

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/01/2015 12:13 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Center for Civic Education (U367D150010)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design & Services	35	26
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Sustainability	15	13
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
Sub Total	100	86
Priority Questions		
CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness		
CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness		
1. CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
CPP3: Promoting STEM Education		
CPP3: Promoting STEM Education		
1. CPP3: Promoting STEM ED	2	0
Sub Total	2	0
CPP4: High-Need Students		
CPP4: High-Need Students		
1. CPP4: High-Need Students	4	2
Sub Total	4	2
Total	107	89

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2015 SEED Peer Review - 7: 84.367D

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Center for Civic Education (U367D150010)

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:

- (1) The significance of the proposed project on a National Level.
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices.
- (3) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Strengths:

This project addresses the national need for improvement in civics education in 45 states plus Washington DC which has a wide national impact. The Center's widely visited website will have an even greater impact beyond the project.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design and services of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design and services of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.
- (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

Strengths:

The applicant provides clear objectives aligned with project outputs and outcomes. Overall, these objectives are solid and detailed. The applicant effectively links this project to academic and state and national standards. The proposed project is of sufficient intensity and duration to lead to improvements in practice. The blended learning model is a strength of the project. The applicant adequately addressed disadvantaged individuals.

Weaknesses:

The applicant may consider more specifically measurable outcomes for some objectives to clearly delineate whether that objective has been met. A case is not made for a shortage of civics or government teachers who are the targeted population of this project. The applicant mentions high needs students throughout but does not show a clear plan for how the needs of these students will be addressed.

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project and of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and the project personnel, the Secretary considers:

(1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.

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

(3) The extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.

Strengths:

The proposed personnel are highly qualified and have relevant training and experience to run this project. A clear and detailed management plan is provided that links milestones, timelines, and persons responsible to each objective. This plan lends confidence that project tasks will be completed on time and within budget. The Center makes a case for established resources to support this project.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to continue the proposed project after the grant period ends. In determining the adequacy of resources and the potential for utility of the proposed project's activities and products by other organizations, the Secretary considers:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations.

(3) The extent to which the applicant will disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project in ways that will enable others, including the public, to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant has a history of sustaining initiatives. Access to project resources should continue after the project. The implications of the PD used for this project can be shared across subject areas. The applicant plans to disseminate project information via reports, media, and organizations.

Weaknesses:

The applicant should consider specifically identifying how the website and online resources can be maintained beyond grant funding.

Reader's Score: 13

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:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.
- (2) The extent to which the evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.
- (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

Note: We encourage applicants to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation:
(1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/idocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1>; and
(2) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/.

In addition, we encourage applicants to participate in an optional Webinar hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences on March 6, 2015. This Webinar will discuss strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-experimental Design Studies. Applicants interested in participating in this Webinar may find more information at the following Web site: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/event.aspx?sid=37>.

Strengths:

The applicant provides clear objectives aligned with project outputs and outcomes. Overall, these objectives are solid and detailed. The applicant effectively links this project to academic and state and national standards. The proposed project is of sufficient intensity and duration to lead to improvements in practice. The blended learning model is a strength of the project. The applicant adequately addressed disadvantaged individuals. The applicant addresses WWC standards without reservations through the use of randomized control trials.

Weaknesses:

The applicant may consider more specifically measurable outcomes for some objectives to clearly delineate whether that objective has been met.

Reader's Score: 17

Priority Questions

CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness - CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)

This priority funds projects that will identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high-quality services at the State, regional, or local level by making better use of available resources. Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of Open Educational Resources (as defined in the notice), or other strategies.

Strengths:

The case has been made for cost effectiveness through the use of cost-effective, high quality professional development through technology and open educational resources.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

CPP3: Promoting STEM Education - CPP3: Promoting STEM Education

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education

(Please only assign a score of either 0 or 2 for this question.)

This priority funds projects that address one or both of the following priority areas:

(a) Increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

(b) Increasing the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, including minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women, who are teachers of STEM subjects and have increased opportunities for high-quality preparation or professional development.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to measure the impact the proposed project activities have on teacher effectiveness. Applicants must determine teacher effectiveness through a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation in which performance is differentiated using multiple measures of effectiveness and based in significant part on student growth (as defined in this notice).

Note: The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 3 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

This was not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

CPP4: High-Need Students - CPP4: High-Need Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Supporting High-Need Students

This priority funds projects that are designed to improve:

- (a) Academic outcomes;
- (b) Learning environments; or
- (c) Both,

For one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Students in Lowest-performing Schools.
- (v) Students who are living in poverty and are served by schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty.
- (vi) Disconnected Youth or migrant youth.
- (vii) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 4 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The applicant specifically states they will target high needs schools and high need students.

Weaknesses:

More detail should address how these needs will met.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/01/2015 12:13 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/31/2015 11:00 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Center for Civic Education (U367D150010)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design & Services	35	26
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Sustainability	15	13
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
Sub Total	100	86
Priority Questions		
CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness		
CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness		
1. CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
CPP3: Promoting STEM Education		
CPP3: Promoting STEM Education		
1. CPP3: Promoting STEM ED	2	0
Sub Total	2	0
CPP4: High-Need Students		
CPP4: High-Need Students		
1. CPP4: High-Need Students	4	1
Sub Total	4	1
Total	107	88

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2015 SEED Peer Review - 7: 84.367D

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Center for Civic Education (U367D150010)

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:

- (1) The significance of the proposed project on a National Level.
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices.
- (3) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Strengths:

The applicant currently implements a nationwide program designed to increase the content knowledge of teachers and students in civic education. The proposed project has the potential to be significant and have impact on a national scale. The project will provide professional development to 675 teachers in forty-six states and the District of Columbia each year of the grant thus potentially reaching 2,025 teachers and 202,500 students. (Page 10-11) The results of this program will determine if professional development delivered yields more effective, highly trained teachers who are capable of fostering high need students' attainment of state standards.

The applicant cites research that conveys the compelling need for professional development in civic preparation for students. According to National Assessment of Education Progress Civics Assessment, a disappointing 25% of students are performing above the proficient level at their tested grade level. (Page 6) Research further shows that schools may exacerbate the problem by not providing quality instruction in civic education. The applicant seeks to providing professional development for 675 teachers per year in civics education using a blended learning model in which mentor teachers lead professional development programs using online, videotaped interviews. If the proposed method is effective, the applicant will be able to provide cost effective professional development for teachers across the nation. This contribution could be substantial as there are scores of teachers reportedly that are teaching outside of their area certification or are in need of professional development.

The magnitude of the proposed project is adequately presented. Each year of project implementation will train 675 who will gain knowledge and skills required to promote students' attainment of state standards in civics and government. A secondary result of this project is to encourage students to become civic-minded adults. This outcome will be substantial in high need areas as this demographic is considered to be historically disengaged.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design and services of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design and services of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.
- (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

Strengths:

The goals are clearly articulated in the proposed project. (Page 15-6) The objectives and outcomes are clearly aligned to the goals.

The applicant clearly demonstrates how it has been a part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and supports rigorous academic standards for students. Since 1965, the applicant has been implementing standards-based PD and curricular programs in civics and government. The applicant has a group of state coordinators, mentor teachers, scholars, members of government to focus on We the People and other PD and curricular programs. (Page 21) A study of the We the People PD and curriculum programs determined that it meets the What Works Clearinghouse criteria for moderate evidence of effectiveness that demonstrates its effort to improve teaching and learning.

The proposed program will provide participants with professional development services that appear to be sufficient in quality, intensity and duration which will likely lead to their improvements in practice. Participants will take part in the traditional or blended method PD. The participants in the year 1 traditional method will receive 36 hours of training that have been rated as successful in prior years. In year two, both cohorts will receive a total of 52 hours of PD. (Page 27) The duration of PD appear to be adequate to provide meaningful training which will likely increase teachers knowledge and skills.

The applicant will depend on state coordinators to identify schools with high concentrations of high-need students that include students with disabilities, English learners, students in Lowest-performing Schools, students who are living in poverty and are served by schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty.

Weaknesses:

The goals and objectives are not written in measureable terms; therefore, it is difficult to ascertain the level of program effectiveness.

The cost effective while broadening its reach with reach nationwide. It is unclear why the blended method is only given a one-year trial period of implementation. It would appear that if this proposed method has potential, the applicant would consider an additional year to modify the program to increase the deliverables proposed in the plan.

The applicant states that the blended learning model will be implemented in year 3, if the research justifies its further use. (Page 24) This plan is concerning because the applicant does not allow the opportunity to make modifications to the plan. One of the goals of the proposed projects is to study the feasibility and effectiveness of using high-quality online PD resources in blended learning programs. (Page 15) It would be reasonable to provide more time this portion of the project thus providing other agencies with information as it relates to implementing cost effective PD.

The applicant acknowledges that there are no shortages in the area in which it seeks to provide professional development. (Page 32) However, the applicant states that many teachers report that they are unprepared to teach

civics and government classes.

Although the applicant states that it will focus on schools with large groups of high need students, it is not easily ascertained how it will directly serve the needs of the targeted population.

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project and of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and the project personnel, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.**
- (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
- (3) The extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

Strengths:

The applicant clearly provides a description of appropriate staff assigned to the project. Key personnel identified to work on the project will include the project director, directors of professional development, fiscal affairs, IT and curriculum as well as project consultants and subcontractors. Personnel identified for this project appear highly qualified and experienced to effectively carry out the proposed project as evidenced on pages 34-37 and their resumes in the appendix. The applicant provides a chart that provides a general outline of the management plan including the projects objectives, milestones, and persons responsible for accomplishing project tasks. (pages 40-41).

The applicant provides a general statement that asserts that the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources in the areas related to the project design. The applicant relies heavily on its experience in estimating its resources to be able to stay within budget. The budget narrative outlines the key personnel's commitment to the project, which appears to be reasonable.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to continue the proposed project after the grant period ends. In determining the adequacy of resources and the potential for utility of the proposed project's activities and products by other organizations, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations.**
- (3) The extent to which the applicant will disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project in ways that will enable others, including the public, to use the information or**

strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a project that has an adequate design to build capacity and yield results beyond federal funding. The applicant has amply demonstrated its sustainability beyond Federal financial assistance that includes public and private sources. In some instances, funding is provided by state legislatures, universities, and nonprofit organizations. (page 43) If successful, the blended model for PD is designed to build capacity for school districts that struggle with being able to provide teachers with training in a cost effective manner.

The proposed project has adequate potential to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations. The applicant has been established as a leader in providing professional development and increasing content knowledge to civic and government educators for many years. In addition to the traditional PD methods currently used by the applicant, it proposes to use a blended learning model. If the applicant determines that the blended learning model implemented in year 2 is effective, the applicant will continue building upon this method. (page 24) This could be beneficial for other agencies that are developing alternative PD models.

The applicant clearly articulates its plan to disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project that will enable others to use the information and strategies. A comprehensive report will be given to the Department of Education and an executive summary will be shared with all interested groups. In addition, information will be shared via the applicant's website, added to educator databases, and included in scholarly journals.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not appear to have considered how the online resources will be supported beyond Federal funding.

Reader's Score: 13

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:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.**
- (2) The extent to which the evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.**
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.**

Note: We encourage applicants to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation:
(1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/idocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1>; and
(2) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/.

In addition, we encourage applicants to participate in an optional Webinar hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences on March 6, 2015. This Webinar will discuss strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-experimental Design Studies. Applicants interested in participating in this Webinar may find more information at the following Web site: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/event.aspx?sid=37>.

Strengths:

The applicant's methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. The external evaluator will use multiple forms of evaluations to provide the applicant with a wealth of feedback regarding the proposed program. Qualitative and quantitative data will be garnered from the partnering sites to conduct the impact evaluation as well as the implementation and formative evaluations.

The evaluation process will use objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and produce qualitative and quantitative data. The evaluator will use data garnered from teacher and student surveys, assessments of teacher and student civic knowledge and performance tracking (Pages 50-51). Additional qualitative data will include teacher professional engagement, teacher efficacy, and classroom pedagogy.

The evaluation will provide adequate performance feedback and will permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving the intended outcomes. Interim and full cohort evaluation reports will be given in February and July of each year. (Appendix 10c) Evaluation of teachers, students and both proposed PD programs are scheduled to occur throughout the implementation of the project. This information may allow key personnel to make adjustments and to monitor progress toward the objectives stated.

The evaluation method is designed to meet the What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards without reservations and will ensure that it will produce clear evidence regarding the project's effectiveness. The evaluation will include randomized assignments experimental and control groups. The applicant also addresses attrition and ensures that a baseline equivalence is determined. (page 56)

The applicant has ensured that sufficient resources have been placed on the evaluation process. The proposed project will have external evaluators in place to determine the effectiveness of the proposed program. The evaluation lead and graduate students will have necessary resources at their disposal. The evaluation budget was calculated based on the personnel and time needed to complete the evaluation.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide any quantifying measures to determine what it would consider successful implementation of the proposed project. For example, by the end of Year 1, the participants will increase their content knowledge by 25% as demonstrated on the We the People posttest for teachers. Clearly established measurable goals need to be established to determine program effectiveness.

Reader's Score: 17

Priority Questions**CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness - CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness****1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)**

This priority funds projects that will identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high-quality services at the State, regional, or local level by making better use of available resources. Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of Open Educational Resources (as defined in the notice), or other strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant proposes to implement a blended learning model which is designed to provide a cost effective way to provide high quality professional development to teachers. The blended learning model utilizes “ mentor teachers lead PD programs using online, videotaped scholarly interviews will produce results comparable to the traditional programs that include face-to-face interactions with scholars.” (pages 3-4)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

CPP3: Promoting STEM Education - CPP3: Promoting STEM Education**1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education**

(Please only assign a score of either 0 or 2 for this question.)

This priority funds projects that address one or both of the following priority areas:

(a) Increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

(b) Increasing the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, including minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women, who are teachers of STEM subjects and have increased opportunities for high-quality preparation or professional development.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to measure the impact the proposed project activities have on teacher effectiveness. Applicants must determine teacher effectiveness through a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation in which performance is differentiated using multiple measures of effectiveness and based in significant part on student growth (as defined in this notice).

Note: The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 3 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The applicant did not address this Competitive Preference Priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this Competitive Preference Priority.

Reader's Score: 0

CPP4: High-Need Students - CPP4: High-Need Students**1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Supporting High-Need Students**

This priority funds projects that are designed to improve:

(a) Academic outcomes;

- (b) Learning environments; or
- (c) Both,

For one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Students in Lowest-performing Schools.
- (v) Students who are living in poverty and are served by schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty.
- (vi) Disconnected Youth or migrant youth.
- (vii) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 4 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The proposed project meets the criteria for supporting high need students. The applicant will provide professional development opportunities for civic and government teachers in schools that serve high need populations.

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant has stated that it will serve high need students, it is questionable what the actual percentage will be since the participants will be randomly recruited.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 05/31/2015 11:00 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/27/2015 04:23 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Center for Civic Education (U367D150010)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	8
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design & Services	35	26
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	17
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Sustainability	15	14
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	16
Sub Total	100	81
Priority Questions		
CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness		
CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness		
1. CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
CPP3: Promoting STEM Education		
CPP3: Promoting STEM Education		
1. CPP3: Promoting STEM ED	2	0
Sub Total	2	0
CPP4: High-Need Students		
CPP4: High-Need Students		
1. CPP4: High-Need Students	4	2
Sub Total	4	2
Total	107	84

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2015 SEED Peer Review - 7: 84.367D

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Center for Civic Education (U367D150010)

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:

- (1) The significance of the proposed project on a National Level.
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices.
- (3) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Strengths:

The "We The People" Civic education program is well established as professional development delivered in a nationwide model.

The national model/system is already established, and there is now an expanded interest in blended learning (p. 3) for delivery of materials. In addition, the material will continue to be available on the Open Educational Resource (see p.8).

On page 9, Independent research on the program will focus on teacher content knowledge and productive pedagogy, both of which are critical to student achievement improvement.

Weaknesses:

\The blended learning model being tested may not be particularly appropriate to the high-need schools being selected. The intention is to test this model (p. 4) and potentially go back to the traditional model after one year seems unreasonably limiting.

On page 8, the proposal reports the impact of the "We the People" curriculum on its alumni. Evidence is not presented that this review (of previous work) included schools with the demographics that this proposal intends to serve. Note - planning described p. 11-12 under "magnitude" makes no mention of high-needs schools. It is not clear that the organization has any experience working with teachers of high-need students or expertise in serving their specific needs.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design and services of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design and services of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.
- (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

Strengths:

The project objectives are for a sound teacher background in civics: the proposal's focus is on teacher knowledge, skills, and dispositions for effective teaching of the specific content area.

Quality of materials and PD opportunities is established (p. 20).

Goals are clearly stated, as are expected outcomes (less clear what standard or expectation there is for measuring these outcomes).

There is evidence presented (pages 26-28) that the applicant has experience delivering PD services that have been of sufficient quality and intensity, etc. in the past.

Weaknesses:

It is not clear how this initiative can be considered a "comprehensive effort" because of its focus on civic education. No other services or plans of actions are described that will impact other aspects of the challenges of teachers and students in high-need schools.

The applicant will be "asking administrators" to support and mentor teachers (who will be selected, ideally in pairs). P. 10 It is difficult to know what a "collegial exchange of ideas, etc." looks like and/or how do we know it's effective, especially with a population of teachers that may not have been involved before.

The proposal acknowledges that there is no shortage of civics and government teachers, although it points out reasons why those teachers do not have the content knowledge needed (p. 32).

Analysis on p. 33 re: Hispanic students on the NAEP tests does make the case for improving teacher quality for high-need schools, but, looking at p. 25 of the proposal, there is a lot of teacher capacity and access to tech/digital tools expected. Other than the plan to select teachers from high-need schools, there is no evidence that the proposal is prepared to specifically serve disadvantaged individuals. Project plan p. 14 includes "high needs students" but nothing else in that chart suggests that activities or supports are specifically targeted to them.

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project and of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and the project personnel, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.
- (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.
- (3) The extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.

Strengths:

There is an established leadership team for curriculum development, professional development and assessment/evaluation.

Weaknesses:

The project evaluation has a level of fine-grained school observations and data collection that seems daunting given that the Georgetown evaluation budget appears to be for one professor and one graduate student. There is significant qualitative work outlined in the evaluation design, but there is no budget for transcription. It is possible that this is meant to be covered in institutional IDC, which is at a very high rate (55.5%).

Reader's Score: 17

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to continue the proposed project after the grant period ends. In determining the adequacy of resources and the potential for utility of the proposed project's activities and products by other organizations, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations.
- (3) The extent to which the applicant will disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project in ways that will enable others, including the public, to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

There is a broad network for disseminating the "We The People" curriculum that is already in place, although it is apparently starved for resources on a national/coordinating level (p. 43). With the support of this proposal, the PD delivery will include hybrid/ online resources.

The materials developed, and findings from research on the blended model (p. 45-46) will be usefully shared with others, and the partnerships are in place for this to happen (p. 46) on a national level.

Weaknesses:

The PD delivery will include hybrid/ online resources that are not sustained beyond project.

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:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.
- (2) The extent to which the evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.
- (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

Note: We encourage applicants to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation:

- (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/idocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1>; and
- (2) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/.

In addition, we encourage applicants to participate in an optional Webinar hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences on March 6, 2015. This Webinar will discuss strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-experimental Design Studies. Applicants interested in participating in this Webinar may find more information at the following Web site: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/event.aspx?sid=37>.

Strengths:

The design for accessing teacher opinions of the impact of the project's PD programming and on the students include important measures, including civic skills and dispositions, that are relevant to the proposals goals and objectives (p.54-55).

The design to include a cohort baseline (p. 56) appears to be sufficient to generate evidence of WWC efficacy. There is a plan to combat attrition and a design that will communicate the importance of assessments/evaluations to participants.

Weaknesses:

The application, on p. 50, reports an evaluation design focused on high-need students, but these are not defined. It is not clear why this focus would be appropriate for the overall project.

The proposal claims that the quantitative impact will be measured by "validated outcome measures" p. 52, but these are not named. This is especially an issue with the measures of student learning. That there are state standards relevant to the topics named is not a question, but the question is of the tests or other measures that are going to be used to capture impact on student learning.

It is clear that data/information will be coming in to the center for assessing progress, but it's not clear that this is a feedback loop that will help individual states or systems improve their work or correct a course.

Reader's Score: 16

Priority Questions

CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness - CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)

This priority funds projects that will identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high-quality services at the State, regional, or local level by making better use of available resources. Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of Open Educational Resources (as defined in the notice), or other strategies.

Strengths:

Effectiveness and efficiency will come from online resources and newly developed hybrid delivery models.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 1

CPP3: Promoting STEM Education - CPP3: Promoting STEM Education

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education

(Please only assign a score of either 0 or 2 for this question.)

This priority funds projects that address one or both of the following priority areas:

(a) Increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

(b) Increasing the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, including minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women, who are teachers of STEM subjects and have increased opportunities for high-quality preparation or professional development.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to measure the impact the proposed project activities have on teacher effectiveness. Applicants must determine teacher effectiveness through a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation in which performance is differentiated using multiple measures of effectiveness and based in significant part on student growth (as defined in this notice).

Note: The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 3 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

Not addressed.

Weaknesses:

Not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

CPP4: High-Need Students - CPP4: High-Need Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Supporting High-Need Students

This priority funds projects that are designed to improve:

- (a) Academic outcomes;
- (b) Learning environments; or
- (c) Both,

For one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Students in Lowest-performing Schools.
- (v) Students who are living in poverty and are served by schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty.
- (vi) Disconnected Youth or migrant youth.
- (vii) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 4 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The applicant intends to address high-need students as one component of the proposal (within the broader national/state chapter framework).

Weaknesses:

High-need students/schools who are not a sufficient focus of the proposal. The applicant has not organized the intended activities of the project with a specific design to serve students in high-need schools or be fully responsive to the challenges that these schools face.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

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