

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/31/2013 01:27 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Rockford Public Schools (U351D130013)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	15	14
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	23
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	95
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference		
Priority Four - Technology		
1. Technology	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - AEMDD FY 2013 Application Reivew - 7: 84.351D

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Rockford Public Schools (U351D130013)

Questions

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:

(a) The application provides strong evidence of the need for the proposed project. The proposed project would serve a student population that is 79% low-income, with 6% of students enrolled in the Transitional Bilingual Education program. Twelve percent of students have special needs, and the high school graduation rate is 20% lower than that of the state overall. The district's scores in math and reading trail those of the state in all grade levels. (e16-17)

(b) The application provides strong evidence that the school recognizes the gaps in its current system, including a lack of engaged learning opportunities, enrichment and integrated learning, and family involvement. (e17) Addressing student disengagement in math, which leads to required intervention courses that displace art offerings, and from which few students "graduate" is critical. (e19, 24-25) Math Intervention program show especially poor performance, and many have disciplinary issues (e26) Budget cuts have decimated music programs in the District(e21)

Weaknesses:

More detail regarding the specific types of professional development, or the focus of that professional development, would better illustrate how the project will close this identified gap in professional development.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

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 application shows strong evidence that the products resulting from this project will be utilized frequently and effectively throughout the larger community. The professional development plan offers a carefully-developed series of curriculum development, professional development, and coaching by Community Teaching Artists (e30-31) and formative assessments to continually fine-tune the strategies for adaptation to multiple classrooms. This vetting through a variety of platforms and stakeholders assures the utility of the products. The plan also calls for student incentives to engagement, including field trips to various arts organizations (e32), which increases the odds of success and the overall

utility of the project.

Weaknesses:

This criteria was thoroughly discussed and I did not see any weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. 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:

(a) The application shows strong evidence that the design of the project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practices. The proposed project is based in part on the research of Lynn Tuttle, the College Board, the Kennedy Center Partners in Education, the Common Core, and local strategic plans (e33). The fundamental importance of the proposed approach is supported through Teachers College research and Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (e38).

(b) The application shows strong evidence that the project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning. The project is linked to broad, standards-based initiatives; it is informed by the Common Core standards, as well as the National Arts Standards/Core Arts Standards Development (e33). The slice of life example is helpful in illustrating how various components of the program work together (e39-41)

(c) The application shows strong evidence that the project is designed to build capacity and yield results sustainable beyond the period of Federal financial assistance. The applicant has several promising initiatives in place to create sustainability over the long-term. The School District has voted to extend the school day and to restore some funding to arts programs (e27, 37). The Kennedy Center has helped to develop a City-Wide Fine Arts Collaboration, and the Rockford Area Arts Council, the School District, and the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois are seeking funding and sponsorships for sustainable supplies of school instruments. (e37)

Weaknesses:

This criteria was thoroughly discussed and I did not see any weaknesses. This criterion was thoroughly discussed and my score reflects my professional assessment of this section.

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the 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.

In addition, the Secretary considers the following factor:

The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The applicant shows weak evidence of the encouragement of underrepresented applicants. On the other hand, the applicant shows strong evidence of having assembled a team of key personnel with relevant training and experience. The proposed team shows an impressive array of experiences and educational backgrounds, with the top 5 school leaders having 138 years of school experience among them (e41-42).

Weaknesses:

It is not clear that the proposed staff are from underrepresented groups, or that additional personnel, such as Training Artists, will be recruited from underrepresented backgrounds (e41, 46).

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(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:

(a) The applicant shows strong evidence of a management plan that will meet the project's objectives on time and within budget. The plan lays out the responsibility of each of the 12 schools and 9 community partners. A detailed timeline lays out 22 different actions to be completed by June 2014.

(b) The applicant shows moderate evidence of an efficient allocation of time of the project director and other key personnel to the objectives of the project; the Co-Director's allocation seems right on target with the scope of that position's work.

(c) The applicant provides strong evidence of developing procedures to ensure feedback and continuous improvement. The plan allows for frequent assessments of the project's approach. Among other measures, the plan will provide for quarterly Professional Development evaluation (e47) and monthly reporting meetings by school teams. Key stakeholders, including students, will be involved in evaluating progress; team members will visit schools, attend PLCs, and meet together bi-monthly.

Weaknesses:

Assigning 20% of the Fine Arts Director's time to this project may be slightly low for the scope of her duties (e74), although with the support of the Co-Director, they may be able to accomplish their goals.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. 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:

(a) The applicant shows strong evidence of the use of objective performance measures that are clearly linked to the intended project outcomes. With 2 experimental and 2 control schools representative of low- and medium-performing schools in the district, the evaluation will test the efficacy of the program's application across the school district. The objective measures align well with the project goals of increased student achievement, attendance, lower discipline incidents, an increase in fine arts elective and decrease in math intervention enrollment (e50-53).

(b) The applicant shows strong evidence of the evaluation methodology providing periodic assessments of progress toward outcomes and performance feedback. Teams will meet at a minimum of 2X/month to analyze the data in developing the curriculum. Frequent teacher observations will assess arts and math integration (e52). Additionally, the schools will assess achievement 3X/year through programs from Discovery Education, STAR Math Enterprise, and through quarterly reports and annual assessments.

Weaknesses:

This criteria was thoroughly discussed and I did not see any weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference - Priority Four - Technology

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

Strengths:

The applicant shows moderate evidence of utilizing technology to improve student achievement or teacher effectiveness. The applicant offers various electronic tools to assess student progress toward state goals, including Discovery Education and STAR Math Enterprise (e54). Students will have an opportunity to learn through technology and digital tools, including iPads, 3-D Building materials, and Accelerated Math Home Connect. (e39-40).

Weaknesses:

This criteria was thoroughly discussed and I did not see any weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

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Last Updated: 05/31/2013 10:15 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Rockford Public Schools (U351D130013)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	15	14
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	27
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	21
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	9
Sub Total	100	91
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference		
Priority Four - Technology		
1. Technology	5	4
Sub Total	5	4
Total	105	95

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - AEMDD FY 2013 Application Reivew - 7: 84.351D

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Rockford Public Schools (U351D130013)

Questions

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 Rockford Public School District (RPSD) program model is titled the "Rockford Arts Infusion" as it seeks to establish a high-quality, effective standards-based arts integration into core elementary and middle school math curriculum to improve academic performance, and improve skills relating to the arts. The development of a community partnership with the Kennedy Center Partners in Education and the Rockford Area Arts Council has already been established by the district, while other community arts partners are also targeted to support this endeavor.

The RPSD is a large-unit school district serving over 29,500 students; the state's third largest district. Students who are considered low-income based on free and reduced lunch statistics account for 79% of the district's population. The ethnicity of the district is diverse with the student minority population being near 65%. The high school dropout rate is 61.7%, compared to the state's 82.3% rate. In addition, the district has 30 Title I elementary buildings and 5 Title I middle school buildings. (pp.1-2).

The applicant identified the struggles that teachers have encountered to make connections for students to provide the motivation for high achievement. The district reflected that 94% of those students receiving math intervention have been identified as low income. Also, the present participation rate of students enrolled in math interventions, who are taking band (13) and vocal music (25) are exceptionally low. The amount of behavioral referrals and discipline problems have been excessively high as indicated at one of the middle school's (2,352 discipline referrals, an average of f per student). In creating a student-centered learning environment the district will be able to motivate students to improve their academic performance and work toward those arts elective opportunities. The project will provide professional development opportunities and continual support for teachers along with creating student incentives to increase their academic achievement. (pp.10-12).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not reference research-based information that would support the focus of professional development as a motivating factor in improving the students' academic performance and behavioral problems would improve. In essence, the specific focus areas in professional development initiatives were not identified by the applicant

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

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 applicant referenced research that suggests the influence of the arts with students is far wider and deeper than simply improving grades. The systems nourished through the arts include our integrated sensory, attention factors, cognitive, emotional, and motor capacities; that all drive learning. Also, the research referenced by the applicant included that the arts promote self-discipline and motivation; which also benefits aesthetic awareness, cultural exposure, social harmony, creativity, improved emotional expression, and appreciation of diversity. In addition, students learn to become sustained, self-directed learners in arts programs. Students of lower socioeconomic status gain as much or more from arts instruction than those of higher socioeconomic status.

As the local arts community has pledged its support to this project, the element of establishing community partnerships has already been bridged. The applicant identified several other benefits of integrating the arts:

- Teaching through art form connects math concepts
- Increased student participation and sustainable instruction and mentoring schedules
- Replicable grade level curriculum and assessment aligned with common core standards
- Enhance the students' understanding of the impact of arts relevant to history, society, and everyday life
- Provide student enrichment opportunities
- Foster school and community partnerships

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The applicant showed no weakness in this criterion area.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. 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 applicant's project is designed to offer an expanded array of integrated learning opportunities that will increase student performance and better prepare students for today's global market. The Arts Infusion will address roadblocks students have in achieving at grade level in math. The goals and objectives of this project are aligned with the following

areas: (pp. 13-18)

- Common Core Standards
- National Art Standards/Core Arts Standards Development
- College Board's, "The Arts and the Common Core"
- District's Strategic Plan
- Rockford's Fine Arts Articulation Committee

The applicant, in a chart format, listed three goals that addressed both objectives and outcomes: (pp. 20-21).

1. Integrate arts instruction into the math foundation curriculum
2. Strengthen the arts instruction within the math and fine arts departments
3. Improve academic performance in math

The governance of the district has met recent changes in the position of the superintendent; however, the district's CEO, (Superintendent) both past, present and future, have committed toward supporting the arts. The recent acquisition of Smartboards in most of the arts and music classrooms has been noteworthy; an effort to provide further staff development in the utilization of this classroom communication tool has been indicated by the fine arts department. There appears to be a sizable number of fine arts faculty members in the district; however, a need to collaborate and improve departmental communication has been apparent.

The applicant was developed from the partnerships and trainings to ensure sustainability of long term implementation beyond the life of the grant. The integration and professional development efforts will contribute to build the teachers' capacity through the delivery of arts lesson plans with planning support from the teaching artists. The district intends to replicate this model into other low performing schools. Also, as a member of the Regional Office of Education Curriculum Consortium, progress made in the program will be disseminated to other districts in the region. (pp. 24-25).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide focus on the area of rigorous academic standards when addressing this criterion area in the school settings (i.e., elementary and middle school) that will be impacted and benefit from the project.

The applicant neglected to describe the method of disseminating aspects of the program to other schools or districts.

Reader's Score: 27

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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

In addition, the Secretary considers the following factor:

The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The applicant identified key educational decision makers with proven experience in student achievement and arts integration program development. The project's personnel were defined in a chart format that highlighted areas of responsibilities and each individual's qualifications. In addition, the utilization of separate charts was applied to this area as individuals were categorized as either Rockford Public School or Community (i.e., Rockford Area Arts Council, Rockford Art Museum, Rockford Dance Company, Rockford Symphony Orchestra, Coronado, or Mendelssohn Performing

Arts Center) personnel. (pp. 27-31).

Weaknesses:

The projected personnel positions reflected no apparent FTE time allocation for each position.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(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 applicant addressed this criterion area with a series of charts that addressed the following objectives: (pp. 31-34).

- Contracts
- Recruiting and training teaching artists
- Classroom setup, field trips and after-school clubs
- Arts integration professional development
- Fine arts professional development
- Progress monitoring of student achievement

Each object was addressed with references to a strategy, timelines, milestones and responsibility.

As previously stated, the applicant addressed this criterion area with a series of charts that addressed the following objectives: (pp. 31-34).

- Contracts
- Recruiting and training teaching artists
- Classroom setup, fieldtrips and afterschool clubs
- Arts integration professional development
- Fine arts professional development
- Progress monitoring of student achievement

Each object was addressed with references to a strategy, timelines, milestones and responsibility.

A collaborative effort of all stakeholders to visit schools will be enforced; therefore, this will ensure quality achievement bi-monthly to plan and monitor progress. All members will be involved in adjusting elements to improve success in the following areas: (pp. 35-36).

- Instructional delivery
- Classroom climate
- Relationships
- Student motivational strategies

The applicant has committed to monitor and to stay within the timelines to ensure quality and comprehensiveness. In addition, a community-based partnership will provide administrative support for programs and services at the school sites.

The applicant feels that current policies and procedures will result in successful program implementation.

Weaknesses:

This criterion area was not addressed in a narrative format that would have rendered additional clarification on the information conveyed within the charts. The applicant didn't reference any form of budget allocations within this area.

The applicant did not address this criterion area in a narrative format. The information within the chart didn't specify the responsibilities and duties of the project director or principal investigator. Also, the projected personnel positions reflected no apparent FTE time allocation for each position.

Reader's Score: 21

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. 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 applicant identified the middle school's project model with the comparison of data between two experimental schools and their comparable counterparts. At the elementary school level the comparison of data for the feeder schools of each identified middle school will be evaluated. Overall, the project's evaluation will utilize a variety of data. The methods of collect data will include surveys, standard-based assessments, participant questionnaires, and an examination of school records. (p. 37).

The project's priority is to build evidence of effectiveness with outcomes measured multiple times both pre and post implementation for the comparison and non-participant groups. The Rockford Arts infusion outcomes and measurements were identified through a chart format, which highlighted three distinct program goals: (pp. 37-39).

1. Integrated arts instruction into math foundations curriculum
2. Strengthen the arts instruction within the math and fine arts curriculum
3. Improve academic performance in math

The applicant identified the intended outcomes and measurement components within these goal's areas in an objective framework.

The applicant will conduct a need assessment that will identify current practices and program offerings. This data will be used to help establish the baseline for each program objectives. The district's middle school math assessment schedule, which was provided in a table format, will provide performance feedback that will permit periodic assessment of progress toward raising math achievement. The middle school assessment table identified the following features: type of test; description; occurrence and type. (pp. 39-41).

Weaknesses:

The applicant demonstrated little evidence that reflected upon the production of quantitative and qualitative data.

In addition, the applicant did not address the methods of evaluation in the elementary school setting; no elementary

school assessment table.

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

Reader's Score: 9

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference - Priority Four - Technology

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

Strengths:

The applicant referenced the recent acquisition and application of Smartboards that were installed in art and music classroom settings. (p. 23). In addition, the applicant identified that iPads were being used to support creative instruction in Accelerated Math; plus the utilization of 3D building materials. (p.26).

Weaknesses:

The applicant didn't reference research-based information that supports the improvement of student achievement and effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tool or materials.

Reader's Score: 4

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Rockford Public Schools (U351D130013)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	15	15
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	29
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	22
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	95
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference		
Priority Four - Technology		
1. Technology	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	105	95

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - AEMDD FY 2013 Application Reivew - 7: 84.351D

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Rockford Public Schools (U351D130013)

Questions

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:

(a) The applicant proposes to establish a high-quality, effective standards-based arts integration model "Rockford Arts Infusion" into the core elementary and middle schools math curriculum in the Rockford Public School District in Rockford, Illinois. Presently in the targeted school district, seventy-nine percent of the students are considered low-income based on free and reduced lunch statistics. The dropout rate in Rockford is 8%, which is higher than the state's average of 2.5%. The high school graduation rate is 61.7% compared to the state's rate of 82.3%. For the 2013-2014 school year, the district will have thirty Title I elementary buildings and five Title I middle school buildings (page 2).

(b) The applicant states that due to the high enrollment in math interventions at a targeted middle school, the enrollment in fine arts electives are low, only supporting thirteen in band and twenty-five in vocal music. The Rockford School District's fine arts offerings have waned during the past decade as budget woes have forced the elimination or limitation of band, music, art and chorus programs at several schools (page 12).

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

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 applicant states a model that will integrate district curriculum, engage students in a variety of learning styles and nurture family, friends and community partnerships that are critical to individual learning and development. The following will be woven together to create an effective, long-term comprehensive quality arts program to increase student involvement in the arts along with increasing math achievement (1) approach to teaching through an art form which connects math concepts with effective practice in classroom management and strategies for engaged learning (2)

replicable project goals, student participation, documenting progress, professional development designed for sustainable instruction and mentoring schedules (3) replicable grade level curriculum and assessments aligned with Common Core standards (4) provide opportunities in various formats for student information in virtual reality and visuals from around the world to enhance understanding of how the arts shape and reflect history, society and everyday life (5) provide an opportunity for students to participate in enrichment activities and (6) foster school/community partnerships. The fidelity component of the model is the artist working with the teacher to plan and the teacher delivers the arts integration lesson (page 15).

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weaknesses

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. 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:

(a) The applicant states the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice are based on this theory - that students learn and retain more by having opportunities to think, reason and make sense of mathematics. The goals and objectives of the project are aligned with (1) Common Core standards (2) the National Art Standards/Core Arts Standards Development presented by Lynn Tuttle on February 2013 (3) College Board – “The Arts and the Common Core: A Review of Connections between the Common Core State Standards and the National Core Arts Standards Conceptual Framework” (4) the district’s strategic plan “Readiness Rock – 21st Century Learning Environments and (5) Rockford’s Fine Arts Articulation Committee (page 19).

(b) The applicant states that the Superintendent of Rockford Public Schools has pledged his support in building the arts program. This year, the secondary students were introduced to seven-period school days that expose them to the arts, foreign language classes and advanced courses that will give students a more well-rounded experience (page 22).

(c) The applicant states that the model was developed from partnerships and trainings at the Kennedy Center, to ensure sustainability of long term implementation beyond the life of the grant. Arts integration training/professional development will build teacher capacity through the teacher delivering the arts integration lessons with planning support from the teaching artists (page24).

Weaknesses:

(c) The applicant does not fully discuss resources that will continue beyond the work of the grant.

Reader's Score: 29

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the 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.

In addition, the Secretary considers the following factor:

The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The applicant states that strong programs are the result of hard work, clear focus, strong leadership and careful analysis of the needs of the participants (page 27). The current key project personnel have the qualifications, including relevant trainings and experiences. Resumes are provided for key personnel.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not indicate how key personnel vacancies will be advertised to underrepresented groups.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(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:

(a) The applicant indicates in charts which staff member(s) will be performing each strategy and specific timelines and milestones are provided for each task (pages 31-34).

(b) The applicant states in charts appropriate and adequate time commitments for the project directors and some key personnel (budget narrative).

(c) The applicant states that key stakeholders will visit schools, attend PLC's and meet collaboratively, efficiently and with the synergy to ensure quality achievement bi-monthly to plan and monitor progress including frequent communications with classroom teachers and students. It is vital to have all stakeholders, including the students, be involved in goal-setting, evaluating progress and celebrating achievements (page 36).

Weaknesses:

(b) The applicant did not provide the time commitments for all key personnel. As stated in the selection criteria, the applicant does not reference a Principal Investigator under key project personnel.

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. 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:

(a) The applicant provided in charts the methods of measurement associated with specific outcomes. Methods of collecting data include surveys, standards-based assessments, participant questionnaires and an examination of school records (pages 37-39),

(b) The applicant provides in charts performance feedback, permitting periodic assessment of progress towards raising math achievement. Contractually, minimum twice a month staff teams meet to analyze data to plan for instruction (pages 39-41).

Weaknesses:

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference - Priority Four - Technology

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

Strengths:

The applicant elected not to specifically address CPP 4.

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/04/2013 04:21 PM

