

Technical Review Cover Sheet

Panel Details

Fiscal Year 2010 **CFDA/Subprogram** 84.295A **Schedule No** 1 **Tier No.** 1

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R1		

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Selection Criteria		
Need for Project	15	14
Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design	25	24
Project Personnel	10	10
Management Plan	20	20
Project Evaluation	20	19
TOTAL	100	97

Technical Review Form

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R1		

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1.

The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project by considering the following factors:

- a) **The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.**
- b) **The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.**

Strengths

This proposal provides solid research-based goals that pertain to both early childhood math and literacy deficiencies. There is an expansive focus on serving low income students. What is very striking about this proposal is their added attention to the state of low income school in the U.S. It cites that the nation's poorest schools are often those least likely to be able to provide their teachers with powerful new teaching tools and professional development opportunities (page 160). This is a fact that is sometimes overlooked in projects that seek to revolutionize and deliver transmedia to students and families. The project aims to provide services and materials to the schools who serve the target audience. Furthermore, in regard to this entity's abilities to serve the target group, Hispanic, African-American, and low-income homes represent a disproportionately higher number of PBS KIDS viewers and Web visitors, compared to their representation in the U.S. population. (Page 160) The audience is already actively coming to them to supplement their educational needs. The pieces are in place; this leaves little room for weakness in services or specific gaps.

Weaknesses

Further detail is needed regarding the plan and methods for delivering materials to schools and in targeting parents of at-risk youth.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Significance

2.

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project by considering the following factor:

- a) **The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.**

Strengths

CPB and PBS are uniquely well-positioned to harness the power of high-quality transmedia content to reach and help struggling children get on the path to academic success.
More than 21 million children watch PBS KIDS on television, and more than 20 million engage with PBS

KIDS online each quarter. (page 160). The potential is enormous for this proposal to succeed in being used in a variety of other settings. The project will focus on technologies and interventions that they believe hold the most promise for delivering effective and engaging educational content to the widest audience possible, including low-income audiences. (page 164) Their focus on the strengths and potential of mobile platforms, for example, is savvy and research-based. They have already conducted research based in iPhone apps of their educational programs.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

3.

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

- a) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practices.**
- b) 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.**
- c) 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.**

Strengths

The project will provide searchable, transmedia learning resources that strategically use multiple media formats to meet the individual learning styles of children (page 161). The proposal is mindful and respectful of differentiated instruction for students. They have provided ways to modify the tools and materials so that students who learn in different ways and have different needs can benefit equally. They have identified three new math properties for children ages 3-5 to develop into television and game pilots. These properties exemplify engaging, age-appropriate, character-driven transmedia storytelling that seamlessly integrates a focused research- and standards-based early childhood math curriculum.(page 10). Peg + Cat, Mini and Max, and Astroblast are all excellent pilot projects. Astroblast even incorporates nutrition and healthy practices. They support and reflect current national curriculum standards (page 166) and place all of the learning goals and methods into what they call their educational ecosystem. The entire model as detailed on page 167, is excellent, clear, and inspiring. Transmedia wrappers are yet another unique tools to tie apps and content together. (page 176).

Weaknesses

The project acknowledges a Need to Foster Family Engagement and Support Home Learning. They propose providing free tools to families such as websites and a progress tracker tool that will empower parents and educators to gain insight into what children are learning (page 162). Yet, there should be consideration of low income parents in regard to their own personal levels of technology sophistication. Often in school, students- low or high income students- can sometimes easily out rank their teachers in technology ability. The same certainly holds true for families, parents, and care givers. If they are to interact with these wonderful materials and tools, then the proposal should incorporate a parent and family technology develop session of some kind. Without parents who know how to engage the tools, then the gap remains.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

4.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

a) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers 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.

b) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factor. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths

As leaders in affirmative action and equal employment opportunities in the broadcast industry, the boards of CPB and PBS annually implement plans to ensure and maintain diversity in their workforces. (page 181). This commitment to diversity to all individuals make the project even more appealing, as this entity will surely translate the same acceptance and insight into what they create for kids. Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), as joint applicants, are in cooperation with the Chicago Public Schools and Boston University's School of Education, as well as the National Summer Learning Association and the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems. These prestigious and experienced partners create an ideal collaborative entity for RTL. (page 158) Over the last five years, under the leadership of CPB and PBS, RTL pioneered groundbreaking transmedia content designed to encourage children to learn, practice, and reinforce key skills and build connections that bridge home and school environments (page 165). The leaders for this project have unparalleled experiences and expertise.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

5.

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

- 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.**
- 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.**
- c) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

Strengths

In relation to their products and pilots, CPB and PBS will initiate an innovative national campaign to engage children in voting for their favorite new properties. Including transmedia polls and voting is another excellent way to fill the gap for students. Researchers will conduct in-depth focus group testing with children, parents, and educators to measure the appeal and educational efficacy of the content and consult the math curriculum advisory team to determine which properties best support math learning outcomes. At the conclusion of this review, one of the pilots will be expanded into a full RTL PBS KIDS television and multi-platform series in 2012, and at least one other will be developed as an RTL PBS KIDS broadband-original property. This plan is a transparent way to engage students into the development process, and serves as a strong teachable moment as well. (page 171) They have created a timeline that details every aspect of the project down to each transmedia tool. (Page 187). Outreach and research are given appropriate and extensive time and energy and they have ensured that all aspects of the project will have adequate personnel assigned. (page 189)

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

6.

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project by considering the following factors:

- 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.**
- 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 research plan is an integrated program of formative and summative research, research teams will conduct needs assessments, a sequence of quick response implementation studies, and a series of mixed-methods studies and formative experiments (using random assignment). These studies will examine the effectiveness of individual media properties and platforms and the synergistic effect of transmedia gaming suites created over the life of the project on student learning and parent and teacher engagement. (page 196) Evaluators will recruit approximately 60 preschools and 60 after-school programs in markets serving low-income families in three states.

Participation incentives will include free technology access and a modest participation reward. (page 198) This reward will ensure that participants feel valued and open to the experience in an effective way. The summative evaluation is highly detailed and well thought out.

Weaknesses

Evaluation may not have adequate educational and visors and focus. While creative, outreach, and technology experts abound, more educational experts are necessary in all phases, namely evaluation.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 19

Technical Review Cover Sheet

Panel Details

Fiscal Year 2010 **CFDA/Subprogram** 84.295A **Schedule No** 1 **Tier No.** 1

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R2		

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Selection Criteria		
Need for Project	15	13
Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design	25	22
Project Personnel	10	8
Management Plan	20	18
Project Evaluation	20	20
TOTAL	100	91

Technical Review Form

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R2		

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1.

The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project by considering the following factors:

a) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of

students at risk of educational failure.

b) **The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.**

Strengths

STRENGTHS: This proposal focuses on the need to deliver to American children a next-generation educational ecosystem of integrated transmedia content in literacy and numeracy. In other words, the goal is to provide content that reinforces language skills and early math education across multiple platforms, especially online games and mobile applications, but also to interactive white-boards in schools, and, of course, to good, old fashioned television sets in American homes. The proposal states that this grant would lead to the development of a compelling new vision for Ready To Learn, the banner used by PBS (historically) to describe its preschool programs.

The needs identified include the need to offer young children high quality transmedia learning experiences; the need for high quality transmedia resources in schools; the need to engage children outside of the school day and school year; the need for content to support individual differences and differentiated instruction; and the need to foster family engagement and support home learning. While those are a multitude of needs and agendas, the proposal addresses all of them in a convincing way.

Of note, the proposal addresses the gaps in educational services available to high risk children. A disproportionately higher number of public television viewers come from minority and low income homes, the plan put forth addresses that need in a comprehensive way. One other strength of this proposal is that it addresses ways in which family members can help support literacy and numeracy instruction, in association with schools and teachers.

Weaknesses

WEAKNESSES: There are some disconnects between the goals stated and the ways they propose to achieve them. The transmedia cited here online games, mobile phone applications, access to websites are more representative of experiences shared by older children. And while the proposal cites a number of current (and proposed new) programs for older children. The public television stations that CPB supports do not have a good track record for attracting older children to its broadcasts. Many CPB supported local stations carry only preschool programming, so one might question whether or not these stations can actually reach the older children identified in this proposal as being part of the target audience. Secondly, the transmedia applications are, in some cases, expensive, and one wonders if the families of at risk children will be able to afford some of the transmedia devices. It may be difficult for some parents to afford the price of an iPhone, or download costs (not to mention access). And then there the question of whether a 4 to 8 year old should be downloading anything from the Internet, and the question of whether they should use or have access to a cell phone. Third, the content being proposed will need to be distributed directly to schools; however, the method for this form of distribution, and the training needed within a massive school district like the Chicago Public Schools, is not fully articulated in the proposal.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Significance

2.

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project by considering the following factor:

- a) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.**

Strengths

STRENGTHS: The significance of this project is in the superb content, the expansive broadcast platform of the PBS system, and in the integration of transmedia: online games, mobile content and interactive websites. A major emphasis is placed on games, which have become a dominant screen experience for older kids, especially multi-user online games. One hopes that by tapping into that type of experience, but with more instructional-oriented content than the more commercial fare, kids will learn the skills they need to learn, and parents will receive the help and support they need in getting literacy and math instruction in front of their children.

Weaknesses

WEAKNESSES: No weaknesses noted.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

3.

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

- a) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practices.**
- b) 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.**
- c) 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.

Strengths

STRENGTHS: The educational ecosystem is put forth as a four cornered, structured design: original content, transmedia content, immersive world, and outreach. This is a solid, valid approach and each area is fully flushed out with examples and strategies. The personalized tracking system proposed within the plan promises be an outstanding feature possibly even a breakthrough in connecting schools, kids and parents.

Among the stated goals is the linking of home and school, via this new educational ecosystem that will be first tested in a strategic partnership with the Chicago Public Schools in association with Boston University's School of Education and two other agencies. Curriculum plans in math and literacy are also included frankly, the proposal covers just about everything one would expect in a revised version of the RTL program, including outreach to schools, communities, parents, teachers and children, through the transmedia platforms where kids live.

Weaknesses

WEAKNESSES: The design could have benefited from some more specifics, especially regarding the plan to connect directly to homes and families and what, in this regard, it will measure. The project is weighted toward online, multi-player games, which can be fun for children, but there is some concern that by emphasizing this too much the time a child needs to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills will be less available, and there is not enough data in the presentation to support converting traditional teaching methods of those skills by games or with some yet-to-be-developed application. The proposal refers to using state standards for literacy and numeracy. In the case of literacy and language arts, there are national standards put forth by professional organizations (NCTE and IRA) that are responsible for setting the standards for the teaching of English and language arts in all schools nationwide. The National Council of Teachers of Math is cited as an organization setting the standards for math instruction, but one wonders why the national standards literacy and language arts instruction, as set forth by the standard bearers, are not part of the design proposal.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

4.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

a) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers 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.

b) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factor. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths

STRENGTHS: The personnel identified in this proposal are top notch at every level. Most are highly accomplished, extremely qualified, with vast experience in their areas of specialty. In particular, the Lead Investigator has the experience and management expertise necessary to execute the goals of this proposal. In addition, the expertise at Boston University School of Education in managing the curriculum development, and the proven online capabilities of PBS Kids online (which was partially funded by CPB) are outstanding. In addition, the other affiliations are excellent choices and will provide top level expertise and consultation. PBS Online has a great track record for delivering web-centric content to both age categories preschool kids through PBS Kids (which was partially funded by CPB).

Weaknesses

WEAKNESSES: If there is a weakness in the personnel, it might be in the background of the key PBS programming executives who are more entertainment-oriented (coming from places like Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon and Disney Channel) than education-oriented. This background can also be a strength when it comes to selecting programming that can entertain and inform, and there are several CPB executives with strong educational media backgrounds to help guide the decision making. The educational success of this proposal could rise or fall on the selection of the program content, which needs to serve the educational needs of children more than their entertainment needs.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

5.

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

- 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.**
- 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.**
- c) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation**

of the proposed project.

Strengths

STRENGTHS: The proposal is very comprehensive. They will make great use of research in creating new strategies; they will support rigorous academic standards, even while using transmedia platforms and new forms of content; they will support existing educational goals but will apply new ways of achieving them; the new animated programs look excellent from the brief descriptions; it's an immersive world, which has proven to be successful with young kids; and the progress tracking tool looks to be a great way for teachers and parents to stay on top of a child's progress. In addition, the outreach plan as presented here looks to be comprehensive and makes good use of transmedia itself. If executed according to plan, this promises to provide schools and ho (teachers, kids and parents) a way to truly enhance their learning experience, bring classrooms that haven't changed since the 19th century all the way to the 21st century!

Weaknesses

WEAKNESSES: There is some concern that the Chicago Public Schools, a sizeable bureaucracy in its own right, would need to add a layer of in-service training to teach teachers the new skills necessary in using the transmedia applications. The proposal did not go into specific detail on how this would work, and while the actual content might be outstanding, and the applications all ready to use, if teachers aren't trained in how to use this new ecosystem, it might not succeed.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

6.

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project by considering the following factors:

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

Strengths

STRENGTHS: There is an extensive, robust evaluation plan, covering every aspect of the proposal. It is impressive that they will be providing Preschool and Afterschool Impact studiens, specifically to test the success of using multiple transmedia resources. This alone should be able to provide some extremely

valuable data on the entire theory of using transmedia to reach children. It is especially noteworthy that they will be measuring the success of instruction through game experiences, which may enlighten educators regarding the future potential of this type of instructional experience. There are eight tests proposed to measure literacy including needs assessment and formative evaluations in the early phases. To their credit, the tests will analyze attitudes toward literacy as well as measuring skills. There will also be four tests to cover early math. The plan focuses on children, parents, teachers and the overall transmedia plan. In addition, the measurements will provide useful feedback as the project progresses, from beginning to end.

Weaknesses

WEAKNESSES: There are no weaknesses noted.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 20

Technical Review Cover Sheet

Panel Details

Fiscal Year 2010 CFDA/Subprogram 84.295A Schedule No 1 Tier No. 1

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R3		

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Selection Criteria		
Need for Project	15	15
Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design	25	22
Project Personnel	10	9
Management Plan	20	18
Project Evaluation	20	18
TOTAL	100	92

Technical Review Form

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R3		

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. **The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project by considering the following factors:**

a) **The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or**

otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

b) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

Strengths

The proposers provide data on the educational deficits of at risk children (overall as well as with regard to Hispanic and African American children) based on their NAEP scores on reading and math. Therefore, the team proposes to develop a multiple platform transmedia solution to focus on improving core literacy and math skills in children ages 2 to 8, and to include teachers, educators, and parents as part of this solution. Therefore, the proposed project will address this need and provide services for at risk students via school, home and community services. This is a comprehensive approach that links learning in multiple locations and contexts. This is the core strength of this proposal.

Weaknesses

The applicant provided the requested information on needs and gaps, so no weaknesses are listed for this section.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Significance

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project by considering the following factor:

2. **a) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.**

Strengths

The proposers describe a strongly innovative approach (as well as a list of specific steps within this approach) to facilitate the use of the transmedia products by learners ages 2 to 8 in a variety of settings (e.g., home, school and community centers) and to provide linkages among all 3 through the use of push/pull communication and social networking technologies. The strength of this approach is that it has been designed to be used in a variety of settings.

Weaknesses

The applicant provided the requested information on significance, so no weaknesses are listed for this section.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

- a) **The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practices.**
3. b) **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.**
- c) **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.**

Strengths

The strength of this well-detailed solution is that it represents a comprehensive effort to improve both learning and teaching. This will be done by building on an "educational ecosystem," that has curriculum listed at the forefront, as well as bilingual transmedia content, tools, implementation support, and

evaluation. This approach being used is expansive yet well-integrated, and the math and literacy curriculum to be addressed is described in detail. Also, the use of an age-by-age breakdown of skills to be addressed, as well as overall skills such as problem solving. is likely to be a highly effective approach for engaging this audience. Also. the use of AR-focused media for children ages 6-8 is likely to be a highly effective approach as well. Additionally the use of student progress tracking and bilingual tools to support teachers and parents is a strong plus of this overall approach.

Weaknesses

While the experience of CPB to provide math and literacy skills development through media is well known, the weakness of this project design is that few details on the enhanced literacy framework and how it will be specifically facilitated through transmedia.

A weakness of the push/pull concept is the overall management of information by teachers as well as parents. For example, if 25 children visit a Curious George video, will the teacher/educator receive 25 separate emails to try out the interactive surface table in the classroom. Also, the reality of teachers sending personalized emails to parents each week with recommendations of web activities to try at home is unrealistic unless the teacher/educator support tools are designed to be "every smart" • with regard to knowing what to send and to whom it should be sent. The potential weakness of this approach is that the push/pull communication and social networking may easily overwhelm everyone involved, so the communication methods needs to be well designed to be manageable.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

4. **The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.**
- a) **In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers 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.

b) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factor. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths

The qualifications and experience of the key project team and consultants is excellent. There is an appropriate balance of personnel focused on education/outreach and media design/development.

Also, CPB provided general information on how they will recruit personnel from underrepresented groups.

Weaknesses

While the core team has personnel focused on curriculum and education, the weakness is the absence of content-focused personnel focused specifically on math and literacy, as well as the absence of a bilingual outreach coordinator. Given the focus on bilingual audiences, this is critical to address.

Question Status:Completed

Reviewer Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

- 5. 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.**
- 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.**

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

Strengths

The timeline, budget, and activities are well defined and appropriate given the overall goals of this effort. The time commitments for the staff are appropriate for meeting the objectives listed. Also, the procedures for providing continuous feedback and improvement are clear.

Weaknesses

The only weakness of this PM plan is that the content development team has a heavy focus on product development, and yet curriculum design is not addressed in much detail in this section.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project by considering the following factors:

- 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.**
- 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 summative evaluation is well designed to assess the success of the overall

approach through media through the use of various approaches that will help examine project outcomes. Also, specific measures and approaches (e.g., mixed methods) are provided for each phase of the evaluation, and these are all appropriate given the goals of this project.

The methods described in the plan do effectively address how formative evaluation and feedback will provide support for assessing periodic progress as well as intended outcomes of this project.

Weaknesses

The weakness of the evaluation plan is a concern that learners using the media 20-30 minutes a day four times a week over 3 months may not impact, and this may not be substantial enough of an impact to detect significant differences.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 18

Technical Review Cover Sheet

Panel Details

Fiscal Year 2010 **CFDA/Subprogram** 84.295A **Schedule No** 1 **Tier No.** 2

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R1		

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Priorities		
Competitive Preference	20	17
TOTAL	20	17

Technical Review Form

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R1		

Priorities - Competitive Preference Priority

1.

Up to twenty additional points will be awarded depending on how well the application meets this priority.

Points awarded under this priority will be determined by the quality of the proposed evaluation method. In determining the quality of the evaluation method, we will consider the extent to which the applicant presents a feasible, credible plan that includes the following:

- (1) The type of design to be used (that is, random assignment or matched comparison). If matched comparison, include in the plan a discussion of why random assignment is not feasible.
- (2) Outcomes to be measured.
- (3) A discussion of how the applicant plans to assign students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to

the project and control group or match them for comparison with other students, teachers, classrooms, or schools.

(4) A proposed evaluator, preferably independent, with the necessary background and technical expertise to carry out the proposed evaluation. An independent evaluator does not have any authority over the project and is not involved in its implementation.

In general, depending on the implemented program or project, under a competitive preference priority, random assignment evaluation methods will receive more points than matched comparison evaluation methods.

Strengths

An independent evaluation team is clearly defined. The PI for the evaluation team has extensive experience with necessary background to complete the proposed project. A mixed-methods study is clearly described and formative experiments using randomized assignment. The outcomes are clearly linked to the implementation of the proposed project. A plan for attrition is included for teachers and students.

Weaknesses

On page 39, 40 and 41, the ages of children is referenced as 2-8, yet the evaluation plan includes Pre-K through third grade students, therefore an inconsistency seems to exist in the ages of the students being assessed or it is unclear how 2-year-olds fit into the implementation plan for evaluation.

Question Status: Not Completed

Reviewer Score: 17

Technical Review Cover Sheet

Panel Details

Fiscal Year 2010 CFDA/Subprogram 84.295A Schedule No 1 Tier No. 2

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R2		

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
	1. Priorities	
Competitive Preference	20	16
	TOTAL	16

Technical Review Form

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R2		

Priorities - Competitive Preference Priority

Up to twenty additional points will be awarded depending on how well the application meets this priority.

- 1. Points awarded under this priority will be determined by the quality of the proposed evaluation method. In determining the quality of the evaluation method, we will consider the extent to which the applicant presents a feasible, credible plan that includes the following:**

- (1) The type of design to be used (that is, random assignment or matched**

comparison). If matched comparison, include in the plan a discussion of why random assignment is not feasible.

(2) Outcomes to be measured.

(3) A discussion of how the applicant plans to assign students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to the project and control group or match them for comparison with other students, teachers, classrooms, or schools.

(4) A proposed evaluator, preferably independent, with the necessary background and technical expertise to carry out the proposed evaluation. An independent evaluator does not have any authority over the project and is not involved in its implementation.

In general, depending on the implemented program or project, under a competitive preference priority, random assignment evaluation methods will receive more points than matched comparison evaluation methods.

Strengths

The organizations involved appear well-qualified to conduct the research.

Use of multiple RCTs is commendable.

Explication of the RCTs and other studies in the appendix is well detailed in terms of sample sizes, power estimation, and randomization.

Observer training (p. 24 in appendix) is well detailed and solid.

The sheer number of separate studies proposed is impressive.

Weaknesses

The use of standardized assessments from multiple states is not recommended due to noncomparability of those assessments and the resulting scores.

In mixed methods study #4 in the appendix, there is no indication of how/whether the evaluators will control for teacher background (experience, education, etc.) which might affect the outcomes of interest.

The restriction of sites to those in which computers or other transmedia technologies are used extensively in the RCTs (page 15 in the appendix) may result in a non-representative sample.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 16

Technical Review Cover Sheet

Panel Details

Fiscal Year 2010 CFDA/Subprogram 84.295A Schedule No 1 Tier No. 2

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R3		

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
	1. Priorities	
Competitive Preference	20	17
	TOTAL	17

Technical Review Form

Applicant Name	Corporation for Public Broadcasting -- Educational Programming and Services,	PR/Award No	U295A100025
Reviewer Name	R3		

Priorities - Competitive Preference Priority

Up to twenty additional points will be awarded depending on how well the application meets this priority.

- 1. Points awarded under this priority will be determined by the quality of the proposed evaluation method. In determining the quality of the evaluation method, we will consider the extent to which the applicant presents a feasible, credible plan that includes the following:**

- (1) The type of design to be used (that is, random assignment or matched**

comparison). If matched comparison, include in the plan a discussion of why random assignment is not feasible.

(2) Outcomes to be measured.

(3) A discussion of how the applicant plans to assign students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to the project and control group or match them for comparison with other students, teachers, classrooms, or schools.

(4) A proposed evaluator, preferably independent, with the necessary background and technical expertise to carry out the proposed evaluation. An independent evaluator does not have any authority over the project and is not involved in its implementation.

In general, depending on the implemented program or project, under a competitive preference priority, random assignment evaluation methods will receive more points than matched comparison evaluation methods.

Strengths

The evaluation designs used for both formative and summative are randomized control designs, where treatments are randomly assigned to schools. The procedure for randomizing is clear, including explanations about incentives for control groups and the number and type of control groups. There are excellent explanations of the use of power statistics to determine sample size. The appendix provides an evaluation timetable, broken down by year and quarter of 11 formative experiments and 11 summative activities. The names of the independent evaluation firms are indicated, and the individuals leading each aspect of the evaluation is made clear.

Weaknesses

The importance and role of formative monitoring studies, such as the use of focus groups, observations, logs, surveys, etc., is not clear.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 17