calculations; hence, the required sample size necessary to achieve the minimal detectable effect sizes (MDES) calculated for student and teacher outcomes (pg. e40). Given that a baseline equivalency check is mandated with a QED, attrition is not a concern related to the compositional changes of the study participants, only for having enough statistical power. The expected attrition is based on the applicant's previous work that was similar to this intervention (pg. e40). The attrition will allow for sufficient power as calculated, so there are no concerns with that aspect of the evaluation design. Additionally, the applicant has at least one identified outcome measure to meet the What Works Clearinghouse with or without reservations designation (pg. e40). Given that the outcome measure is a standardized state assessment, as stated in the (WWC, 2022) standard, it meets the validity and reliability requirement. Furthermore, the applicant noted the outcome is not over-aligned with the intervention. Finally, and very importantly, the applicant will use an acceptable statistical adjustment before reporting impact estimates with baseline differences between .05 to .25 standard deviations. Any differences greater than this will be considered non-equivalent as specified by (WWC, 2022).

#### Weaknesses:

Two concerns were noted when evaluating the applicant's evaluation design related to attempting to meet WWC with reservations. First, in establishing baseline equivalence for student outcomes, there should be, at a minimum when a pre-test is not available, a standardized measure in the same domain of the outcome of interest to establish baseline equivalence. The applicant in the narrative indicated (pg. e40) that baseline equivalency will be determined using grades and demographic variables. The demographic variables are needed, but grades are insufficient. Finally, the applicant had no discussion related to confounding factors. Given that a research study cannot meet

**Sub**

WWC with or without reservations if there is a confounding factor, essential details were lacking in the narrative related to addressing confounding factors that may influence the overall outcomes of the project.

**Reader's Score: 17**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant has provided several appropriate evaluation questions, which are targeted at gathering performance feedback (pg. e41). The questions overall are related to implementation fidelity and focus on the most important aspects of implementing a targeted intervention, dosage, and adherence to the intervention design. Secondly, the applicant will gather data from a variety of sources, including observation data, teacher fidelity surveys, principal surveys, and student/teacher interviews. There is a plan to triangulate these data to see if major themes emerge, which is a qualitative methodology best practice for trying to determine cause and effect. Finally, regular monthly reports and meetings will review these data and determine if any changes are required (pg. e44). The applicant plan should permit periodic assessment of the project's progress toward achieving the stated outcomes in the grant.

**Weaknesses:**

The overall concern with the formative evaluation is related to if the plan in the narrative can be achieved (pg. e41). Based on the narrative related to the evaluation team and the allocated budget, less than 10% of the requested funds will be applied toward the evaluation resources and team. The budget request for the evaluation appears underestimated to carry out the proposed formative and summative evaluation as discussed in the narrative. Given these concerns, it is highly unlikely that the evaluation will allow for periodic assessment of achieving the milestones for this project due to the lack of resources to support time and effort.

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided a logic model (pg. e153) that identifies the key project components. The components are the intervention curriculum and learning model, professional learning workshops, and professional learning seminars. All three of these align with the applicant's discussion of the project design in the narrative. Additionally, the applicant has a mediation analysis plan and has identified appropriate mediators for this intervention (pg. e40). The mediators identified were student/school demographic characteristics, fidelity of implementation levels, and teacher experience. These are all expected to be mediating variables based on this intervention and should be expected to mediate any outcomes investigated in this research. Also, the applicant identified reliable and valid outcomes (pg. e249). Finally, the applicant discussed and provided specifics related to what would be considered measurable thresholds for acceptable implementation (pg. e251). For example, at least 85% of all intervention teachers will attend at least 85% of the professional learning workshops, that is, 15 out of 18 days. This will allow the project evaluation team to measure how implementation may influence the overall outcomes being studied by the team.

**Weaknesses:**

There were no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score: 5**

---

**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 09/28/2023 03:10 PM