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

# Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:**     Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence (S374A210014)
**Reader #1:**     \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

| | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|---|---|
| **Questions** | | |
| **Selection Criteria** | | |
| **Need for Project** | | |
| **1.** Need | 25 | 23 |
| **Quality of Project Design** | | |
| **1.** Project Design | 30 | 30 |
| **Quality of the Management Plan** | | |
| **1.** Management Plan | 20 | 20 |
| **Adequacy of Resources** | | |
| **1.** Resources | 25 | 25 |
| **Sub Total** | 100 | 98 |
| | | |
| **Priority Questions** | | |
| **CPP1** | | |
| **CPP1** | | |
| **1.** CPP1 | 5 | 5 |
| **Sub Total** | 5 | 5 |
| **CPP2** | | |
| **CPP2** | | |
| **1.** CPP2 | 5 | 5 |
| **Sub Total** | 5 | 5 |
| | | |
| **Total** | 110 | 108 |

**Panel #2 - TSL - 2: 84.374A**

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

**Applicant:** Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence (S374A210014)

**Questions**

**Selection Criteria - Need for Project**

1. **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.**

   **General:**

   Overview
   The applicant (a non-profit partnership between the University of Arkansas Academy for Education Equity and nine rural Arkansas school districts) presents strong evidence of the need for the proposed project, classifying needs as those related to educators, to students, and to COVID reentry. The project will build on previously initiated programs, although it is unclear how those programs were funded.

   Strengths
   The proposed project (ACHIEVE) will address four specific needs of the target school districts: the lack of resources to implement effectiveness-based Human Capital Management and Performance-based Compensation systems; the lack of sufficient capacity to objectively evaluate educator effectiveness across all schools; the lack of a process to connect educators with supports for effectiveness; and the lack of strategies and resources to meet state and local equity plans. Student achievement in districts served will be improved by specific ACHIEVE improvement strategies are proposed for each defined gap/need (pg. e30-e31).
   The ACHIEVE project builds on existing initiatives focused on improving education for high-needs students (Learning Pathways, school climate initiatives, social and emotional learning and mental health) and will provide a foundation for expanding student-centric improvement to include elevating educator effectiveness (pg. e31-e32).
   By adding "peer review"  (teachers observing and evaluating their peer teachers) to their evaluation of teachers, ACHIEVE project schools will give teachers a voice in the school improvement process which will enhance these understandings to improve educators' expertise in the classroom (pg. e32-e35).
   The two-tier project design framework  includes a Comprehensive Human Capital Management System and provides equator quality supports that address each of the identified needs areas and will result in improved student outcomes (pg. e35-e36).

   Weaknesses
   It is unclear how the ACHIEVE program building on existing programs described will utilize existing funding streams as

required in Criteria ii (pg. e30).

**Reader's Score: 23**

## Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
   **(i)      The extent to which the proposed project Demonstrates a Rationale.**
   **(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.**

   **General:**

   Overview
   The ACHIEVE project demonstrates a rationale supported by relevant research and outlines a plan for implementation that uses appropriate methodological tools to accomplish the stated objectives. A thorough evaluation plan provides feedback and monitors progress toward intended outcomes.

   Strengths:

   The logic model identified a goal (improved student achievement by increased access to effective educators in high-needs schools) and four objectives that will guide the implementation of the ACHIEVE project  (pg. e36-e41).
   Peer Review will be added to the accountability system and will represent 10% of the ACHIEVE Effectiveness Formula to provide teacher input into the accountability process (pg. e48-e49).
   Performance-based compensation (PBCS) will link salary advancement and promotion to educator evaluation results and willingness to serve the lowest performing schools and will provide incentives for teachers whose classroom performance leads to higher student achievement in high-needs school (pg. e50).
   Educator Quality supports such as Professional Growth Tracks; Equity in Teaching and Learning; Principal Network; New Teacher Network; and Career Ladder will promote building capacity among teachers and administrators and lead to improved student outcomes (pg. e51-e58.
   An outside evaluator (EdShift, Inc.) will conduct the evaluation of the project and will use research questions to guide the process. An evaluation timeline will guide the activities that are part of the evaluation plan (pg. e59).

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 30**

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

**General:**

Overview
The applicant presented a strong management plan to describe the implementation and operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The personnel to be utilized/hired were described by position, including qualifications and responsibilities that will clarify how each position will support the success of the project by assigning specific tasks to each (pg. e71-e73).

An implementation timeline for three years will outline the activities of the project by providing dates for completion (pg. e73-e74).

By defining by quarter the activities planned and persons responsible as well as benchmarks for each year, the project management team will ensure on-time completion of the program components (pg. e73-e74).

The applicant's commitment to engaging under-represented groups in stakeholder roles as well as in the workforce will support the project goal of fulfilling the districts' equity plans (pg. e75).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:        20**

**Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

1. **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 serves 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.**

   **General:**

   Overview
   The applicant described a plan that utilizes adequate resources to produce the positive results described in the proposal. By leveraging district and partner resources, the applicant will utilize grant funds to achieve the desired changes in the districts served (pg. e75).

   Strengths:
   The implementation of the two-tier supports (HCMS and Educator Quality) will promote positive systemic change in the districts included in the proposed project by appropriately directing changes (pg. e75-e76).
   The project will create short-term, mid-term, and long-term systemic improvement by the implementation of the planned activities (pg. e76).
   The project results will be disseminated in a variety of ways to promote the success of the project for replication by others (pg. e78).
   District funds will be utilized as the matching resources for the federal funding which will enhance the opportunities for sustainability (pg. e78).

The multi-year plan of operation for finances that included identifying non-federal funding sources in year 3, partner commitment, stakeholder support, and sustainable practices will increase the likelihood of the project continuing after federal funding ends (pg. e79-e80).

Several partners and their contributions to the project will provide a foundation for continuing the project after federal funds end (pg. e80-e81).

Sustainability strategies outlined by the applicant will increase the opportunities for continuing the project after the grant period ends (pg. e82).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 25

**Priority Questions**

**CPP1 - CPP1**

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 1: Supporting Educators and Their Professional Growth (Up to 5 points).**

   **Under this priority, projects that are designed to increase the number and percentage of well-prepared, experienced, effective, and diverse educators--which may include one or more of the following: teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, or other School Leaders as defined in section 8101(44) of the ESEA--through Evidence-Based strategies incorporating one or more of the following options:**

   **a)       Adopting, implementing, or expanding efforts to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals--to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, principals, or School Leaders in High-Need Schools who have the knowledge and skills to significantly improve instruction.**
   **b)       Implementing practices or strategies that support High-Need Schools in recruiting, preparing, hiring, supporting, developing, and retaining qualified, experienced, effective, and diverse educators.**
   **c)       Increasing the number of teachers with State or national advanced educator certification or certification in a teacher shortage area, as determined by the Secretary, such as special education or bilingual education.**
   **d)       Providing high-quality professional development opportunities to all educators in High-Need Schools on meeting the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners.**

   **General:**

   Overview:
   The applicant outlines the ACHIEVE Career Ladder Strategy to create a leadership pipeline for high-need schools by implementing several programs: Harvard Strategic Data Project (two-year program for current educators to strengthen capacity to use data), Micro-credentials for high performing educators, Badging to promote self-directed professional growth, and National Board Certification (pg. e22-e23).
   Strengths:
   Strategies for recruiting, selecting, preparing, supporting, and developing will lead to improved classroom instruction and greater student achievement (pg. e23-e24).
   The Career Ladder program will support teachers to seek advanced certification and be more likely to stay in the profession (pg. e25).
   High-quality professional development for teachers that is personalized as to areas of need and interest and is high impact will address district priorities and improve teacher practice (pg. e25).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:        5**


**CPP2 - CPP2**

1. **Under this priority, applicants must develop projects that are designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce through adopting, implementing, or expanding one or more of the following options:**
   **a)        Educator candidate support and preparation strategies and practices focused on underrepresented teacher candidates, and which may include "grow your own programs," which typically recruit middle or high school students, paraprofessionals, or other school staff and provide them with clear pathways and intensive support to enter the teaching profession.**
   **b)        Professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or State policies and practices in order to improve educator diversity.**
   **c)        High-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators.**
   **d)        Data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator and school leader diversity.**


   **General:**

   Overview:
   The applicant describes plan to partner with The Center for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Boyd Griffin Associates to conduct an Equity Audit of the programs of districts within the consortium. Based on these findings, the consortium districts will develop plans to eliminate bias in student and educator programs. (pg. e25-e26).
   Strengths:
   The Career Ladder program will nurture the professional growth of teachers with a focus on equity (pg. e26).
   The ACHIEVE Advisory Committee and ACHIEVE Professional Learning Teams will actively recruit diverse members (pg. e26-e27).
   Professional development options offered will focus on inclusivity and reducing bias in the workplace and school policies (pg. e27).
   An HCMS audit will be used to identify school practices and strategies in need of improvement and will focus on finding opportunities to increase diversity of leadership (pg. e27).


   Weaknesses:
   No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**     **5**

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**Status:**     Submitted
**Last Updated:**     09/03/2021 09:40 PM

# Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:**     Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence (S374A210014)
**Reader #2:**     **********

|  | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|---|---|
| **Questions** | | |
| **Selection Criteria** | | |
| **Need for Project** | | |
| **1.** Need | 25 | 23 |
| **Quality of Project Design** | | |
| **1.** Project Design | 30 | 30 |
| **Quality of the Management Plan** | | |
| **1.** Management Plan | 20 | 20 |
| **Adequacy of Resources** | | |
| **1.** Resources | 25 | 25 |
| **Sub Total** | 100 | 98 |
| | | |
| **Priority Questions** | | |
| **CPP1** | | |
| **CPP1** | | |
| **1.** CPP1 | 5 | 5 |
| **Sub Total** | 5 | 5 |
| **CPP2** | | |
| **CPP2** | | |
| **1.** CPP2 | 5 | 5 |
| **Sub Total** | 5 | 5 |
| | | |
| **Total** | 110 | 108 |

# Technical Review Form

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

**Applicant:**   Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence (S374A210014)

**Questions**

**Selection Criteria - Need for Project**

1. **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.**

   **General:**

   Overview:

   The application establishes a need for the project. The application aligns programs/strategies, grant activities, identified gaps, and completely defines how it will integrate with and build on similar or efforts within the districts included in the consortium. For instance, the application establishes how it is part of a comprehensive effort aimed at improving teaching and learning and details its plan for implementing robust initiatives aimed at effectively meeting the needs of the target population.   e12,15

   Supporting Statements:

   Strengths:

   The proposed data management system will improve upon the identified gaps in current student achievement and effective educators by utilizing Harvard University Strategic Data Project training to assess and design a comprehensive effort to initiate, strengthen and sustain strategies supporting improvement in High-Need schools.  e20
   The proposed recruitment, employment and retention strategies will expand the hiring of highly effective and diverse teachers by offering career ladders, Improvement School Retention Bonuses; creating "Grow Your Own" recruiting programs; providing the New Teacher Network and Professional Growth Track # 1 to employ educator in High-Needs schools.  e 36, 41
   The proposed district turn around and renewal projects will improve academic and social outcomes, deliver rigorous content, and elevate instructional quality in classrooms serving high-need students by leveraging lessons learned from ACHIEVE.  E31
   The proposed career-ladder based performance compensation system will improve teacher retention and stimulate improvements in overall school culture by elevating and rewarding educators; and promoting continuous educator improvement and learning.  e12
    Principal Network support will decrease the rate of principal turnover by providing principals with mentors and coaches to improve leadership practice.  e19
   The proposed New Teacher Network will prepare new teachers coming to the district from other districts or from university teacher preparation programs with training on ACHIEVE standards and expectations to meet the needs of the target

population.  e24

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address how the 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. e24

**Reader's Score:** 23

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.  In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
   **(i)  The extent to which the proposed project Demonstrates a Rationale.**
   **(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.**

   **General:**

   Overview:
   The project's design adequately addresses elements of the selection criterion. The proposed project is designed around a consistent rationale and includes a detailed logic model that aligns project activities and goals with intended outcomes. The project's design is rooted in current and relevant literature. The proposed methodological tools (FORECAST) and methods of evaluation are appropriate to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.  e41,47

   Supporting Statements:

   Strengths:

   The proposed project's conceptual framework is well-conceived and is likely to lead to sound project implementation due to the strong alignment between the proposed project activities and outcomes outlined in the logic model provided. The detailed project plan provided in the applicant's proposal will lead to a more organized project implementation by itemizing project tasks and assigning task owners. Timelines for specific project deliverables will allow all stakeholders to monitor progress in real time.  e 73,74
   The applicant indicates that it plans to implement a data analysis mechanism for use in assessing project implementation. Feedback, multiple assessments, monitoring of components and analysis and dissemination of data will be ongoing to facilitate improvement and sustainability of effective strategies.  e62, 46, 47
   The applicant proposes to employ evidence-based, multiple-layered and nuanced feedback for improvement that is driven by both qualitative (anecdotal) and quantitative (formative and summative assessments). e34
   The timeline for gathering and analyzing project data will allow for a meaningful assessment of progress to occur in time for course corrections to be made, if needed. The proposed schedule calls for implementation data to be collected in Year 1 and analyzed annually to assess progress toward achieving intended outcomes e66, 68

   Weaknesses:

None.


**Reader's Score:** 30



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

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


 **General:**

 Overview:

 The management plan described by the applicant is adequate to achieve the objectives of the proposed project. There is a clear timeline. Roles for key personnel are clearly defined and sufficient staff time allotted to the project will demonstrate the applicant's ability to achieve project objectives on time and within budget. e79-80

 Supporting Statements:

 Strengths:

 The project's timeline is detailed and provides a clear outline for project implementation by positioning key benchmarks with outputs and outcomes outlined in the logic model. Specific deliverables from all key partners and stakeholders involved in the project are also illustrated to accomplish project tasks.  e66, 76
 Proposed milestones are addressed throughout the application to initiate continuous improvement and embrace data checkpoints where information collected is analyzed and used to identify areas where pivots in strategy of implementation may be warranted. e68
 The proposed project's Grant managers, Advisory Board and evaluators will monitor progress to ensure fidelity with project design and assess milestones for accomplishing project tasks. e73
 Advisory Board will convene quarterly to monitor implementation and expenditures;
 and review evaluation data to assess magnitude of results and significance of outcomes. e74
 The Project Director will participate in monthly Evaluator progress monitoring conference calls; and conduct quarterly data review to monitor results compared to goal, objectives, and outcomes. e74
 The proposed Project Director and CSL Finance Office will manage expenditures in accordance to state and U.S. Department of Education regulations to ensure efficient expenditure of funds. e70
 The key personnel assigned to the proposed project stem from multiple areas of interest, expertise and departments within the organization, which suggests an opportunity for the project to have a systemic impact on the organization's overall operation.  e67


 Weaknesses:
 None.


**Reader's Score:** 20

**Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

1. **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 serves 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.**

   **General:**

   The applicant considers the adequacy of resources for the project. It proposes the likelihood that the proposed project will: result in system change or improvement; build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services; and has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant to address the needs of the target population.  e63

   Supporting Statements:

   Strengths:

   Proposed student achievement, cultural diversity, The New Teacher Project, and career opportunities will likely build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand serves that address the needs of the target population. e73,
   Increased equity, strong leadership, Professional Growth Plans, for Improving and expanding the proposed ACHIEVE project will likely result in system change or improvement. e76
   The applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. It includes a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan. It demonstrated commitment of partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success to incorporate and sustain curricula and strategies within the institution beyond the grant period.  e74-79,95,213

   The applicant is in partnership with the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas and nine, rural Arkansas school districts (Blytheville, Brinkley, Cross County, Dumas, Earle, Hope, and Lee County, etc.) to increase the quality of teaching and learning in high-needs schools, and increase equitable access to education and raise student achievement.
   Central administrators and school leaders responsible for conducting educator evaluations will complete Improvement Science training to ensure objective effective project implementation.
   Talent management / HCMS platforms will track educator performance ratings and the results of educator evaluations to provide data to shape district-wide professional priorities.   e77

   Weaknesses:

   None.

**Reader's Score:      25**

**Priority Questions**

**CPP1 - CPP1**

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 1: Supporting Educators and Their Professional Growth (Up to 5 points).**

   Under this priority, projects that are designed to increase the number and percentage of well-prepared, experienced, effective, and diverse educators--which may include one or more of the following:  teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, or other School Leaders as defined in section 8101(44) of the ESEA--through Evidence-Based strategies incorporating one or more of the following options:

   a)      Adopting, implementing, or expanding efforts to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals--to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, principals, or School Leaders in High-Need Schools who have the knowledge and skills to significantly improve instruction.
   b)      Implementing practices or strategies that support High-Need Schools in recruiting, preparing, hiring, supporting, developing, and retaining qualified, experienced, effective, and diverse educators.
   c)      Increasing the number of teachers with State or national advanced educator certification or certification in a teacher shortage area, as determined by the Secretary, such as special education or bilingual education.
   d)      Providing high-quality professional development opportunities to all educators in High-Need Schools on meeting the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners.

   **General:**

   Overview
   The application adequately described educator candidate support and preparation strategies and practices. The project is inclusive of recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention strategies to provide clear pathways and intensive support to enter the teaching profession.  e8-11

   Strengths
   The proposed project will partnership with colleges and universities and utilize the Improvement School Retention Bonuses strategy which is designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce such as, middle or high school students, paraprofessionals, or other school staff. Professional Development will support educators, nurture growth of educators, and increase the overall quality of leadership / instructional practice in all schools, with emphasis on increasing equitable access for highest-need. CSL will launch an ACHIEVE website to share project services / products / strategies / outcomes. Grant managers will participate in media reporting efforts to inform the field of ACHIEVE innovations. Partners will publish strategy papers / position papers on the ACHIEVE website to encourage replication. Partners will share progress, events and research via district and project-specific social media tools. Evaluation results will be shared on the ACHIEVE website, presented at conferences to support High-Need Schools in recruiting, preparing, hiring, supporting, developing, and retaining qualified, experienced, effective, and diverse educators. e8-11

**Reader's Score:        5**

**CPP2 - CPP2**

1. **Under this priority, applicants must develop projects that are designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce through adopting, implementing, or expanding one or more of the following options:**
   a)      Educator candidate support and preparation strategies and practices focused on underrepresented teacher candidates, and which may include "grow your own programs," which typically recruit middle or high school students, paraprofessionals, or other school staff and provide them with clear pathways and intensive support to enter the teaching profession.
   b)      Professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or State policies and practices in order to improve

# Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:**     Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence (S374A210014)
**Reader #3:**     **********

| | | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Questions** | | | |
| **Selection Criteria** | | | |
| **Need for Project** | | | |
|   **1.** Need | | 25 | 23 |
| **Quality of Project Design** | | | |
|   **1.** Project Design | | 30 | 30 |
| **Quality of the Management Plan** | | | |
|   **1.** Management Plan | | 20 | 20 |
| **Adequacy of Resources** | | | |
|   **1.** Resources | | 25 | 25 |
| | **Sub Total** | 100 | 98 |
| | | | |
| **Priority Questions** | | | |
| **CPP1** | | | |
|   **CPP1** | | | |
|     **1.** CPP1 | | 5 | 5 |
| | **Sub Total** | 5 | 5 |
| **CPP2** | | | |
|   **CPP2** | | | |
|     **1.** CPP2 | | 5 | 5 |
| | **Sub Total** | 5 | 5 |
| | | | |
| | **Total** | 110 | 108 |

# Technical Review Form

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

**Applicant:**   Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence (S374A210014)

**Questions**

**Selection Criteria - Need for Project**

1. **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.**

   **General:**

   Overview
   The applicant demonstrates a clear need for the project. The application connects the proposed projects strategies, grant activities, and the identified gaps. The applicant thoroughly describes how it will integrate with and build on similar efforts within the districts. Across multiple examples, the application demonstrates how it is part of a comprehensive effort aimed at improving teaching and learning and describes its plan for implementing robust strategies aimed at successfully meeting the needs of the target population.

   Strengths
   The proposed project clearly identifies they have significant needs by noting evidence of lack of resources to implement effectiveness based HCMS across all schools, lack of capacity to evaluate educator effectiveness, no process to connect educators with supports, lack of strategies and resources to meet state/local equity plans, and no resources to integrate and accelerate systems change (e20).  Additional needs include: (1) educator needs; (2) student needs; (3) family needs (4) community needs; (5) COVID reentry needs and (6) Other gaps and weaknesses (lack of resources, insufficient capacity to objectively evaluate educator effectiveness, insufficient process to connect educators with supports, and lacks strategies and resources to meet equity plans) (e28-e30).
   To address the needs of the targeted area, the applicant will incorporate ACHIEVE: Arkansas Consortium Harnessing Innovation, Equity & Verifiable Excellence which is appropriately designed to help the nine districts improve their quality of education, elevate educator effectiveness, raise student achievement and increase equity in learning (e12). This project will also address the needs by appropriately reducing equity gaps through effectiveness based HCMS, assessing educator effectiveness using validated tools to ensure objectivity, improving educator effectiveness through individualized learning and supports and increasing student attainment of state academic performance standard (e12). Multiple projects targeting improvement across districts priorities (e31) including Learning Pathways, School Climate Initiative, and Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health have been implemented and will be expanded upon (e31-e32).

   The needs of the targeted area will also be addressed by a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students through increasing equity in access to highly effective educators that have been exposed to high-quality academic opportunities (e33). This paradigm shift in using promising classroom practices across districts to drive district transformation will help the districts within the consortium to evolve into learning organizations that will become equity-driven; data informed and student focused. (e35).

The needs of the proposed project will be appropriately met by revising the current framework for professional practice evaluation tool to increase rigor and improve alignment between educator performance ratings and student achievement (e35). The ACHIEVE Project Design Framework will also address the needs by providing the resources needed to expand upon existing student-centric improvement efforts (e35-e36).

Weaknesses
The criteria require that the applicant provide evidence of how 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 State, and Federal resources. It is not clear if the funds the projects will build on are supported by state or federal funding sources (e31-e32)

**Reader's Score:       23**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.  In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
   **(i)        The extent to which the proposed project Demonstrates a Rationale.**
   **(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.**

   **General:**

   Overview
   The applicant provides a strong project design. The application connects the proposed projects strategies and grant activities to strong evidence-based research and a logic model, which provides a strong rationale. The applicant provides a thorough review of relevant literature that supports a high-quality plan for project implementation.  The applicant provides a solid evaluation plan that will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. Strong evidence is noted in the narrative noting the proposed project and its layers of support will provide the targeted area with a mechanism to make effectiveness-based HCMS decisions, improve instructional leadership, enhance classroom education, improve equitable access to quality teaching for all students and raise achievement in high-need, low-performing schools

   Strengths:
   The proposed project will lead to a sustainable change by creating horizontal and vertical organizational alignment that leads to significant and sustainable improvement in student achievement. This theory of change provides a solid rationale for the proposed project (e37-e38).  The rationale is further supported by research on teacher participating in induction support and new teacher mentoring/coaching (e39). The research is clearly high-quality and connected to the proposed activities as evidenced by What Works Clearinghouse (e39-e40). The logic model provided clearly connects the inputs, activities, and outputs to the proposed projects short and long-term outcomes (e41-e42).
   An extensive literature review is noted by additional studies; including research on evidence-based professional learning and job embedded-professional coaching by Podolsky, Kini and Darling-Hammond (e42). Research on the effectiveness of having a National Board-Certified reading teacher and the impact on reading ability for kindergarten through third grade is also aligned to the goals and objectives of the applicant (e42). The project design is clearly supported by four objectives and appropriate performance indicators (e45). Successful achievement will be determined by an appropriate methodological process to evaluate the proposed project and to collect and analyze data (e62).  Periodic performance feedback of progress toward achieving intended outcomes will be conducted by an outside  evaluator (EduShift, Inc) (e62). The FORECAST (FORmative, Evaluation, Consultation, and Systems Techniques) evaluation model will be used to determine the magnitude of results  (e62). Additional evaluation methods will be implemented by collecting and analyzing

quantitative and qualitative data using a quasi-experimental design through comparison of treatment and control group educators (e64); using an appropriate effective size (0.25); and using appropriate data analyses (ANOVA) (e65).

Weaknesses:
None noted

**Reader's Score:** 30

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

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

   **General:**

   Overview
   The applicant clearly provides a structured grant management plan to ensure thorough, timely, efficient implementation of the proposed project with fidelity to the project design. Intentional management connecting project administrators, educators, partners, school personnel, students, families, and community representatives is evident and will ensure inclusive involvement of diverse stakeholders that aligns the proposed project to the needs of the target audience. The management plan is well developed and will ensure that the objectives of the proposed project will be met on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines.

   Strengths:
   The proposed management plan is designed to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget by ensuring equal access for participation across all services regardless of actual or perceived age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or other protected class (e70). Management of expenditures will be appropriately handled by the Project Director and CSL finance office (e70). The Project Director will maintain program file to document implementation, evaluation and fiscal milestones, from award to completion (e71). The Project Director, Advisory Committee and Evaluation Team will sustain ongoing evaluation to promote continuous project improvement (e71). The Center for Strategic Leadership will hire a team of highly-qualified educators to manage implementation of the three-year project. Management will be a collaborative effort guided by key personnel equipped with the skills, knowledge and expertise to successfully implement ACHIEVE; including the project director, ACIEVE Improvement Specialist for Regions, Administrative Assistant to the Project Director, Administrative Assistant to the Improvement Specialist, Leadership Coaches, Instructional Coaches, and New Teacher Mentors (e72-e73). Time commitments are also appropriate to managing the proposed project (e72-e73). Key milestones and benchmarks are evidenced in the timeline which will ensure the project is carried out on time. Budgeted items are clearly aligned to the proposed activities and appropriate to meet the indicated number of participants to be served (e73-e74; (e193-e232).

   Weaknesses:
   None noted

**Reader's Score:** 20

**Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

1. **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 serves 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.

**General:**

Overview

The applicant provides substantial evidence that they have resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan. They have also provided detailed evidence that demonstrates a commitment of a plethora of diverse partners. They have a clear plan for gathering stakeholder feedback. Stakeholders have also committed to the development of a multi-year financial plan that is critical to the project's long-term success. The applicant will leverage diverse district and partner resources to implement the ACHIEVE project that promises lasting, positive results that will extend beyond the grant period. The applicant also has an appropriate dissemination plan to share lessons learned, best practices, implementation guides, outcomes, research, and effective strategies.

Strengths:

The resources provided will clearly promote positive and lasting system changes that will improve outcomes for schools, educators and students by incorporating a comprehensive HCMS and Educator Quality Supports (e76). The systemic changes are also evident in the Unified Talent platform which will improve linkages between educator effectiveness data and HCMS decision-making (e76). Appropriate evidence is noted in the application that ensures the proposed project will provide the targeted schools with the resources to improve human capital management systems and strengthen educator quality supports (e77), by implementing multiple, robust talent management and software systems to streamline operations of its HCMS and increase transparency and efficiency in decision-making (e77). Districts will connect HCMSs with Educator Quality systems through Talent Management platforms to ensure professional growth is connected to HCMS supports that impact employment and compensation decisions (e77). ACHIEVE consortium partners will implement a Dissemination Plan to share products, lessons learned, best practices, implementation guides, outcomes, research and effective strategies (e77). Dissemination of information will be accomplished by launching an ACIEVE website, presenting at conferences and through published articles in publications (e76).

The project will be appropriately sustained after funding ends through the 50% required non-federal funds match (e78) and by the multi-year plan of operation to help them to ensure funding is available through appropriate sustainable practices (e79). A strong commitment from appropriate partners is evident in University of Arkansas who will continue long-term support of teachers and administrators serving targeted schools by offering access to teacher and administrator workshops, online professional learning and coaching designed to help educators raise student achievement and implement research-based educator evaluation systems with fidelity (e80). Other partners include Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators, Harvard University Strategic Data Project, Boyd Griffin and Associates and EduShift (e80-e81).

Weaknesses:
None noted

**Reader's Score:      25**

**Priority Questions**

**CPP1 - CPP1**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Supporting Educators and Their Professional Growth (Up to 5 points).**

**Under this priority, projects that are designed to increase the number and percentage of well-prepared, experienced, effective, and diverse educators--which may include one or more of the following: teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, or other School Leaders as defined in section 8101(44) of the ESEA--through Evidence-Based strategies incorporating one or more of the following options:**

**a)** **Adopting, implementing, or expanding efforts to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals--to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, principals, or School Leaders in High-Need Schools who have the knowledge and skills to significantly improve instruction.**
**b)** **Implementing practices or strategies that support High-Need Schools in recruiting, preparing, hiring, supporting, developing, and retaining qualified, experienced, effective, and diverse educators.**
**c)** **Increasing the number of teachers with State or national advanced educator certification or certification in a teacher shortage area, as determined by the Secretary, such as special education or bilingual education.**
**d)** **Providing high-quality professional development opportunities to all educators in High-Need Schools on meeting the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners.**


**General:**

Overview:

 An appropriate plan to supporting educators and their professional growth is evident. The applicant adopts a clearly described plan to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals--to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, principals, or School Leaders in High-Need Schools who have the knowledge and skills to significantly improve instruction. They also have an appropriate plan in place designed to hire and retain diverse educators. They have provided numerous strategies for increasing the number of state or national advanced educator certifications by provided a plethora of high-quality professional development opportunities.


Strengths:

A comprehensive approach to recruiting, selecting, preparing, and developing talented individuals to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, and school leaders in high-need schools is evident by using a career ladder strategy that will create leadership roles and raise student achievement (e22). Participants will complete professional learning through Harvard Strategic Data Project (e22). Micro-credentialing, Badging, and National Board Certification support will also be provided (e22-e23).
A comprehensive plan to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals to improve instructional quality and raise student achievement is evident by launching a teacher residency initiative to incentivize highest quality student teachers with a residency fellowship.  The plan is also evidence by the launching and sustainability of multiple strategies to help educators raise student achievement and improve instruction (professional growth tracks, new teacher networks, professional learning communities, etc.) (e23). Appropriately, school leaders will review previous educator effectiveness ratings and heavily weigh letters of recommendation to ensure applicants have a history for maintain highly effective/effective performance ratings (e23).
To increase the number of teachers with state or national advance educator certifications in a shortage area the applicant will clearly use the Career Ladder strategy to provide highly effective educators with opportunities to attain state certification, national board certification and/or multiple micro-credential certifications (e25).
An innovative approach to professional development for all educators in High-Need Schools on meeting the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners is evidence by the proposed project including opportunities for educators to self-select professional development from a menu of options that are research-based and approved by the district (e25).


Weaknesses:

 None noted

**Reader's Score:        5**


**CPP2 - CPP2**

1. **Under this priority, applicants must develop projects that are designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce through adopting, implementing, or expanding one or more of the following options:**
   **a)        Educator candidate support and preparation strategies and practices focused on underrepresented teacher candidates, and which may include "grow your own programs," which typically recruit middle or high school students, paraprofessionals, or other school staff and provide them with clear pathways and intensive support to enter the teaching profession.**
   **b)        Professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or State policies and practices in order to improve educator diversity.**
   **c)        High-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators.**
   **d)        Data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator and school leader diversity.**

   **General:**

   Overview:
    The applicant provides appropriate evidence of increasing educator diversity. They have created a clear plan to focus on underrepresented teacher candidates by providing professional growth and leadership opportunities that will help to influence school, district and state polices in order to improve diversity. The applicant also describes clear data systems, timelines and action plans for promoting bias free human resources that promote and support educator and school leader diversity.


   Strengths:
   Any systematic biases  that may impact equity in professional development will be addressed by a consortium equity audit of teaching and learning programs (e26). This audit will clearly help the applicant to identify barriers that reduce representation across divers groups and help them to devise a plan to overcome these barriers and improve representation of traditionally underrepresented groups in the targeted community; specifically Black and Latino men (e26).
   The Career Ladder strategy is an appropriate strategy to ensure professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or state policies to improve educator diversity (e26). The career ladder professional learning will nurture the professional development growth of educators with focus on equity in learning (e27).
   Varying professional development opportunities that are focused on increasing inclusivity and reducing bias in instruction, workplace, and school policies/procedures are appropriately provided by providing workshop opportunities for educators. There are appropriate opportunities that can be self-selected and are related to two critical themes (school climate and equity and social and emotional learning).  Micro-credentialing courses like learning across literacy, STEM and Computer Science, Educational leadership and Improvement Science are also provided and will be offered at three historically Black Colleges and Universities (e27).

   Significant data systems, timelines, and action plans are in place for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator and school leader diversity. For example, they will conduct an equity audit (e27). HCMS experts in collaboration with ACHIEVE partners will work with consortium schools to create a recruitment and marketing plan appropriately designed to attract candidates from traditionally under-represented groups in the field of education (e27).

   Weaknesses:

None noted

**Reader's Score:**      **5**

**educator diversity.**
**c)      High-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators.**
**d)      Data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator and school leader diversity.**

**General:**

Overview:

The application adequately described high-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators. For instance, the application establishes strategies for addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators. e27

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The proposed ACHIEVE project is designed to address inequities in existing performance management data; and deliver equitable instruction to all students. ACHIEVE proposes to engage as many stakeholders as possible in the implementation and decision-making process to improve educator diversity and to ensure a positive school environment.

Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas will offer multiple professional development opportunities focused on increasing inclusivity and reducing bias in instructions, workplace and school policies / procedures. Professional Learning choices will be inclusive of two Critical Themes that address bias in instructional practice and school learning environments: School Climate and Equity and Social and Emotional Learning.  Also, the applicant will employ A menu of Micro-Credential courses to help educators implement practices that build equity in learning. The applicant will focus on Literacy, STEM and Computer Science, Educational Leadership and Improvement Science approaches to improve access to quality programs for all students and reduce achievement gaps separating students of color and /or poverty from other populations. e11-13 , 26

Weaknesses:

None.

**Reader's Score:      5**

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