

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/06/2014 10:44 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Osborn School District (U351C140024)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	5
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	10
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	11
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	22
Sub Total	100	83
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	15
Sub Total	20	15
Total	120	98

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Osborn School District (U351C140024)

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: 5

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 Osborne School District (Phoenix, AZ) will focus on the Encanto School, where 90% of its students come from underserved groups, primarily Hispanic (69%). The proposal has clearly stated goals tying a drama PD program provided by Childsplay with measureable teacher- and student-outcomes. Research results could add value to the growing studies on drama education for English Language and Second Language Learners as well as mainstream youngsters.

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 has detailed a plan for dissemination that would reach colleagues in the district as well as educators and arts advocates in national and state associations and organizations. The applicant plans to focus dissemination on three facets of the program including impact of drama integration on student achievement, long-term impact on whole school culture, and development of language skills across three language streams served in the school and elsewhere.

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 Design

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

General:

N/A

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 is based on a theoretical platform provided by findings from an AEMDD grant to Childsplay. Researchers from Arizona State University found evidence validating claims for student achievement and increased teacher knowledge as a result of their project in another district of Phoenix. The applicant also summarized claims for learning in and through the arts that are part of the recognized body of research in the field.

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:

The applicant has described its design clearly and explicitly in its Logic Model (pages 9-11). Focus is on Childsplay training its teaching artists and observers who in turn will train classroom teachers at Encanto, including special education and music teachers. Training is designed to empower teachers to use Childsplay drama education protocols with their students and to build curriculum frames that will guide their teaching process.

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: 15

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:

The applicant has described in detail how it will include teachers of all students in the school in PD activities. They will provide family materials in all languages used by Encanto families and they will tailor program activities to support differing needs. Each teaching artist will work individually with each Encanto teacher supporting the goals of the PD design. Materials for the program will be published in all languages used by Encanto families.

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 Logic Model calls for multiple hours of Teaching Artist and classroom teacher training in different formats including a Fall Institute and in-service sessions in which participants learn the Childsplay system of integrated drama education for early childhood classes. The training and curriculum developed will be designed to fit the state and local education standards. The quality of the training is demonstrated by the examples given in this section that are well-developed and seemingly transferable to teachers once trained. The proposal includes plans for both training and follow-up year by year.

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:

Childsplay has a record of impact, and with the active participation of the principal and district language acquisition specialist, it is most likely that the teachers will adopt the new program. The anticipated curriculum offered by trained teaching artists and classroom teachers is likely to lead to higher levels of student performance as measured against state standardized testing and other academic measures. The services should help to reverse the downward trend in test results for Encanto over the past three years. Because the curriculum will be designed to enhance existing practices rather than replace them, the applicant may be more able to engage teachers to incorporate the new drama segments.

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 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:

N/A

Reader's Score: 11

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:

Encanto Elementary School is committed to actively recruiting and retaining a diverse staff.

Weaknesses:

The application lacks a detailed description of how the school or district or Childsplay will act on their commitment to fill vacancies by encouraging applications for employment from members of groups traditionally underrepresented, particularly in regard to hiring Teaching Artists.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The application's description of the key project personnel—the Principal, Language Acquisition Specialist and district Curriculum Director—have resumes that attest to their qualifications as educational leaders and their involvement with demanding programs. Other key personnel include the co-directors of this project on behalf of Childsplay (see below).

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:

Project co-directors from Childsplay are experienced grant administrators and development professionals. Jenny Millinger has a background in dramaturgy and studied with the British American Drama Academy in London. Korbi Adams was a music major in college and is a graduate of Walnut Hill School for the Arts in Massachusetts. Both have had experience codirecting an AEMDD grant in a previous cycle. The PI/evaluator, an experienced scholar, is IRB certified by Arizona State University and is an Associate Professor of Early Childhood.

Weaknesses:

The proposal lacks resumes of prospective teaching artists associated with Childsplay. Since the success of a program largely rests on the quality of in-classroom service and artistic expertise, it is difficult to comment on their relevant training and experience.

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: 20

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 has divided responsibilities for this grant among school and district staff, Childsplay staff and the Principal Investigator. Childsplay assumes the bulk of responsibility for initiating planning and activities related to training and curriculum writing. District staff responsibilities include general administrative oversight, budgeting and reporting among others. The PI will be responsible for data collection and analysis. The first year of the grant is primarily a planning year, preparing for curriculum development, website development, communication and evaluation processes. Training activities will begin during the 1st quarter of the second year of the grant working with the finalized versions of curriculum (drama frames).

Weaknesses:

The management plan does not include timely meetings with parents, school officials, and teachers within Encanto on its timeline. There is no inclusion of a teacher leader to participate as part of the school team.

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 time commitments seem to be appropriate for Childsplay and the PI.

Weaknesses:

The time commitment from the principal and language acquisition specialist (at 3% each) does not seem to align with the numerous duties and responsibilities included in this project including meetings, oversight, and reports as well as supportive behavior as instructional leaders. The Teaching Artists will not be hired until March 2015 and so they will not be involved in the planning process described on pages 26-27.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The management plan refers to a comprehensive and continuous improvement process which relies on project-developed feedback tools and data collection by the PI, the use of which will provide data for continuous flow of information.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not describe how the Childsplay co-Project Directors will communicate with the building principal and with what regularity. In effect, the Project Directors are directing and evaluating themselves, which is an acceptable practice when included with other kinds of evaluative feedback, but the proposal lacks a description of how the school based leadership will deliver their observations of project activities. The proposal refers (page 32) to regular monthly meetings, but does not indicate with whom. The lack of a stakeholder Project Advisory Team that includes teachers and teaching artists weakens the likelihood of sustainability.

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: 22

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 is a quasi-experimental design that includes comparing Encanto's academic performance with Solano Elementary School, which has similar demographics. It will address growth in teachers' knowledge and skill as related to the content of Drama Frames and measured by a pre-/post-test design without a control group.

Weaknesses:

The proposal lacks an indicator that staff is willing to undertake such a rigorous evaluation. A letter of support from a representative of the staff would have attested to their understanding of what a commitment to the project entails.

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 AZELLA state standardized test and the soon to be published Arts Content Test of Knowledge (ACTOK) will be aligned with the State and Common Core standards. The use of the pre-/post-test Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale should be a good index of project effectiveness, especially when used in conjunction with a project-developed survey. The Teacher Facilitation Rubric may be an interesting tool for consideration by other projects with similar intent.

Weaknesses:

When teachers are involved with evaluation from the beginning of a project, they can more clearly focus on what is important to integrate into their practice and serve as enthusiastic collaborators in the process. The proposal does not indicate a role for teachers in reviewing or developing some of the self-reporting tools for evaluation.

The proposal lacks a discussion of how the evaluation will deal with the high mobility of students (page 33).

Sub Question

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 evaluation process will compare the test results of Encanto and Solana Elementary Schools' (AZELLA) and use results to find various correlations. This process should, if the project is successful, produce evidence of promise, corroborating evidence produced by the AEMMD project. The design also includes interviewing focus groups which should provide valuable insights on the project and its outcomes. The CARSR should also be a valuable process for showing growth in young children's ability to construct and tell stories.

Weaknesses:

There are six forms/processes for data collection and there is a danger of data-fatigue on the part of participating teachers and Teaching Artists.

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 project involves the use of the website as an online resource center, functioning as a repository for project deliverables such as "a searchable lesson plan database," resource lists, sample videos, etc. Technology will be used in the analysis of data collected as per the Evaluation Plan. The evaluator will enter student scores into an SPSS database for analysis. Such a resource center will be helpful in future years when training materials can be used to acclimate new teachers to the process of drama-infused instruction.

Weaknesses:

The proposal lacks references to how instructional technology itself can be used in the actual process of training and delivery of Drama Frames instruction.

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

Reader's Score: 15

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/06/2014 10:44 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/17/2014 09:15 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Osborn School District (U351C140024)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	5
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	10
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	21
Sub Total	100	81
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	120	101

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Osborn School District (U351C140024)

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: 5

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:

Located in the state of Arizona, the applicant is a K-12 school district that is seeking to provide professional development in arts education in an elementary school. (Page 2) The school serves students from kindergarten to grade 3 and is comprised of a diverse population of Hispanic (67%), African American (8%), Native Americans (5%), and other students. The applicant notes that 83.5% of the school qualifies for free or reduced lunch and that 32% of the students are English Language Learners. The proposed professional development includes sustained intensive training for teachers who will implement a drama and language arts development program. The applicant intends to use drama as a means of exploring language skills, peer language modeling, and scaffolded instruction. The project will also include the use of a national program called Drama Frames. The entire grade level teacher population will receive intensive training.

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 disseminate outcomes by sharing them with arts educators and a general education community through conferences and publications. (Page 5) Citing recent presentations, the applicant will also make an online resource center with a searchable lesson plan database available to all who are interested.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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:

None noted.

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 applicant has adopted an evidence-based model in arts education professional development. (Page 7) Called "Drama Frames," the model has been studied by Arizona State University in a controlled research project which indicated that intervention groups reported higher writing and reading scores in state tests. In addition, 80% of the teachers felt comfortable using this model with English Language Learners. The applicant also provides a logic model for proposed activities which are aligned with resources, outputs, and both short-term and long-term outcomes. The information is detailed and comprehensive.

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:

In addressing the issue of sustainability, the applicant proposes that the job embedded professional development will impact on students and continue past the end of the grant. In addition, the proposed model supports the existing community of learners and will assist in developing the ongoing curriculum. The proposed professional development will also develop books, lesson plans and other support materials for future use in presenting the curriculum.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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: 15

Sub Question

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:

In addition to its GEPA statement, the applicant specifically identifies the special-needs student population for inclusion in the project. (Page 13) The applicant also indicates that all teachers, parents and family, and others will participate in the project. Furthermore, the model it has adapted is individualized in nature and will focus on the needs of the individual student.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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 indicates that the adopted model is a 20 month long professional development program which aligns a teaching artist with a grade level team of classroom teachers. (Page 14) The applicant describes an arc of learning that includes such dramatic aspects as pantomime, tableau, group story building and reflection. The applicant provides specific information concerning the duration of such programs as the Fall Institute (10 hours), second semester units (21 hours), and sophomore units (6 hours).

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.**

Strengths:

The applicant describes efforts by the school to meet the Annual Yearly Progress goals and improve its "C" rating by the state of Arizona. (Page 20) The Drama Frames program was specifically selected because it focuses on drama and language arts and how this program specifically enhances the language arts curriculum for English Language Learners at various levels.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

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 indicates that it is committed to actively recruiting and retaining individuals who are members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. In addition, the applicant also includes a GEPA statement. (Page 22)

Weaknesses:

The statement provided by the applicant concerning employment from underrepresented groups is somewhat general. It is unclear what specific steps the applicant will take to recruit and select members from these groups. No information is provided concerning job postings and selection methods.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant generally describes several key personnel such as the school principal, the Language Acquisition Specialist, and the fiscal director of the project. For each professional, the applicant provides a general statement about their qualifications. (Page 23) For example, the applicant describes one of the professionals as having years of experience working with English Language Learners.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear who the project director is. The individual or title is not included in the narrative section concerning key personnel. It is unclear if the principal investigator is the project director. More specific information is needed on who is managing and implementing the project.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant describes a number of key consultants and advisors who will work with the project. (Page 24) Included are the Childsplay Project Co-Directors, the parent organization of Drama Frames. In addition, the applicant describes the principal investigator who is a faculty member at a nearby teachers college. The principal investigator has many publications and has experience in early childhood education.

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: 20

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 describes the work of three parties, the school and district project directors, the Childsplay project directors, and the principal investigator. (Page 25) The school and district project directors will provide access to research data, support participating teachers, schedule programs and services, communicate program activities to the community, and provide general administrative oversight. The applicant also provides a description of the roles of the other two parties.

Weaknesses:

The overall organizational structure of the project is unclear. In addition to not naming the specific project director, the applicant provides little information concerning how the various personnel will interact with each other and carry out appropriate duties. It is unclear who the project director will report to and how the project will be supervised by the district.

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 the time commitments for a number of personnel. (Page 29) For example, the positions and time commitments identified were the principal (3%), the director of curriculum (2%), the English Language Learner Coordinator (3%), and the Childsplay Co-Directors (25%). The principal investigator will devote 25% of his time.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear how much time the district and school project directors will devote to the project. Information about these positions is very general and does not have specific functions or duties associated with them. As a result, a time commitment that is appropriate cannot be determined.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

To gather feedback and seek improvement, the applicant indicates that it will use evaluation instruments, reflection forms, unit meetings, and focus groups. These activities will provide ongoing information for the project staff in order to make any necessary changes as the program proceeds. In addition, monthly meetings to review program goals and timelines as well as bimonthly feedback reports will be used.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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: 21

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 a research plan that includes evaluative processes that are focused on a number of areas related to the project. (Page 33) The applicant identifies a number of tests it will use in terms of arts education; for example, the Arts Content Test of Knowledge. The applicant will also measure satisfaction levels of teachers and will conduct semi-structured focus groups. As a result, the applicant will measure outcomes of teachers, students, and the Drama Frames program.

Weaknesses:

The information provided by the applicant focuses on a number of research activities it plans to carry out. (Page 36) It is unclear how the various research activities and evaluation processes are brought together in a unified format that constitutes a plan. Needed is a clear statement of what outcomes the project is seeking to measure and what specific information will be used to measure those outcomes. The various activities need to be aligned with the goals and objectives of the project.

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:

In the evaluation plan, the applicant includes a research plan and timeline. (Page 43) The plan includes dates, events, data and instruments to collect the data, and responsible personnel for the activity. Included in the plan are quarterly program status reports, data analysis, and written reports updating progress.

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.)**

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that it will use a number of measurements and standardized tests to report the progress of the students. (Page 37) These measurements will be compared to a control group (another school in the district) in order to assess the progress of the students in the project.

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:

In addressing the competitive priority, the applicant indicates it plans to create an online resource center that will provide searchable lesson plans, sample videos of lessons and techniques, a database page, copies of all program tools and templates, and additional program data. The information will be provided on a selective basis using a password protected approach.

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 20

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/17/2014 09:15 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/06/2014 02:09 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Osborn School District (U351C140024)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	5
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	10
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	11
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	23
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	24
Sub Total	100	88
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	120	108

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Osborn School District (U351C140024)

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: 5

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 proposed drama program will endeavor to strengthen the skills of English Language learners to express themselves and build confidence (p 2).

This is an excellent approach to serve the 32% of students who are English language learners within a school with a nearly 84% free or reduced lunch rate (p 2). The proposed drama program will integrate well into the district's new English and Language Arts curriculum that is customized to three different levels of English facility (p 4).

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 strong evidence of the extent to which the project results will be disseminated in ways that enable others to use the information or strategies. The applicant's partner, Childsplay, has a history of presenting its research to state and national arts organizations, and will disseminate the results of this project through conferences and publications. The partner will also work with other school districts to obtain funding for the program in their schools (p 5-6).

The applicant will share resources with other English Language Learners educators through in-service opportunities and through a planned online resource center (p 6).

Sub Question

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 Design

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

General:

N/A

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 applicant provides strong evidence of the extent to which the proposed project's design is supported by strong theory. The applicant will utilize the evidence-based Drama Frames model that was developed through the ED's Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination program (p 7).

A randomized control trial of another Arizona school district highlighted the statistically-significant benefits in writing and reading scores (p 7) and increased levels of teacher confidence and comfort in working with English Language Learners. The Drama Frames model has been implemented in the applicant's district at the preschool level with early results suggesting its positive impact on numerous language arts skills (p 8).

The applicant's logic model is very well laid-out and offers a well-reasoned approach to the implementation of this program to accomplish the project goals. The 64 hours of proposed teacher professional development is especially impressive in its scope and variety (p 9-11).

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:

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. Each participating teacher will receive a variety of tools, including lesson plans, books, and support materials, as well as an online resource center for trained and new teachers (p 13). Ongoing Professional Learning Communities will support teacher interaction and sharing of ideas and strategies (p 12). The partner has committed to offering another year of services for those teachers who will have completed only one year of training prior to the end of the grant (p 18).

Sub Question

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: 15

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 program will disseminate materials in the language spoken at home of all students and families (p 13-14). All teachers, including those of special education students and those without a classroom, will have the opportunity to take part in some facet of the training, which will be customized to meet the teacher's individual needs (p 14).

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 applicant will utilize an "I do, We do, You do" approach to support teacher's developing comfort and skills with the particular topic (p 16).

This philosophy appears to be a strong approach that will help to increase confidence and comprehension over time while building bonds among teacher participants.

Further, the scaffolded structure of the training promises a more in-depth understanding of the basic building blocks of drama-infused learning (p 17). The heavy courseload in the first year (52 of 64 hours) makes sense to build those skills and confidence for classroom-ready activities (p 19).

Sub Question

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 applicant provides moderate evidence that the project's services will lead to improvements in student achievement as measured against rigorous academic standards. The applicant states that earlier versions of the proposed model at the preschool level resulted in a 20% increase in writing scores compared to control group students (p 21).

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 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:

N/A

Reader's Score: 11

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 moderate evidence of the extent to which the applicant will encourage employment applications from underrepresented groups. Page e10 contains the school district's hiring practices and activities designed to recruit and retain employees of all backgrounds.

Weaknesses:

The application would be strengthened by information regarding the applicant's plans to recruit potential applications from underrepresented groups, such as which job boards, professional associations, colleges or universities, or other sources they might utilize.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides moderate evidence of the qualifications of key project personnel. The resumes of the leadership team show a good mix of arts and bilingual/dual language classroom and administrative experience (p e66-e69). The proposed fiscal director has years of experience in grants reporting (p 23).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not identify who will serve in the Project Director role.

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. Funded by ED and private foundations, the partner consultants will serve as Project Directors. They provide similar professional development services throughout the state (p 23) and have presented at numerous national educational and theatrical conferences (p 24).

The Project Directors will oversee the work of the teaching artists, who have classroom experience and skills (p 24). Finally, the Principal Investigator shows extensive experience and scholarship in arts and early childhood education (p e75-e77).

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: 23

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 detailed timeline shows a strong understanding of the various interdependencies among the activities to be accomplished (p 26-29).

Of special interest is the level of detail that includes IRB applications and the development of the Teacher Facilitation Rubric (p 27). Similarly, the key milestones for accountability show a seriousness of purpose that is refreshing (p 29).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The overall organizational structure between the school and the partner is unclear; therefore, it is unclear how the district will oversee the partner's work. Additionally, the applicant might consider assigning specific people within the different organizations (e.g., the co-Project Directors or Teaching Arts of Childsplay, or which elementary school official) in order to have a stronger sense of each person's commitment and workload.

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 moderate evidence of the appropriateness and adequacy of the time commitments of key project personnel to meet project objectives. The partner Project Co-Directors will devote 25% FTE to the project, and the school personnel will provide 2-3% of their time.

Weaknesses:

Given the large number of responsibilities for the elementary school team, particularly during the planning year, it is not clear that 2-3% FTE will be sufficient to complete all tasks. If one of these personnel are to oversee the project as Project Director, this time allocation is insufficient for such an extensive project.

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 applicant will collect data from ongoing assessments of teacher performance utilizing rubrics, unit meetings, and focus groups (p 30-31). Further, teacher and teaching artists' feedback will be utilized to adjust the professional development program (p 39).

Standardized test scores and pre-and post-student surveys will keep project leaders informed of the initiative's impact on student progress (p 32). The leadership team will meet with the Principal Investigator on a quarterly basis to review the data and consider changes to the project design (p 31).

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

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. Student reading scores on State tests, tests of reading comprehension, and State English Language Learner tests will provide rich data resources for measuring student progress.

Teacher data will include quantitative scores of teacher knowledge, efficacy, and classroom performance through pre- and post-surveys and tested rubrics (p 34-36) as well as the qualitative data from focus groups.

Weaknesses:

The application would be strengthened by the inclusion of an overall evaluation framework or strategy into which these various evaluation tools fit. The framework would also help explicitly tie the various elements of the evaluation to the project goals and objectives.

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. A rich array of data, culled from a variety of data gathering methods, will inform the evaluation. For example, a rigorous ongoing assessment of teacher classroom performance through rubrics, reflection forms, unit meetings, and focus groups will determine implementation fidelity and needed adjustments to the program (p 30-31). Additionally, meetings with teachers and teaching artists will inform adjustments to the training model (p 39).

Student progress will be evaluated through standardized test scores and pre- and post-surveys (p 32). The Principal Investigator will meet quarterly with the leadership team to discuss the results of the evaluation (p 31).

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 strong evidence of the extent to which the evaluation will, if well implemented, provide evidence of promise. The evaluation plan on pages 43-46 is robust and well-detailed.

The evaluation will review child-level outcomes compared to a control school without the treatment via a quasi-experimental study, and teacher-level outcomes will use a pre- and post-test design (p 33).

Sub Question

The teacher pre- and post-assessment instruments will be well-designed and based on national assessment tools (p33-35) and supplemented by qualitative focus group research.

The research protocols and project design are based on an earlier version of this project, designed for preschoolers, which has shown significant peer-reviewed results (p 40-42) in terms of students' gains in the Six Traits of Writing skills.

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 online resource center will house a searchable lesson plan database, drama book lists, sample videos, and Pinterest links to lesson materials (p 18, 49).

Weaknesses:

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

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

Reader's Score: 20

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