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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Ypsilanti Community Schools (S374A210001)
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

Technical Review Form

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

Applicant: Ypsilanti Community Schools (S374A210001)

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 classifies needs for the program as those related to educators, to students, to families, to the community, and to COVID reentry and adequately describes how they will be addressed. The project will build on previously initiated programs, although it is unclear how those programs were funded.

   Strengths
   The proposed project (SEEK) will address four specific needs of the Ypsilanti Community Schools: 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 YCS equity plans. Student achievement in the YCS will be improved by the specific SEEK strategies that are proposed for each defined gap/need. (pg. e27-e28)
   The proposed SEEK project builds on the existing initiatives focused on improving education for high-needs students (YCS STEMM Middle College Program, YCS STEM Initiative, YCS Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health Integration) and will provide a foundation for expanding student-centric improvement to include elevating educator effectiveness (pg.

   e28-e29).
   The proposed SEEK project will expand reform and renewal efforts to attain a district turnaround to improve outcomes for students, such as the Ypsilanti-Willow Run School district merger, which created a larger school district, allows the district to offer more and better opportunities for students. (pg. e30)
   YCS instructional coaching, currently focused on Literacy and Math, is compatible with SEEK activities in the proposed plan and will improve classroom instruction which will lead to increased student academic achievement. (pg. e30)
   YCS Career Ladder, which provides options for educators to advance in their careers by taking on leadership roles, will be enhanced by the PBCS elements of the SEEK plan and

will result in greater opportunities for teacher advancement and lead to greater teacher retention. (pg. e30-e31)
The two-layer project design framework includes a Comprehensive Human Capital Management System and provides educator quality supports that address each of the identified needs areas and will result in improved student outcomes. (pg. e31-e32).

Weaknesses
It is unclear how the SEEK project 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 SEEK 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 will provide feedback and monitor 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 SEEK project (pg. e32-e37).

   An external audit to determine how to transform the YCS Human Resources Department into a data driven HCMS and an equity audit to review district systems for possible bias will guide the implementation of the project and enhance the likelihood of its effectiveness. (pg. e41-e42).
   A talent management system (United Talent) will be purchased to track educator data and professional growth plans and provide evidence of progress toward goals (pg. e43).
   Educator Effectiveness Models (Danielson Model for teachers and School Advance Model for administrators) will be implemented to improve the systems for evaluating the quality of teaching and leadership (pg. e43).
   Student growth measures will be included in accountability for outcomes and will represent 40% of the Educator Effectiveness Formula, which will better align teacher evaluation and student academic achievement (pg. e43-e46).
   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 to teachers whose classroom performance leads to higher student achievement (pg. e47).
   Educator Quality supports such as Professional Growth Tracks, Professional Development, Principal Network, New Teacher Network, and Career Ladder will promote building capacity

among teachers and administrators and lead to improved student outcomes (pg. e48-e57).
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. e58)

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 that includes job descriptions and
   outlines responsibilities, timelines, and milestones to guide 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. e66-e68).
   An implementation timeline for three years will outline the activities of the project by providing
   dates for completion (pg. e68-e70).
   By defining by quarter the activities planned and persons responsible as well as benchmarks
   for each year, the project management will ensure on-time completion of program
   components (pg. e70).
   The applicant's commitment to engaging under-represented groups in stakeholder roles as
   well as in the workforce will support the project goal by fulfilling the YCS equity plan (pg. e69-
   e70).

   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 district.

Strengths:
The implementation of the two-layer supports (HCMS and Educator Quality) will promote positive systemic change in the district by appropriately directing changes. (pg. e71-e72).
The project will create short-term, mid-term, and long-term systemic improvement by the implementation of the planned activities (pg. e71-e72).
The project results will be disseminated in a variety of ways to promote the success of the project for replication by others (pg. e74).
District funds will be utilized as the matching resources for the federal funding which will enhance the opportunities for sustainability (pg. e74).
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 funds end .(pg. e74-e75).
Several partners and their contributions to the project will provide a foundation for continuing the project after federal funding ends (pg. e76-e77).
Sustainability strategies outlined by the applicant will increase the opportunities for continuing the project after the grant period ends (pg. e78).
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 SEEK Career Ladder Strategy to create a leadership pipeline for high-need schools by implementing several programs: Rising Leaders Program for internal education leaders, Harvard Strategic Data Project (two year program for current educators to strengthen capacity to use data), Teacher Residency Program (EMU partner, place student teachers in residency fellowship that leads to employment in the district), Micro-credentials for high performing educators, Badging to promote self-directed professional growth, and National Board Certification (pg. e17-e18).

Strengths:

The applicant lists several strategies planned to support the recruitment of retention of educators. The strategies are classified as to recruiting, selecting, preparing, supporting, and developing (pg. e19-e20).

The applicant describes how the Career Ladder program will support teachers to seek advanced certification (pg. e20). The applicant outlines plans to offer high-quality professional development to teachers that is self-selected as to areas of need and interest and is high impact to address district priorities (pg. e21).

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 will partner with Learning Forward to conduct an Equity Audit of the district's programs. Based on these findings, the district will develop a plan to eliminate bias in student and educator programs. The EMU Teacher Residency Program will support findings by providing a way to encourage diverse teacher candidates (pg. e22).

Strengths:
The Career Ladder program will nurture the professional growth of teachers with a focus on equity (pg. e23).
The SEEK Advisory Board and SEEK Professional Learning Team will actively recruit diverse members (pg. e23).
Professional development offered will focus on inclusivity and reducing bias in the workplace and school policies (pg. e23).
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. e23).

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Ypsilanti Community Schools (S374A210001)
Reader #2:   **********

		Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Need for Project			
1. Need		25	25
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		30	25
Quality of the Management Plan			
1. Management Plan		20	20
Adequacy of Resources			
1. Resources		25	25
	Sub Total	100	95
Priority Questions			
CPP1			
CPP1			
1. CPP1		5	5
	Sub Total	5	5
CPP2			
CPP2			
1. CPP2		5	5
	Sub Total	5	5
	Total	110	105

Technical Review Form

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

Applicant: Ypsilanti Community Schools (S374A210001)

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 strong need for the project. The application aligns programs/strategies, grant activities, and the 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.   e24-26

   Supporting Statements:

   Strengths:

   The proposed data management system will improve upon the identified gaps in current student achievement and effective educators by utilizing a Planning Team to assess and design a comprehensive effort to initiate, strengthen and sustain strategies supporting improvement in High-Need schools. e39

   The proposed recruitment, employment and retention strategies will expand the hiring of highly effective and diverse teachers by offering 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.   e41
   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 building on lessons learned from YCS STEMM Middle College Program. e28
   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. e30-31
    Instructional Leadership Academy and Principal Network support will decrease the rate of principal turnover by providing principals with mentors and coaches to improve leadership practice. e35

The proposed Annual Induction Orientation will prepare new teachers coming to YCS from other districts or from university teacher preparation programs by offering training on the YCS HCMS standards and expectations. e53

Weaknesses:
None.

Reader's Score: 25

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. It is unclear whether 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. e58, 37

   Supporting Statements:

   Strengths:

   The proposed project's conceptual framework will likely lead to sound project implementation by providing aligned project activities and outcomes outlined in the logic model provided. e76

   The detailed project plan will lead to a more organized project implementation by itemizing project tasks, assigning task owners, outlining timelines for specifically project deliverables, and allowing all stakeholders to monitor progress in real time. e76

   The detailed plans to implement a data analysis mechanism will assess project implementation by utilizing quantitative and qualitative assessments. e47

   Feedback, multiple assessments, monitoring of components and analysis and dissemination of data of will be ongoing by facilitating improvement and sustainability strategies. e62, 46, 47

   The timeline will allow for a meaningful assessment of progress to occur in time for course corrections to be made by providing dates on ongoing activities.e62

The proposed schedule will dictate when implementation data will be collected and analyzed in Year 1 whenever the project is launched across all schools by providing timeframes for ongoing actions. e 62, 75

Weaknesses:

One of the educational studies at the foundation of the grant proposal is more than 13 years old. Given the basis in outdated research, it is unclear whether the proposed activities are built on a sufficient research base to lead to the type of innovative improvements that are sought. (e.114).

The applicant identifies educational studies it intends to use for project implementation. However, a referenced study date is more than 13 years old and does not reflect a review of high-quality literature. Given the basis in outdated research, it is unclear whether the proposed activities are built on a sufficient research base to lead to the type of innovative improvements that are sought. (e.114).

Reader's Score: **25**

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.**
   In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the 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. e67

   Supporting Statements:

   Strengths:

   The project's timeline will provide a clear outline for project implementation by positioning key benchmarks with outputs and outcomes outlined in the logic mode. e67

    Specific deliverables from all key partners and stakeholders involved in the project will improve productivity by offering support for the project. e66, 76

   Proposed milestones will initiate continuous improvement and embrace data checkpoints by identifying areas where pivots in strategy of implementation may be warranted. e63

   The proposed project's Advisory Board will monitor implementation / expenditures and review / update SEEK Timeline and Logic Model to facilitate project completion by convening quarterly meetings / committee meetings. e66, 70

   The proposed Project Director will ensure efficient expenditure of funds by managing fiscal resources. e 66,70

The key personnel assigned to the proposed project will suggest an opportunity for the project to have a systemic impact on the organization's overall operation by stemming from multiple areas of interest, expertise and departments within the organization. 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:

   Overview:

   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

   Strengths:

   Proposed student achievement, cultural diversity, and career opportunities (School Retention Bonuses) will likely build local capacity by providing, improving, or expanding serves that address the needs of the target population. e12, 27, 47

   Proposed "Grow Your Own" recruiting programs and the New Teacher Network and Professional Growth Track # 1 to employ educator in High-Needs schools will likely build local capacity by providing, improving, or expanding serves that address the needs of the target population. e12, 27

   Improving and expanding the proposed YCS Human Capital Management System and Performance-Based Compensation System (Layer 1) will likely result in system change or improvement by providing training and professional development services.   e27

   Proposed resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant will provide continued products and services for

the target population by providing commitments from partners. e74-78

Multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan will ensure that the budget is consistent with the size and scope of the project and can accomplish the activities and goals of the proposal with the total amount of money requested by outlining expenditure and revenues for the project years. e74-79

Commitment of partners and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success will incorporate and sustain curricula and strategies within the institution beyond the grant period by showing support for the project. e74-76

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 provided high-quality professional development opportunities to all educators in High-Need Schools. The proposed projects are designed to increase the number and percentage of well-prepared, experienced, effective, and diverse educators to meet the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners. e17

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:
The proposed Supporting Educator Excellence & Knowledge, a Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program will improve educator effectiveness and support the professional growth of teachers and administrators by providing extensive professional learning for teachers, assistant principals, principals and district administrators linked to the Ypsilanti Community. e17

The program will increase the number of well-prepared teachers by calculating lessons to meet the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners.
e17

Weaknesses:
None.

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 application described educator candidate support and preparation strategies and practices. The project is inclusive of recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention initiatives to provide clear pathways and intensive support to enter the teaching profession. e17

   Supporting Statements:

   Strengths:

   The project will 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 by partnering with colleges and universities and utilizing the "grow your own programs." e17

Weaknesses:
None.

Reader's Score: **5**

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/03/2021 04:49 PM

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/03/2021 06:21 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Ypsilanti Community Schools (S374A210001)
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: Ypsilanti Community Schools (S374A210001)

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 clearly describes how it will integrate with and build on similar efforts within each of 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 describes significant (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) (e24-e28). These needs will be appropriately addressed by the proposed SEEK project that is designed to launch educator quality supports that prepare educators to support youth as they reenter school based social and academic environments and cope with the trauma / stresses of COVID-19 reentry (e27).

   To address the needs of the targeted area, the proposed project will build on three district- funded projects to improve relevant student outcomes by expanding the YCS Middle College Program, building upon the YCS STEM initiative, and expanding the YCS Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health initiative (e28-e29).

   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 (e30). The needs will also be addressed by expanding instructional coaching with grade-level specialists and coaches with expertise in STEM, Social Studies, Equity, Special Education, ELL Instruction and Social and Emotional Learning (e30).

   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 with a minimum of 40% of evaluation ratings determined by student growth outcomes (e31). Additional appropriate proposed project activities are delineated in the Project Design Framework (e31-e32).

Weaknesses

The criteria requires 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. However, it is not clear if the funds the projects will build on are supported by state or federal funding sources (e28-e29).

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 project design is supported by a clear rationale. This rationale is evidenced by research on teacher participation in induction support and new teacher mentoring/coaching. This research supports the applicant's proposal to provide three years of new educator supports including induction orientation, new teacher professional learning communities and new teacher mentoring / coaching to support instructional excellence (e33). Clearly appropriate research that is connected to the proposed project activities is evidenced by research that strongly or moderately meets What Works Clearinghouse is also provided in the narrative (e34-e35). The logic model provided clearly connects the inputs, activities, and outputs to the proposed projects short and long-term outcomes (e36-e38; e83-e84). Each of the activities in the logic model are also aligned to the research described in the narrative (e36-e38).
   The applicant's proposed project design to ensure services target highest need students and schools using a Priority Level strategy is based on evidence-based research and provides a rational for ensuring their proposed project benefits highest-need schools and closes equity gaps (e38-e39). The applicant four proposed objectives will clearly meet the overall goal of improving student achievement by increasing access to effective educators in high-need schools (e39). Appropriate performance indicators are noted (e39). The methodological tools described will clearly ensure successful achievement of project objectives through appropriate alignment between the objective, goals and outcomes; a clearly outlined improvement strategies, and appropriate data collection processes (e40-e42) . The applicant clearly describes recruitment, hiring, placement retention, promotion, dismissal, compensation, and professional development efforts (e40-e42). The Danielson Model and School Advance Model provide a clear evaluation system for educators and administrators (e44).
   The proposed project design includes a solid evaluation plan by describing the methods of evaluation that will provide

performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. The applicant will contract with EduShift, Inc. a program evaluation organization to implement an objective evaluation (e57). The applicant proposes to utilize a FORECAST (FORmative, Evaluation, Consultation, and Systems Techniques) evaluation model, which is supported by effective research (e57). Baseline data will be collected. Additional evaluation methods will be implemented by collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data (e58-60); using an appropriate effective size (0.25) and data analysis process (ANCOVA) (e60). The project design is also supported by a evaluation timeline (e63-e64).

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 (e64). The management plan also describes appropriate project oversight by the project director and the university finance office who will manage expenditures in accordance with state and governmental regulations and will prioritize allocations to ensure completion of project (e64). Uniquely an overall project oversight including creating a budget committee, equity committee and sustainability committee will be done by an advisory board with representation from all key stakeholders (e64). An appropriate management team with the appropriate skills to manage the proposed project is evidenced by project director, education quality coordinator, principal and instructional coached and interns that will commit an appropriate amount of time into managing the proposed project (e67). 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 (e120-e165).

   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 a Teacher and School Leader grant 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 Comprehensive HCMS and Educator Quality Supports) (e71). The systemic changes are also evident in the Unified Talent platform which will improve linkages between educator effectiveness data and HCMS decision-making (e71-e72).
   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 (e72, by implementing multiple, robust talent management and software systems to streamline operations of its HCMS and increase transparency and efficiency in decision-making (e73). Professional Growth Plans and Educator Portfolios maintained through Unified Talent will also help educators identify professional learning that addresses individual needs to increase overall effectiveness of educators (e73). Dissemination of information will be accomplished through a website the applicant will develop to share products, services, strategies, and outcomes (e74) and through the presentation of data and results at conferences and through published articles (e74).
   The project will be appropriately sustained after funding ends through the 50% required non-federal funds match (e74) and by scaling effective practices and catalyzing replication of services to expand reach of federal investment in the project (e74). Funding will be available through appropriate sustainable practices by implementing a multi-year plan of operating and financial plan that includes adjusting practices and improving systems based on audit findings (e75). A strong commitment from appropriate partners is evident in Eastern Michigan University and University of Michigan's long-term support of teachers and administrators serving targeted schools. Each offers 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 (e76).

   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:

   A solid plan to supporting educators and their professional growth is evident. The applicant adopts a strong 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 provides 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 a leadership pipeline that fills a void in high quality school leaders committed to serving students in the targeted community (e17). Participants will also complete professional learning through Harvard Strategic Data Project (e17). Micro-credentialing, Badging, and National Board Certification support will also be provided (e19).
   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.) (e19-e20). A clear plan for selecting diverse educators is also evident.
   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 (e20).
   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 (e21).
   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 strong evidence of increasing educator diversity. They have created a solid 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:
   Through a district-wide equity audit the applicant will determine any systemic biases that may impact equity in professional development opportunities and equity in student opportunities. 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. The applicant also has a clear plan to use the data from the audit to develop recruitment marketing and support plans that increase educator diversity, promote retention of diverse educators in targeted schools and improve representation of traditionally under-represented groups in the school's faculty, administration, and staff (e22).
   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 (e22). The applicant will clearly provide varying professional development opportunities that are focused on increasing inclusivity and reducing bias in instruction, workplace, and school policies/procedures. There are appropriate opportunities can be self-selected and are related to two critical themes (school climate and equity and social and emotional learning). Micro-credentialing is also provided and will be offered at three historically Black Colleges and Universities (e23).
   The applicant has significant data systems, timelines, and action plans 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 and a HCMS audit to identify systems, policies and plans that need to be revised to better engage traditionally under-represented groups in the field of education (e23).

   Weaknesses:

   None noted

Reader's Score: **5**

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