

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/21/2014 05:23 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Fort Worth Independent School District (U351C140023)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	4
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	9
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	10
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	15
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	21
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	25
Sub Total	100	84
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	120	104

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Professional Development Arts Educators - 3: 84.351C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Fort Worth Independent School District (U351C140023)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

General:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 4

Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

Strengths:

The applicant, a large K-12 school district in the state of Texas, proposes to provide intensive, innovative and research-based professional development to teachers from 117 campuses with student populations composed of disadvantaged students. Focusing on several innovative instructional approaches, the applicant intends to build local capacity by training teachers to effectively exploit strategies with proven outcomes in improving student performance in music and other subjects. Specifically, teachers will earn certification in the area of music methodology which will promote the development of student abilities and skills which will impact all academic areas. (Page 5) The applicant states that students in high quality school music programs score higher on standardized tests, citing one study which showed that students scored 22% higher in English and 20% higher in mathematics. The project will impact on schools where more than 70% of the students at each of these campuses are educationally disadvantaged and on ten priority schools with African American and Hispanic student populations of 85.6%.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that it will foster collaboration among all stakeholders as it provides programs which will support, advance, and sustain improvement in arts education in the district. It plans to disseminate its activities among its partners through videotaping and other documentation which can be shared on its television channel and through streaming media. (Page 6) It will also share results with other teachers as well as participate in professional conferences, sharing lesson plans and the district curriculum framework which will be stored electronically.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not identify strategies it will use to disseminate information and materials outside the district. More information is needed about making presentations at state and national conferences.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project by considering the following factors:

General:

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and my score reflects my personal assessment of this section.

Reader's Score: 9

Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is supported by strong theory.

Strengths:

The proposed project design is focused around four objectives which are supported by performance indicators. (Pages 7-8). The project seeks to train music teachers in innovative processes that will ultimately impact on student enrollment in music and general improvement in student achievement. It has identified several key approaches and will use a Student Learning Objective (SLO) approach in presenting the material. (Page 11) Identified as a best practice, SLO will be used to measure student progress in training teachers to use such methods as the Kolady Approach in music education. (Page 15) The applicant provides documentation supporting the approach and how it impacts on student learning of music principles. Similar support is provided to other approaches being employed in the project. The information is timely and relevant to proposed activities and services.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant.

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that it will review all project activities and will utilize the district's quality improvement model to incorporate the project activities beyond the grant. (Pages 21-25) The district uses the Malcolm Baldrige Model which applies a "plan, new (pilot), study, and act" process to proposed changes in programs and services. Included in the process are steps which adopts a change that is being piloted, adapt it when proven, and change process as necessary.

Weaknesses:

The quality control process as described by the applicant reflects a general model that can be applied to all aspects of the curriculum. (Pages 21-25) More specific information about the proposed professional development and its review and assessment are needed. For example, the applicant needs to explain how the quality management process specifically relates to the professional development activities as they are being implemented.

Sub Question

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

General:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Sub Question

- 1. (A) The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that it will provide equal access to the project. (Page 25) It will also pay special attention to any barriers concerning gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age as well as barriers related to language and communication. It will apply this to project staff as well as to volunteers and others who may participate. It will follow district approved steps as well as those included in the GEPA statement.

Weaknesses:

The applicant indicates it will follow district procedures without providing any additional proactive activities to recruit and select eligible participants and personnel from traditionally underrepresented groups. Specific information on posting jobs, contacting specialized publications, and other collection processes are not provided. (Page 25)

Reader's Score:

- 2. (B) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides specific information concerning the hours of professional development it will provide. It anticipates that there will be over 45,178 "seat hours" of professional development during the project. (Page 26) For example, it will provide 40-90 hours of training per level in teaching music methodology, 96 hours during the 14 day Summer Institute, and 80 hours for 55 elementary music teachers in instrumental music. In addition, the applicant provides a graphic description of the process it will employ to present its professional development program. For example, it provides a day-to-day description of how it will provide training in Gordon's Music Learning Theory certification. (Page 26)

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

- 3. (C) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.**

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant provides information on how the various programs will be presented and how they will impact on curriculum and student performance. For example, the applicant indicates that students will perform and analyze music literature appropriate for the general music curriculum, which will include American folk music, traditional children's songs, games, and art music. Similar information is provided for other programs it will be presenting.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide information on how these programs and services focus on disadvantaged students. The information is general and does not provide information that suggests that the proposed music activities relate to rigorous academic standards.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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

General:

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and my score reflects my personal assessment of this section.

Reader's Score: 15

Sub Question

- 1. (A) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides the ethnic breakdown information concerning current teachers who will be involved in the project. (Page 32) Included are staff who are African-American (23.2%) and Hispanic (21.2%). The applicant indicates it will recruit at events and job fairs at Black colleges and universities and will visit other universities and locations seeking to attract individuals from underrepresented groups. Also included are professional organization community groups who will be contacted when openings occur.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

- 2. (B) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides information concerning the titles and qualifications for key personnel involved in the project. (Page 33) Included are the project coordinator, the executive director, the director of research and evaluation, and the deputy superintendent for leadership. The qualifications include for all positions a Master's degree or higher, various years of experience, and areas of expertise. For example, the project coordinator must hold a Master's degree in education and arts, have grant experience, and a project management background. The training and qualifications are appropriate and will assist the project in meeting its objectives.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

3. (C) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

Strengths:

The applicant identifies a number of organizations which will serve in an advisory or consulting capacity. (Page 34) The organization includes arts councils, performing arts groups, museums, and foundations. Training will also be provided by an individual consultant whose background is described in detail and is affiliated with a local university. Other trainers are required to have a certificate or a graduate diploma. The information provided by the applicant is detailed and reflects appropriate qualifications.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project by considering the following factors:

General:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 21

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The management plan provided by the applicant includes a description of the various professionals associated with the project. Included is a chart which lists activities and is aligned with the staff positions. (Page 36) The project will be assisted by a Management Committee and an Advisory Council. The membership for both groups is identified and their duties are described. For example, the Management Committee will review formative evaluations, deal with implementation difficulties, and monitor expenditures.

Weaknesses:

The timelines provided by the applicant are somewhat general in nature. (Pages 36-37) More specific information, perhaps on a monthly basis, is needed to determine if the project can maintain its implementation plan. The current timeline is on an annual basis.

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that the project coordinator will commit 100% of his or her time to the project. Other time commitments are provided for the executive director (25%), music content specialists (10%), and internal evaluators (20%). (Page 37)

Weaknesses:

The time commitments provided by the applicant are difficult to assess in terms of adequacy. Without aligning them to the project activities, it is difficult to determine if they are appropriate.

Reader's Score:

3. (C) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that feedback and continuous improvement will be assured through the monthly Management Committee meetings. (Page 38) The group will focus on policy accountability, program accountability, performance accountability, process accountability, and probity accountability.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear from the information provided by the applicant how the Project Management Committee and the Advisory Council will function separately and will collaborate together. More information is needed on how they interact and communicate with each other.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

General:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

Strengths:

The evaluation plan will be part of the district's overall evaluation process which is coordinated through the Office of Research and Evaluation. (Page 38) The office includes trained evaluators who will follow GPRA measures as well as focus on key research questions. Included in the evaluation will be such methods as sign in sheets, surveys, classroom observations, and student feedback. Information gathered will be reviewed by the project coordinator, the evaluator, the Management Committee and the Advisory Council on a monthly basis. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a graphic description of how it will measure outcomes according to the goals and objectives of the project, performance indicators, which instruments and sources are to be used, a data collection timeline, and the responsible personnel assigned to the evaluation activities. (Page 43) Process and products will be evaluated using the CIPP Evaluation Model. Review of information will be ongoing and will be collected and reviewed at appropriate intervals (every six weeks). As a result, the project has a regular feedback loop which will permit periodic changes.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

3. **(C) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence of promise (as defined in the notice.)**

Strengths:

The applicant provides studies which support their evaluation methods and processes. (Page 47) If implemented, the evaluation plan will produce evidence of both success and weaknesses of the outcomes. The plan is also supported by the Evaluation Logic Model graphic which provides an overview of the entire evaluation process.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

CPP-Technology - Competitive Preference Priority-Technology

1. **Projects that are designed to improve student achievement (as defined in the notice) or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.**

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that it is addressing this priority through a number of improvements recently developed in the district. (Page 2) Included in these areas of upgrades are distance learning programs, classroom computers, servers and printers, mobile computing, wireless access, and network electronics. As a result, the district is prepared to use technology in the music classrooms in many new and interesting ways. In order to maximize the impact of technology, the applicant will train staff to use technology to improve student performance.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/21/2014 05:23 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/11/2014 12:52 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Fort Worth Independent School District (U351C140023)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	4
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	8
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	10
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	14
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	24
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	25
Sub Total	100	85
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	120	105

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Professional Development Arts Educators - 3: 84.351C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Fort Worth Independent School District (U351C140023)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 4

Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the project's likelihood of building local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population. The applicant's 10 target schools average more than a 70% share of economically-disadvantaged students, and 9 of the 10 have higher discipline rates than the District overall (p 3). Most schools have lower attendance rates and lower passing rates in elementary reading and math (p 4).

The applicant proposes to train teachers in the EI Sistema model, which aims to increase student achievement in all areas of study and will integrate arts instruction into the new core curricula and into the district's new Fine Arts Academy (p 5).

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant provides moderate evidence of the extent to which the project results will be disseminated in ways that enable others to use the information or strategies. Materials, such as tapes of professional development activities, will be made available through the district's dedicated EdTV channel (p 6). Lesson plans will be available through the district's online curriculum framework (p 7). Project teachers will be required to train other teachers and participate in professional conferences (p 6-7).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The application would benefit from more detail about how the project materials and results might be disseminated to other education partners across the state or the country. For example, the applicant might share the results or lesson plans, student work samples, evaluation or project results with arts partners, state education partners, or national colleagues via journals, conferences, or online public resources.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project by considering the following factors:

General:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and these scores reflect my professional opinion.

Reader's Score: 8

Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is supported by strong theory.

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the extent to which the proposed project's design is supported by strong theory. The applicant cites several studies showing the positive link between arts instruction and academic achievement, including music classes (p 5-6).

Further, the project will be developed on the learnings of the Measures of Effective Teaching Project (p 8-10) and utilize Student Learning Objective evaluative tools (p 11-14); both of these approaches are notable for their strong teacher involvement.

Among several methodologies available to teachers (p 14-21), Gordon's Music Theory (p 14-15) and the Kodaly philosophy of music education will also inform teachers of strategies and practices for instilling a love of music in children.

The applicant will offer certification in several different arts education methods (p 5). The project logic model (p e65) shows a strong progression among the various activities, outputs, and short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes. Of special interest is the applicant's objective that the trained teachers' performance encourages students to enroll in multiple music courses (p 8, e65).

Weaknesses:

The applicant offers an exciting menu of professional development options and curriculum frameworks; however, it is unclear what formalized program of training will be offered in order for teachers to study, learn, and implement their new instructional methods together.

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant.

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the sustainability of the project's potential and planning to incorporate the project's purposes, activities or benefits beyond the grant period. The applicant states that the Plan, Do, Study, Act process will enable the team to adapt the model on a continuous and formal basis (p 23-25). If the final model demonstrates promise, the district will adopt the model for further dissemination (p 25).

Weaknesses:

While it is clear that new teachers will have access to a variety of resources, it's not apparent what financial or time resources will be provided by the district for those new teachers to be trained after the grant period.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 10

Sub Question

1. **(A) The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the project's strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for underrepresented groups. The applicant will include cultural competency training regarding the removal of barriers affecting access and participation (p 25). Additionally, as the average share of African-American and Hispanic students at the target schools is 95.5%, it is clear that underrepresented students will have access to this program.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

2. **(B) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the extent to which the proposed professional development will lead to improvements in practice among recipients of those services. The menu of professional development options for teachers is quite impressive, and the rigor and duration of the courses appears sufficient to engage and prepare teachers.

The various training programs range from 40-96 hours of training per level per year, with the applicant supporting three years of certification training (p 26). The proposed topics and sequences for the Gordon's Music Theory (p 26-28), Kodaly's, and Orff-Schulwerk coursework (p 29-32) are impressive in their scope and depth. The applicant

Sub Question

plans to provide additional professional development throughout the year to reinforce the concepts (p 26).

Weaknesses:

The application would be strengthened by providing further information regarding the district's professional development during the school year that would support and sustain the lessons learned over the summer, such as coaching, professional learning communities, etc.

Reader's Score:

- 3. (C) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides moderate evidence that the project's services will lead to improvements in student achievement as measured against rigorous academic standards. It is clear that the breadth and depth of professional development topics and lessons will prepare teachers to provide excellent music instruction (p 26-32).

Weaknesses:

The application would be strengthened by a discussion of more explicit ties between the proposed professional development and the academic achievement of students. Further, the applicant does not tie the gains in musical education to gains in other academic areas, such as reading or mathematics, which are clearly academic gaps for the target schools (p 4).

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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

General:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and these scores reflect my professional opinion.

Reader's Score: 14

Sub Question

- 1. (A) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the extent to which the applicant will encourage employment applications from underrepresented groups. The district is already committed to this goal, as evidenced by the staff position dedicated to recruiting minority candidates (p 32). Additionally, the district recruits at Historically Black Colleges and Universities' job fairs, meets with classes at universities with high minority populations, and advertises with publications and organizations serving minority populations (p 32).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the qualifications of key project personnel. The resumes of the key project team provide an excellent mix of music, grants administration, administrative, and educational experience (p e77-e85). The requirements of the job descriptions for Senior Evaluator and Senior Project Development Specialist (p e86-e90) are rigorous and appropriate for the responsibilities.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

3. (C) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the qualifications of project consultants or subcontractors. A variety of well-established organizations will develop specialized training, connect teachers to local arts organizations, and offer their expertise (p 34-35, e69-e75). Additionally, credentialed experts will offer training within the summer training institutes (p 35-36).

Weaknesses:

The project would also benefit from the services of an external evaluator to provide an objective view of the project's progress and success.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project by considering the following factors:

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 24

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides moderate evidence of the project's management plan to achieve project objectives on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for project tasks. The applicant's RACI Chart on page 36 gives a good sense of the personnel's roles within various tasks (p 36). The

Sub Question

timeline provides some detail regarding tasks to be completed each year of the project (p 36-37).

Weaknesses:

The application would benefit from a more detailed timeline that includes the various activities, roles and responsibilities, and milestones to achieve those activities. The RACI chart gives some indication of roles, but some of the activities do not align clearly to the RACI chart. Breaking the annual activities down into quarterly or monthly timeframes would give a sense of the progression of each activity and any interdependencies among the activities.

Reader's Score:

2. **(B) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the appropriateness and adequacy of the time commitments of key project personnel to meet project objectives. The 100% FTE of the coordinator makes sense for the scope of this project; the 25% FTE of the Executive Director of Fine Arts seems sufficient for the oversight of the proposed program (p 37-38).

Weaknesses:

It's unclear what role the Principal Investigator will play, or who the PI will be. It's also unclear what the time commitment of the various trainers will be, and therefore, it is hard to evaluate whether the time envisioned is sufficient to achieve project objectives.

Reader's Score:

3. **(C) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the project.

The proposed Plan, Do, Study, Act continuous improvement model implemented by the district (p 23-25) offers numerous opportunities for the project team to evaluate progress toward goals, identify needed program changes, and authorize implementation of those changes. It is rigorous and intentional and appears to be an excellent framework for monitoring project success.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 25

Sub Question

1. **(A) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the extent to which the project evaluation includes objective performance measures clearly related to the project's intended outcomes and which will provide quantitative and qualitative data. The applicant will collect data regarding student music grades, student feedback, teacher content knowledge through observation rubric data, and course enrollment data (p 40-43).

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong evidence of the extent to which the evaluation plan will provide periodic feedback and assessment of progress toward intended outcomes. The applicant offers a detailed description of the Plan, Do, Study, Act model implemented by the district (p 23-25).

The approach offers numerous opportunities for the key leadership team to come together to discuss progress toward goals and approves and implements program adjustments as needed. The model is detailed and formalized to the extent that the project team can rigorously evaluate progress and propose program changes (p 23-25).

The management committee includes a variety of partners and perspectives to evaluate the project's success, including arts organizations and funding organizations (p 38).

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

3. **(C) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence of promise (as defined in the notice.)**

Strengths:

The applicant provides moderate evidence of the extent to which the evaluation will, if well implemented, provide evidence of promise. The analysis will include a quasi-experimental review of formative and summative data to determine the effects of the professional development on teacher and student content knowledge (p 39). The program evaluation will add to existing bodies of knowledge regarding the efficacy of the various musical professional development models to be offered to teachers (p 46-49).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

CPP-Technology - Competitive Preference Priority-Technology

- 1. Projects that are designed to improve student achievement (as defined in the notice) or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.**

Strengths:

The application provides strong evidence of the extent to which the project will utilize high-quality digital tools or materials to prepare teachers to use technology to improve instruction, as well as develop, implement, or evaluate digital tools and materials, in order to improve student achievement.

The applicant will leverage the new technological upgrades approved by voters, including distance learning, mobile computing, and laptops for all students to offer musical education apps to students (p 2). A Harmony Director, or interactive keyboard, will enable teachers to provide musical instruction easily (p 2-3).

The district's educational technology team will collaborate with the project team to offer training to teachers (p 3).

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 20

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/11/2014 12:52 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/17/2014 04:14 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Fort Worth Independent School District (U351C140023)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	4
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	10
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	12
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	15
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	25
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	25
Sub Total	100	91
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	120	111

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Professional Development Arts Educators - 3: 84.351C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Fort Worth Independent School District (U351C140023)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 4

Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

Strengths:

With the current upgrading of technology related to music instruction and the provision of research-based PD using systematic approaches to vocal and instrumental and general music, the applicant will be increasing capacity to deliver 21st century music instruction and report its effects on students enrolled in the lowest performing elementary, middle and high schools. By partnering with music education departments in several prestigious universities in Ft. Worth, the program will expand the ongoing support system for music educators.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant will disseminate information about the project and videotape activities through the district's dedicated EdTV channel and streaming media.

Weaknesses:

Dissemination plans do not include reaching out through other means to the community, or other areas of the state who could be interested in replicating or adapting those parts of the program that are deemed most effective in elevating teacher and student performance.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project by considering the following

factors:

General:

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and my score reflects my personal assessment of this section.

Reader's Score: 10

Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is supported by strong theory.

Strengths:

The project relies on a strong theoretical base, including the Measures of Effective Teaching project, developed by the Gates Foundation, to identify "great teaching" (page e23). It involves pedagogical training for music educators over an extended period of time using well-developed systems that are used nationally and internationally. The project will incorporate Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) for teaching music to students. The system of SLOs is an outgrowth of evidence emerging from Race to the Top projects.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant.

Strengths:

Selected teachers who have completed the music education training (see above) will develop fine arts into FWISD existing district-wide Frameworks and would form the beginning curriculum for the new Fine Arts Academy to open within the time frame of this grant. The district has recently reorganized using the Baldrige Model to reshape administrative, supervisory and other support systems. The Executive Director of Fine Arts is part of the Quality Improvement Team. The team is the recipient of streams of data they will study and act upon, all in the effort of improving performance at all levels.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 12

Sub Question

1. (A) The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

Sub Question

Strengths:

District policy “will ensure that all project staff and volunteers reflect the diversity of the city at large” (page e40). The district incorporates a policy for ensuring equitable access and cites the guidelines of GEPA Section 427 which it intends to follow.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

- 2. (B) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**

Strengths:

Training offered by the local universities is both deep and broad, involving 14 day summer institutes, ranging from 40-90 hours per level in methodology, musicianship, conducting, music lit and pedagogy. Those who teach these courses are certified specialists. The proposal contains detailed descriptions of the four systems of music education.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

- 3. (C) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.**

Strengths:

The district has made a considerable investment in the upgrading of music education and has a strong system of oversight regarding the tracking of teachers and administrators through the Quality Improvement Team and supervision by the Fine Arts Director.

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not address this criterion directly but refers to the QPI and other processes for tracking the effects of training. The proposal lacks a description of how the project will directly connect the music training to academic standards as measured by those included in the Evaluation Design.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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

General:

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and my score reflects my personal assessment of this section.

Reader's Score: 15

Sub Question

Sub Question

- 1. (A) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

Strengths:

The district has created a highly diverse faculty (page e47) and participates in a recruitment process that includes attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities' job fairs, individual visitations to speak with classes at universities with large minority populations and advertising job openings in media outlets serving minority populations.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

- 2. (B) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

Strengths:

The music department is headed by Executive Director of Fine Arts, Chris Walk. She will also be the Etude Project Manager. She is highly qualified for her position. The district will hire an Etude Project Coordinator with appropriate credentials and experience. Also involved are the district's Directors of Research and Evaluation and Deputy Superintendent for Leadership, Learning & Student Support. This quartet makes a very strong team to guide this project.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

- 3. (C) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.**

Strengths:

Consultants and sub contractors include the major cultural institutions of Ft. Worth plus professors of music education from the University of Texas at Arlington, Southern Methodist University, and trainers from the Music Division of Meadows, a school of music in the area. Their resumes attest to their expertise, experience and credentials (pages e48-e50).

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project by considering the following factors:**

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 25

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

Roles and functions of key personnel are clearly defined for most positions.

Weaknesses:

Internal Evaluation is listed as a contracted service. It is unclear whether the internal evaluator is part of the staff or a contractor.

Reader's Score:

2. **(B) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

Commitments seem to be appropriate and adequate to meet the project's objectives.

Weaknesses:

There is no description of the role of principal investigator (page e53). Nor is there a timeline or budget notation for those lead teachers who integrate their training into development of revised curriculum frameworks.

Reader's Score:

3. **(C) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

Evaluation feedback to the management committee monthly is the lynchpin for continuous feedback and adjustment of programs, monitoring policy, program, performance, process and probity accountability.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 25

Sub Question

1. **(A) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.**

Strengths:

The evaluation will employ a quasi-experimental design with formative and summative components. Both components will include qualitative and quantitative data related to program objectives. Evaluators from the district office are experienced and well qualified to gather and interpret data. Data will be managed using Eduphoria, a data management software program. In addition to the usual procedures (surveys, observations, etc.), evaluators will consider music course grades and compare the treatment group with control group. A logic model for evaluation summarizes the goals, performance indicators, instruments, data collection timeline and responsible parties. Evaluators will analyze the data using statistical protocols to isolate correlative and/or causal relationships. State fine arts standards will guide input for PD courses and guide development of evaluation instruments (page e59).

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The proposal describes methods that will provide performance feedback and procedures for periodic assessment of progress toward stated goals. Meetings will be called monthly to review progress and make adjustments accordingly.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

3. **(C) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence of promise (as defined in the notice.)**

Strengths:

Proposal is indeed aligned with multiple studies (cited) showing evidence of promise. Results should reveal strong evidence relating in-service, PD-specific music course work as a predictor of student achievement in music learning and perhaps academic growth as well.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

CPP-Technology - Competitive Preference Priority-Technology

1. **Projects that are designed to improve student achievement (as defined in the notice) or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.**

Strengths:

The proposal contains a complete array of technology assisted tools, equipment and assessment systems that will enhance music learning and its outcomes.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly reviewed and discussed with my fellow peer reviewers, and I found no weaknesses.

Reader's Score: **20**

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