

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/16/2016 09:57 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy	30	25
Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	30
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
Total	100	70

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance. In determining the significance, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

The LISTO project provides sufficient research findings on page 4 to demonstrate the need for STEM in rural schools and with an emphasis on supporting EC and ELL student populations.

LISTO proposes to provide high impact practices, targeted PD, and mentoring using technology innovations as new conditions to the existing LISTO program. As stated on page 9, the addition of new member schools, standards curriculum, and science content in an academic language through a virtual environment will contribute to providing an extraordinary approach towards advancing student achievement for rural, EC and ELL students.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application. (2013 i3 NFP)

(3) The feasibility of successful replication of the proposed project, if favorable results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

The applicant references on page 13, the results of a recent needs assessment as a measure used to determine a demand for the LISTO process. Likewise, based on the stated interest in virtual delivery methods, the applicant proposes that it has the potential to meet national demands.

The applicant describes on page 14 a number of barriers that existed in previous programs as well as solutions in table 1 on page 15. Likewise, on e249, a detailed budget narrative provides greater insight on how the funds from the grant will be used specifically to support solutions to barriers stated in the proposal.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant includes references to a digitized LISTO on page 16, as a method to ensure replication of the project, it is unclear if the replication will be successful in populations other than the ECs and ELLs which limits replication.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period. (2013 i3 NFP)

(4) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

The applicant identifies one goal, objectives, strategies, and outcomes.

As included on page 21, the management plan provides a timeline with milestones, responsible groups, and time frames. Collectively, the four management groups involved in LISTO should ensure an effective project implementation and development and improve student achievement but especially for rural, ECs and ELLs.

On page 23, LISTO indicates the assurance of continuous communication with school level administrators, teachers and project teams either monthly, biweekly, per semester, and using GoToMeeting formats. By utilizing the continuous feedback process, LISTO will improve processes and products in this project.

Weaknesses:

In some cases specific measures are not included. For example, on page 18, strategy 2.1 references training for 6th 7th and 8th grade teachers on the use of software but measure 2.1 does not indicate specifically how this will be measured.

According to the proposal, LISTO has operated an i3 validation grant in the past. However, it is unclear what specific financial and operating model will be utilized to manage this grant if awarded since the discussion in the application on page 23 is limited to cost per student and teacher only.

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed. (2013 i3 NFP)

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups. (2013 i3 NFP)

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions. (2013 i3 NFP)

(5) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (2013 i3 NFP)

(6) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively. (2013 i3 NFP)

Strengths:

Scored by another reviewer.

Weaknesses:

Scored by another reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/16/2016 09:57 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/16/2016 08:21 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy	30	27
Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	27
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
Total	100	69

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance. In determining the significance, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

The application contains specific data illustrating the persistent problem of recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers, particularly in the STEM subjects (p. 4). Additionally, the application includes research on the challenges rural schools face in providing high quality and effective professional development (p. 4). The rate of economically challenged students and students who are English language learner in Texas is also cited as further evidence of the magnitude of the problem addressed by the proposed project. Data on student populations from state assessments in Texas is also included as compelling evidence that the target populations have an intense need for services and academic growth. The application contains a thorough description with appropriate research cited to support the need for increased student interest in science, motivation to pursue science in upper grades (p. 7).

The use of targeted professional development, coaching and mentoring, and training for administrators indicates a multi-faceted approach to addressing the needs identified (p. 8). A literacy-infused science curriculum, which is based on the 5E model and will be taught for 80 minutes per day, represents a promising new strategy which can accentuate literacy concepts and skills through use of engaging, hands-on science content and explorations (p. 10). Instructional technology and a component designed to support science learning at home in an engaging forum are also examples of an exceptional approach which address both the school and home community. This approach reinforces teaching in the classroom through extensions and real-world applications that apply to the science content learned in school.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product,

strategy or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application. (2013 i3 NFP)

(3) The feasibility of successful replication of the proposed project, if favorable results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

The application clearly articulates the unmet demands of partner LEAS in the needs assessment survey (p. 13). The needs for science-specific professional development, technology integration, effective hands-on science instruction, and literacy components in the science classroom are all addressed thoroughly in the proposed project. Strategies, such as virtual observation, virtual mentoring, at-home resources, and virtual connections to science experts represent effective mechanisms that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application (p.14). They offer accessibility and a level of structured support that can be extended to other school populations within the state of Texas.

The application contains evidence of specific barriers previously experienced, including geographic spread, technology knowledge and accessibility, and recruiting and hiring (p. 15). The solutions proposed indicate evidence of a clearly articulated plan to work past the barriers and reach the desired level of scale.

With a manageable cost and free access to the project components, other schools in the state could replicate the project with relative ease (p. 16-17). With a description of how to implement the project components, easily accessible resources and digital copies of training and materials, the costs are greatly reduced, which results in a greater likelihood of replication over time.

Weaknesses:

The application includes a focus on the state standards in Texas and the needs of the large population of English language learners (p. 6, 18). There are few details to illustrate specifically how the operating model would effectively facilitate implementation at a national or regional level with the same level of success given different academic standards and different populations.

Reader's Score: 27

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period. (2013 i3 NFP)

(4) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

The application contains a thorough description of all objectives, strategies, outcomes, and mechanisms to measure effectiveness (p. 18-20). The comprehensive discussion provides clarity and coherence among the four different project objectives. Some of the objectives contain measurable components.

The application contains a general description of the roles of the four management groups involved in the project (p. 20-21). This provides an overview of the major groups who will facilitate project completion.

The potential for replicating the project across the state and country is supported through the cost and proposed structure of the project (p. 23). Accessibility to the materials is increased through use of virtual resources that will be publicly available.

Ongoing communication between project leaders and teachers within the proposed project demonstrates a process by which feedback can be gleaned and utilized to make continuous improvements (p. 23). Additional meetings with the research team provide further evidence of procedures to ensure that updates and improvements are considered throughout the life of the project (p. 23).

Weaknesses:

The application does not utilize SMART goals with corresponding measurable outcomes, and there is not baseline data to indicate the desired level of change over the course of the proposed project.

There are no specific timeframes to correspond with the milestones listed in table 3 (p. 21). With only years noted for each milestone, and the vast majority of tasks occurring every year, it is difficult to ascertain the steps that will be necessary to carry out the strategies and how much time will be needed for each one.

The application lacks some clarity in the specific responsibilities of each staff member. A more comprehensive discussion of the roles and responsibilities planned for each milestone is needed to gain insight into the effectiveness of the management plan.

Reader's Score: 27

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed. (2013 i3 NFP)

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups. (2013 i3 NFP)

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact,

and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions. (2013 i3 NFP)

(5) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (2013 i3 NFP)

(6) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively. (2013 i3 NFP)

Strengths:

Scored by another reviewer.

Weaknesses:

Scored by another reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/16/2016 08:21 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/18/2016 02:04 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy	30	25
Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	29
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
Total	100	69

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance. In determining the significance, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

(1) The proposal submitted by Texas A&M recognizes the STEM academic issues of economically challenged (EC) and English language learners (ELL) in rural, suburban and urban settings. It successfully documents disparities in those student populations and including noted performance disparities in the rural setting. Disparities in performance on standardized science testing at the State and federal level are noted. ELL/EC students of color are especially underperforming. Because literacy is a major emphasis of this STEM curriculum, documentation of disparities in student literacy performance is also included in the proposal. EC and ELL students, especially those from rural setting are less interested and less inclined to undertake STEM educational pathways, although enhanced STEM activities in the classroom and teacher training can positively impacts those tendencies and motivate students to be more interested in science. That highlights a major point of the problem identified, motivation of students before age 13, before they have made many career decisions and/or developed a science identity.

Another major emphasis of the proposal is the development of teacher instructional capacity. Texas A&M has also documented a national need for teacher training in the area of inquiry-based science (<10% nationally use inquiry in the classroom). The proposal documents the lack of good data on evaluation of success in the ELL Science classroom, which may be a result of few valid classroom observation instruments for Science instruction in the EC/ELL setting.

(2) The Texas A&M proposal describes a plan for utilizing professional development (PD) for participating teachers supported with mentoring, coaching and compensation for participation. Furthermore, the planned PD for campus leaders will provide additional on-site support for the teachers. The curriculum is standards-aligned and has been developed with previous support with funding from the National Science Foundation. A cohort of students will be followed longitudinally.

(3) Strengths include a) the integration of literacy with the science is an important and novel aspect of the proposal. Even though this effort is directed at schools with high populations of EC and Hispanic ELL students, it can be argued that the integration of literacy in science instruction for all students will improve communication and team skills for all students. b) Although the 80 daily minutes required by the curriculum is a lot, the integration with reading comprehension and writing instruction lessens that burden. c) The use of virtual science writing notebooks and family engagement activities is novel and attractive. d) Support from this initiative will improve IT capabilities at each school to support the curriculum and the required videoconferencing for PD and mentoring/coaching. e) The use of college science majors to mentor students is also attractive as it may encourage student interest in STEM studies and careers.

Weaknesses:

(1) The applicant has not displayed any weaknesses in deficiencies in their proposal's identifying the problems that will be addressed by this project plan.

Another major emphasis of the proposal is the development of teacher instructional capacity. Texas A&M has also documented a national need for teacher training in the area of inquiry-based science (<10% nationally use inquiry in the classroom). The proposal documents the lack of good data on evaluation of success in the ELL Science classroom, which may be a result of few valid classroom observation instruments for Science instruction in the EC/ELL setting.

(2) There are no identified weaknesses in their building on past successful strategies with new strategies.

(3) There are no identified weaknesses in using exceptional strategies for addressing the STEM challenges for these students.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application. (2013 i3 NFP)

(3) The feasibility of successful replication of the proposed project, if favorable results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

(1) The proposal documents an unmet need in the participating schools in the areas of a) teacher PD, b) academic language in science, c) reading comprehension, d) technology integration, e) higher order thinking and problem solving skills, and f) engaging hands-on science activities for students. The greatest strength of the proposal is that it directly addresses each one of these unmet needs specifically using educational strategies they have developed for Texas EC and ELL students. This curriculum for primarily EC and ELL students and their teachers should directly lessen the documented disparities. The proposal specifically outlines each process, product, strategy and practice that will be used to address these unmet demands.

(2) The plan to use technology to provide teacher PD as well as mentoring, coaching and assessment should successfully address the issues associated with the scale up required for this validation proposal. Furthermore, the principal research team has significant experience with this type of scale up or validation process, especially in the area of teacher assessment, reflection and feedback.

(3) A strength of this proposal is that it would be easy to scale up this program (Teacher PD, coaching, mentoring, curriculum, IT, and family outreach) for other schools as the costs are reasonable, even for poorer school systems. The

curricular materials are well defined and available and there is established support through Texas A&M.

Weaknesses:

- (1) The only perceived weakness is that it is not clear whether the program will specifically or effectively address ELL needs of non-Hispanic students (or whether it even intends to).
- (2) There are no perceived weaknesses in this area of the proposal.
- (3) A significant weakness is that the program is set up for Texas schools only. The curriculum is supported by Texas A&M and it is not clear whether that support would be available to schools outside of the state of Texas. Although the curriculum has been linked to state science standards, it is not clear whether the program would provide similar support to tie curricular efforts (content, activities, assessments) to school from other states in the U.S.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period. (2013 i3 NFP)

(4) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

- (1) The applicant has provided clearly defined objectives and strategies, aligned with predicted outcomes and measures. The outline includes when the cohort outcomes will be measured and which assessment instruments will be utilized. Outcomes measures are included on a timely schedule so that mid-course corrections could be proposed.
- (2) The proposal to distribute the management plan into 4 groups (Advisory Board (AB), Policy and Procedural Oversight Group (PPO), Application/Implementation Group (AIG) and the Evaluation Group) is well thought out. Milestones for each objective and strategy are defined using a timeline chart, along which group has responsibility.
- (3) The operating plan including financials is reasonable, with significant effort and resources going to provide teacher PD, coaching, mentoring and assessment. The requested resources are appropriate given the scope of the project and reasonable when considering whether this could be scaled up.
- (4) The applicant adequately defines procedures for providing assessment and feedback to program participants in a timely manner. In fact, the assessment, mentor and coaching processes outlined in the proposal are one of its strongest features. If that process works using IT distance technologies (whether live or recorded) it would address the most serious drawback to effective curricular initiative such as this.

Weaknesses:

- (1) There are no perceived weakness in the program strategies, goals, and objectives proposal.
- (2) It is not clear what remediation activities would be undertaken if a milestone is not met, especially those that might impact linked strategies within the project. Another weakness is the planned use of substitute teachers as testers because of their previous background check does not seem to ensure the quality of that activity.
- (3) The applicant's statement that the resources and components could be replicated for other schools around the country is desirable, although it is not clear that a Texas A&M-like partner would be available for all schools nationally or that Texas A&M would serve in the same capacity for school nationally. It was not clear that the applicant has provided linkages to educational standards for the curriculum for schools in other states.
- (4) There are no perceived weakness in the program plan to solicit feedback and undertake quality improvement of the project.

Reader's Score: 29

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations. (34 CFR 75.210)**
- (2) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed. (2013 i3 NFP)**
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups. (2013 i3 NFP)**
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions. (2013 i3 NFP)**
- (5) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (2013 i3 NFP)**
- (6) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively. (2013 i3 NFP)**

Strengths:

Not evaluated.

Weaknesses:

Not evaluated.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/18/2016 02:04 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/12/2016 12:24 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy	30	0
Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
Total	100	17

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance. In determining the significance, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

NA - Reviewed by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

NA - Reviewed by another reviewer

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application. (2013 i3 NFP)

(3) The feasibility of successful replication of the proposed project, if favorable results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

NA - Reviewed by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

NA - Reviewed by another reviewer

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period. (2013 i3 NFP)

(4) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

NA - Reviewed by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

NA - Reviewed by another reviewer

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

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(2) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed. (2013 i3 NFP)

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups. (2013 i3 NFP)

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions. (2013 i3 NFP)

(5) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of

the project, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (2013 i3 NFP)

(6) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively. (2013 i3 NFP)

Strengths:

The proposed project is likely to produce evidence about the project’s effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations, because it uses an experimental design, includes a sufficient number of participants, uses an external evaluator, and addressed possible attrition (pages 24-26, 34-35).

The applicant identified key questions (pages 28-32). They will provide an indication of the proposed project’s impact on students, teachers, and families. The evaluation plan includes appropriate methods to address each using varied data sources.

The applicant plans to evaluate the proposed project at an appropriate scale by studying its impact on diverse student population groups in diverse settings across one state (pages 32-33).

The applicant included a description of its plan to analyze data collected for each objective (pages 27-31). It proposed an appropriate sample size and minimum detectable effect size for the proposed project designed to measure longitudinal impact for one group of students and teacher effects after implementing the proposed project several years with decreasing grant-funded support. The data analysis plan that is described will provide important information of the efficacy of the proposed project.

The evaluation plan includes plans to measure fidelity of implementation as well as project outcomes (pages 27, 33-34). The applicant included an appropriate a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. This clearly articulated plan is likely to ensure the proposed project is implemented as designed and that its evaluation will provide an accurate measure of its efficacy.

The applicant has included includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively (pages 34-35, budget narrative). The evaluation team appears to be well-qualified, and the costs for evaluation are appropriate.

Weaknesses:

The objectives in the proposed project are not measurable (pages 17-20). For example, Objective 1 is “To examine the impact and efficacy of bi-monthly LIS VPD for Treatment 5th GR. teachers compared to routine school district PD for Control teachers” with a list of five areas to be measured. The applicant did include instruments to measure data but did not provide expectations for successful implementation. Without this information, it will be difficult to determine if it has met expectations for its impact.

The proposed project does not include baseline data for students it will serve (pages 17-20, 28-32). Without this information it is difficult to determine actual need and whether goals are likely to be attained.

The goals are not aligned with the project design and objectives (pages 28-32). The evaluation plan described will not provide sufficient evidence of achieving the objectives included in the proposed project.

Reader's Score: 17

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/12/2016 12:24 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/19/2016 09:12 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy	30	0
Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
Total	100	17

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B160011)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance. In determining the significance, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

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

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application. (2013 i3 NFP)

(3) The feasibility of successful replication of the proposed project, if favorable results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (34 CFR 75.210)

(3) The clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period. (2013 i3 NFP)

(4) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210)

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations. (34 CFR 75.210)

(2) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed. (2013 i3 NFP)

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups. (2013 i3 NFP)

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions. (2013 i3 NFP)

(5) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of

the project, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (2013 i3 NFP)

(6) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively. (2013 i3 NFP)

Strengths:

The proposed evaluation team is a highly qualified independent external evaluation group (p. 35) that has written a useful and practical evaluation plan for the level of scale needed to evaluate this project. An additional strength in this proposal is the credible plan proposed to be implemented to account for anticipated project attrition. The budget appears to be sufficient for the evaluation work proposed by the external evaluation group. The minimum detectable effect size of .25 to .35, sample size of 35 schools, and power of .80 detailed on page 28 are all appropriately aligned with the anticipated project impacts. The 3-level HLM analytic approach proposed is clear and credible and relevant to the key evaluation and research questions (p. 27). The applicant meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations as evident in the rich description of the longitudinal cluster randomized control trial with random assignment to treatment and control group proposed on page 24. The applicant proposes a mixed method research design that also includes qualitative approaches such as the phenomenological approach. Chi-square will be used as well as the paired t-test for certain questions as deemed appropriate.

Weaknesses:

The project evaluation questions do not appear to be aligned with the project goals and objectives in the table on pages 17-20. It is not clear how the implementation measurable threshold will be met.

Reader's Score: 17

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/19/2016 09:12 AM