

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/20/2014 09:48 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Cherokee County School District (U351D140083)

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need for Project	15	12
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	25
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	20
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	97
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Technology</b>		
1. CPP: Technology	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	105	102

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Development & Dissemination Grant Program - 1: 84.351D

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Cherokee County School District (U351D140083)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 1 - Need for Project in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides a description of the need for the project and includes evidence of high economic need (page 4), low academic performance (pages 7-8), and high populations of ELL students (page 4). The applicant describes gaps in student academic performance on tests in science and reading (page 7-8). Plans to address the needs of the target population include the development of a bank of professional development modules developed in partnership with local universities and art institutes that include hands-on workshops (page 10), Common-Core aligned formative assessments, and digital tools.

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not explicitly describe how the planned professional development activities will improve student achievement for some identified at-risk students. For example, the applicant mentions a high percentage of ELL students in the target population, but does not specify how their needs will be met.

It is unclear what specific gaps in professional development currently exist in the target schools. The applicant does not provide details regarding weaknesses in current services that will be improved by the proposed activities. The applicant states that teachers in treatment schools have received multiple years of comprehensive, year-round arts integrated professional development (page 9), which makes it difficult to understand the need for more training.

Details regarding existing gaps in instruction that will be improved by professional development partnerships are limited.

Reader's Score: 12

#### Sub Question

1. (a) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides a description of the need for the project and includes evidence of high economic need (page 4), low academic performance (pages 7-8), and high populations of ELL students (page 4). Plans to address the needs of the target population include the development of a bank of professional development modules developed in partnership with local universities and art institutes that include the use of on-line, face to face trainings. The applicant also mentions a collaboration with university faculty and classroom teachers to develop new arts-integrated units focused on state and national standards (page 10).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not explicitly describe how the planned professional development activities will improve student achievement for at-risk students. For example, the applicant mentions a high percentage of ELL students in the target population, but does not specify how their needs will be met.

**Reader's Score:**

2. **(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 applicant describes gaps in student academic performance on tests in science and reading (page 7-8).

**Weaknesses:**

It is unclear what specific gaps in professional development currently exist in the target schools. The applicant does not provide details regarding weaknesses in current services that will be improved by the proposed activities. Details regarding existing gaps in instruction that will be improved by professional development partnerships are not limited.

**Reader's Score:**

**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 proposes to to develop arts integration professional development modules that will be shared with schools that are new to arts integration (page 9). There is a plan to develop disseminate these modules through a website (page 11). The applicant mentions a plan to measure the impact of professional development on student achievement through a longitudinal study (page 9).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 3 - Quality of Project Design in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides research to support arts integration (page 12), and mentions targeting 21st Century skills through professional development modules that address the Common Core English/Language Arts with an emphasis on critical thinking and writing (page 12).

The applicant provides research that supports arts integration professional development and provides a theory of action on page 17. The applicant describes a research-based rationale for utilizing engagement strategies that shift students from extrinsic to intrinsic rewards (page 14), and promote moral development (page 13). A logic model is provided on page 18.

The applicant describes a comprehensive effort to improve teaching through professional development, the use of valid and reliable formative assessments, virtual and face-to-face coaching, and Common Core aligned instruction. There is a plan to implement peer- tutoring/mentoring program (page 15). The applicant describes strategies to develop lessons with university partners and art experts that infuse digital/media processes into the classroom (page 12).

The applicant provides a plan to incorporate the project activities into ongoing work that will extend beyond the end of the grant. Examples include innovative professional development options such as distance learning, blended face-to-face and on-line webinars, and the dissemination of arts integration units created through university partnerships. There is a plan to use a website to post a bank of lessons that will be accessible beyond the life of the grant.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 25**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides research to support arts integration (page 12), and mentions targeting 21st Century skills through professional development modules that address the Common Core English/Language Arts with an emphasis on critical thinking and writing (page 12).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted,

**Reader's Score:**

2. (b) **The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides research that supports arts integration professional development and provides a theory of action on page 17. The applicant describes a research-based rationale for utilizing engagement strategies that shift students from extrinsic to intrinsic rewards (page 14), and promote moral development (page 13). A logic model is provided on page 18.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

3. **(c) 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.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes a comprehensive effort to improve teaching through professional development, the use of valid and reliable formative assessments, virtual and face-to-face coaching, and Common Core aligned instruction. There is a plan to implement peer- tutoring/mentoring program (page 15). The applicant describes strategies to develop lessons with university partners and art experts that infuse digital/media processes into the classroom (page 12).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a plan to incorporate the project activities into ongoing work that will extend beyond the end of the grant. Examples include innovative professional development options such as distance learning, blended face-to-face and on-line webinars, and the dissemination of arts integration units created through university partnerships. There is a plan to use a website to post a bank of lessons that will be accessible beyond the life of the grant.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the 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 the board of education does not discriminate in educational and employment practices (page 20), and mentions that efforts will be made to encourage participation from traditionally underrepresented groups (page 21). The qualifications of the project director, project evaluator, curriculum director, and other key staff members are described on pages 21-29. The applicant provides details that depict a staff with experience and relevant expertise.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 5 - Management Plan in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a management plan that includes a timeline for each year of the grant and persons responsible for project activities (page 29-32). Milestones for the project are also described for each year, and include school reviews of data and anecdotal evidence of success, an achievement data group study (page 33), surveys, and the dissemination of project findings and lesson units (page 38).

The applicant describes the time commitments of the project director and the project evaluator (page 39). Other staff time commitments are mentioned on page 40 and include the curriculum director, the curriculum editor, the unit designer/reviewer, a regional coordinator, curriculum coaches and the director of school improvement. The applicant mentions additional support for the project that will be provided by arts consultants and university consultants that will support a blended-model of on-site and virtual workshops.

The applicant describes a plan for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement for the proposed project and includes details regarding quarterly meetings, data reviews, and the dissemination of project deliverable (page 41). There is a plan to conduct classroom observations and collect student surveys to measure perceptions of the peer program and guide teachers through the implementation process (page 47). The applicant mentions a state writing assessment that will provide diagnostic feedback (page 48). Focus groups with a representative sample of teachers are also planned (page 50).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a management plan that includes a timeline for each year of the grant and persons responsible for project activities (page 29-32). Milestones for the project are also described for each year, and include school reviews of data and anecdotal evidence of success, an achievement data group study (page 33),

**Sub Question**

surveys, and the dissemination of project findings and lesson units (page 38).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes the time commitments of the project director and the project evaluator (page 39). Other staff time commitments are mentioned on page 40 and include the curriculum director, the curriculum editor, the unit designer/reviewer, a regional coordinator, curriculum coaches and the director of school improvement. The applicant mentions additional support for the project that will be provided by arts consultants and university consultants that will support a blended-model of on-site and virtual workshops.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes a plan for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement for the proposed project and includes details regarding quarterly meetings, data reviews, and the dissemination of project deliverable (page 41). There is a plan to conduct classroom observations and collect student surveys to measure perceptions of the peer program and guide teachers through the implementation process (page 47). The applicant mentions a state writing assessment that will provide diagnostic feedback (page 48). Focus groups with a representative sample of teachers are also planned (page 50).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:****Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 6 - Project Evaluation in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides an evaluation plan that include multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data. Examples include surveys, student assessment, focus groups, teacher surveys, and student engagement surveys (page 49-50). A timeline for evaluation activities is provided in the appendix that includes timelines for data collection activities and types of analyses. Relevant outcome measures are described in a table and include student engagement, teacher perceptual data, interventions components, locally administered tests, and state-administered achievement tests (appendix).

The applicant describes methods of evaluation that include reviews of performance feedback measures, comparisons of longitudinal analysis of performance in project schools and control schools, and data reports that will be delivered throughout the grant period and within two weeks of each formal professional learning event (page 43). The applicant describes a plan to use feedback forms that will be utilized by instructors and curriculum coaches to guide professional development (page 44).

The applicant provides a plan to implement an evaluation that includes a quasi-experimental design using 3 treatment schools and 3 control schools. Analysis methods include the use analysis of covariance to statistically control for baseline differences on pre-tests (page 42), field tested surveys that have been evaluated for internal consistency (page 43), and standardized z-scores generated from student achievement tests from previous years (page 48).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides an evaluation plan that include multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data. Examples include surveys, student assessment, focus groups, teacher surveys, and student engagement surveys (page 49-50). A timeline for evaluation activities is provided in the appendix that includes timelines for data collection activities and types of analyses. Relevant outcome measures are described in a table and include student engagement, teacher perceptual data, interventions components, locally administered tests, and state-administered achievement tests (appendix).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.r

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes methods of evaluation that include reviews of performance feedback measures, comparisons of longitudinal analysis of performance in project schools and control schools, and data reports that will be delivered throughout the grant period and within two weeks of each formal professional learning event (page 43). The applicant describes a plan to use feedback forms that will be utilized by instructors and curriculum coaches to guide professional development (page 44).

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness noted.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a plan to implement an evaluation that includes a quasi-experimental design using 3 treatment schools and 3 control schools. Analysis methods include the use analysis of covariance to statistically control for baseline differences on pre-tests (page 42), field tested surveys that have been evaluated for internal consistency (page 43), and standardized z-scores generated from student achievement tests from previous years (page 48).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - 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 provides a plan to utilize technology tools such as blackboard and Moodle to improve student achievement and teacher effectiveness (pages 8-9). The applicant also plans to partner with a local university and an arts institute in order to increase teachers use of technology in arts integration activities (pages 3-4). The applicant provides a plan to use a blended model to deliver workshops through face to face and distance education and to post lessons on a website for dissemination across the state (page 39).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/20/2014 09:48 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/20/2014 09:28 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Cherokee County School District (U351D140083)

**Reader #2:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need for Project	15	11
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	25
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	20
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	96
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Technology</b>		
1. CPP: Technology	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	105	101

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Development & Dissemination Grant Program - 1: 84.351D

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Cherokee County School District (U351D140083)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 1 - Need for Project in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.

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

#### Strengths:

This section is well developed.

#### Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 11

#### Sub Question

1. (a) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

#### Strengths:

The Cherokee County School District has applied for arts funding to support its Arts Now Impact project. This project will service three treatment schools and the school district will collaborate with Georgia Institute of Technology and Savannah College of Art and Design to integrate arts into science and ELA contents. Low-income students are traditionally underserved and over 50% of enrolled students are minority. It is noted in the grant application that over 60% of all students that will participate in the project qualify for free or reduced lunch.

#### Weaknesses:

The grant applicant has not effectively presented compelling evidence of a need for the Arts Not impact project in the selected treatment schools. There is limited information on the academic achievement of the selected schools.

#### Reader's Score:

2. (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:

It is noted in the grant application that over 40% of all elementary students did not pass reading assessment. The grant applicant has also noted that state does not out perform nation with having a high percentage of students graduate.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The grant applicant has listed tables on page 7 explaining academic achievement but the district has failed to define for the reader levels 1 and 2 assessment scores. Also, the applicant has noted that it has a high percentage of minority students but the application lacks support evidence that there are performance gaps among student populations. The applicant has not mentioned a void in arts programs in the selected schools nor is there supporting evidence on how identified voids will be filled with the arts project.

**Reader's Score:**

**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 goals of the ArtsNow Impact project are to provide teachers with additional professional development modules. The explanation of the focus of the modules is understood. The school district also plans to collaborate with Atlanta Ballet Centre for Dance Education, Emory University Center for Creativity and the Arts, Georgia State University, Savannah College of Art and Design and Synchronicity Theatre Company to provide hands on workshops and arts integrated curriculum. Integrated content units will be created upon completion of successful collaborative efforts.

The school district has noted that Teacher Developed Arts Integrated Unit Bank Lesson units aligned local, state, and nation curriculum standards will be published online available to the public. The school district has done a good job explaining how these resources will also be made available internal school district systems.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 3 - Quality of Project Design in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.**

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

**Strengths:**

This section is fully developed.

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score:** 25

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The school district has justified its project goals by applying the goals to current research and effective practices in arts integration. By collaborating with local universities, the school district will allow teachers the opportunity to work with practicing researchers.

There is supporting research presented in the grant application that there are strong links to arts integration and improvement in student's long term memory. Cherokee has done a good job providing research that its project will increase student engagement by encouraging a shift in both the mindset of students and teachers.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score:**

2. (b) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory.

**Strengths:**

The school district has included a logic model and a theory of action within the grant application. The logic model includes necessary resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes to make the project successful.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score:**

3. (c) 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.

**Strengths:**

The applicant has noted that evaluation reports will be composed to improve teaching and learning. These measures of teacher effectiveness and the increased professional development will assist with turning around persistently low achieving schools. The applicant has noted that the ArtsNow Impact project is aligned with goals from the Race to the Top federal initiative. It is evident that the district desires to improve the skills and capacity of students and teachers by building critical thinking, conceptual understanding, and improving social skills. The grant applicant has successfully noted that rigorous professional development with multiple delivery options will assist with increasing student achievement.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score:**

#### Sub Question

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

##### **Strengths:**

It is understood that through project implementation students will be exposed to content with increased rigor. It is also understood that with successful project implementation, teachers will participate in designing research driven instructional strategies and units.

##### **Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

##### **Reader's Score:**

#### **Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the 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 grant applicant has clearly stated its efforts to hire personnel using nondiscriminatory practices. Vivid descriptions of key personnel have been included in the grant application. Each member has extensive experience in education, the arts, and educational research. Key positions include:

Project Director

Project Evaluator

Curriculum Director

Curriculum Editor

Unit Designer/Reviewer

Regional Coordinator

Curriculum Coach and Internal Formative Assessment Evaluator

Curriculum Coach – Arts Integration and Character Development

Director of School Improvement

Director of Grants Accounting

##### **Weaknesses:**

There are no found weaknesses.

**Reader's Score: 10**

#### **Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

**Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 5 - Management Plan in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.**

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

**Strengths:**

This section is fully developed.

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

Included in the grant application is a four year timeline listing the duties and responsible parties for implementing the project. Cherokee has done a good job outlining the goals for developing professional development sessions and explaining plans for creation of unit lessons. The grant applicant has thoroughly explained each planned project milestone. It is feasible, with grant funding, for the grant applicant to successfully create unit lessons, plan professional development and collaboration training opportunities, and review goals and provide feedback if the following timeline is carefully carried out as written.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

The grant applicant has noted that the project director will commit 3.5 days a week in years 2-4 for overall supervision of the arts project. Also, Cherokee has noted that the project evaluator will spend 50 days assessing and analyzing all aspects of the project. Plans, responsibilities, and commitments for both the project director, evaluator, and other key personnel are well justified.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

Cherokee has outlined a plan to have a chain for clear and open communication. It is understood that there is an open door policy with the university to ensure successful creation of professional development and unit lessons. The plan to integrate arts into content lessons can occur if the district commits to ensuring the feedback and continuous improvement as outlined in the grant application.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score:**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

- 1. Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 6 - Project Evaluation in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.**

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

**Strengths:**

This section is fully developed.

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The grant applicant has appropriately described the formal process that will be used to analyze the quasi-experimental project. Statistical difference will be evaluated through use of ANCOVA analysis. There will be three treatment and three control schools selected to be analyzed throughout the years of grant funding. The applicant has noted that selection will be based on whether students were equivalent on baseline measures of achievement and demographic characteristics. The plan to collect teacher surveys in the spring and student surveys twice a year is well justified. The applicant has clearly defined plans for establishing teacher/student survey validity and reliability.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

Levels of evaluation have been well established. The district plans to collect feedback from professional development events, included plans to evaluate arts-based performance assessments, and included plans to evaluate the success of the peer tutoring program by monitoring student self assessment, learning, and engagement. It is believable that feedback from the programs can lead to a clear assessment of how well the district successfully implemented intended project goals.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

There are clear goals to increase student achievement. The grant applicant has successfully provided a vision of the project plans and has described the rigor of learning that will take place in the selected schools. Evaluation of student achievement in content areas, and on standardized assessments is understood. Collections of surveys from staff and evaluation from focus groups sessions will also lead to valuable feedback to enhance the project's success. Within the appendix, the grant applicant has provided thorough evaluation measures with listed outcomes, data sources, and planned methods of analysis. If implemented, these plans could ensure project success.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses within this section of the grant application.

**Reader's Score:**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - 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 grant applicant's desire to create professional development via face-to-face and blending online learning modules to increase student achievement is understood. Cherokee has included a plan to provide virtual learning tools utilizing Blackboard or Moodle to achieve a blending model of professional development. The goal to implement the AI project and to conduct a longitudinal evaluation of the success of the project is well described. Plans to create a teacher developed unit bank incorporating technology is described throughout the grant application.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no found weaknesses.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/20/2014 09:28 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/15/2014 09:50 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Cherokee County School District (U351D140083)

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need for Project	15	12
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	25
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	20
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	97
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Technology</b>		
1. CPP: Technology	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	105	102

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Development & Dissemination Grant Program - 1: 84.351D

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Cherokee County School District (U351D140083)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 1 - Need for Project in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.

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

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

Reader's Score: 12

#### Sub Question

1. (a) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

**Strengths:**

The applicant demonstrates strong evidence that the service provided by the project will address the needs of the students at risk on pages 3-9. The applicant discusses background and current information student performance data, teacher recruitment, retention, and instructional quality data, and district demographic data by territory, State, and by region to the extent possible. Over 80% of the students in some of the title 1 schools included are on free and reduced lunch; while over 95% of the students are referred to as minority students. The professional development to improve instruction and the integration of the arts in the curriculum are highly likely to address the low performance and motivation needs of the students at risk of failure in the Cherokee County District.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score:

2. (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.

### Sub Question

#### Strengths:

The applicant proposes ample opportunities and services to facilitate and equip these low performing schools to successfully carry out the purposes and activities of the proposed project. The high quality digital tools, the multiple partnerships, and the virtual learning tools support are identified and fully described by the applicant as services/opportunities to address the educational gaps and weaknesses in the Cherokee County District. The collaboration and the professional learning communities, the peer tutoring will build teacher knowledge and skills and thus student achievement gaps and weaknesses as described on page 8.

#### Weaknesses:

This application would have been strengthened if there were more concrete examples provided that describe exactly which gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructures, and opportunities will be addressed by this proposed arts project.

#### Reader's Score:

### 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 materials and processes described is evidence that this project is more likely to be highly effective in a variety of settings. These products are centered on the professional development modules, the technology, and the curriculum. The variety of settings the product has a strong chance of being highly effective in includes other classrooms, teacher workshops, and professional organizations involving arts-integration.

#### Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 10

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

**Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 3 - Quality of Project Design in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.**

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

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score:** 25

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

This project proposal reflects research-based practices and emerging promising practices related to the effective arts based instruction. The proposal is supported with a strong logic model on 18. The model includes research supported resources, project activities, outputs and outcomes. Some of the current research cited includes 21st Century Skills, Marrow, Pressley, Smith and Smith, and Erickson and Lanning.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score:**

2. (b) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory.

**Strengths:**

The applicants theory of action for the proposed project is based of Confucius classic philosophy that "Tell me, I forget; Show me, I remember; Involve me, I understand." The underpinnings of this theory is a good fit for the proposed arts-integration project work as the team has been designed to include a great deal of involvement and collaboration. The involvement takes place between and among teachers, students, partners and key project personnel. The theory of action is illustrated on page 17 extends the philosophy of this the project to strategies and lessons that explain designed in the proposed art integration project. This is strong evidence that the proposed project is supported by strong theory.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses noted in this section of the grant proposal.

**Reader's Score:**

3. (c) 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.

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The innovative project design, the strong project partners, the validity and reliability of the evaluation efforts, and the high-quality professional development package are strong components of this proposal that support comprehensive effort to improve academic achievement for the high needs students. The applicant thoroughly addressed specifying a strong plan for achieving the educational goals and priorities set for the targeted schools to be served by this project. The virtual learning opportunities and the focus on student and teacher outcomes on page 14 additionally support the improvement of teaching and learning. The peer teaching, the art-based student products, the video-modules, and the strong research based evidence support improving academic achievement of the students. The project is aligned with the comprehensive-wide improvement plans and the Race to the Top system.

### Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses identified.

### Reader's Score:

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

### Strengths:

The applicant focuses on sustainability of the project for students and teachers being achieved once the arts integration project is fully implemented as proposed in the 26 targeted schools in Cherokee County School District. This suggests that the strong project goals and objectives, professional development modules, the digital tools and virtual learning communities when fully implemented will result in sustainability. The students and teachers will have transferable skills in moral character, critical thinking, key character traits, academic skills, and accountability that will continue to be with them long after the grant funding period ends.

### Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses identified.

### Reader's Score:

## Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the 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's description of the full time employees, personnel positions, proposed staff and relevant experiences are also clearly identified in a logic model for the management plan. The applicant highlighted the complete funding source for each of the project personnel listed by including that detailed information in the chart. There is a strong team of highly experienced and qualified staff on the project which is more than adequate to achieve the project objectives.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 5 - Management Plan in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.**

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

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The project tasks, the responsibility of the project personnel, and the reasonable timelines are clearly defined in a table centered on project milestone. The timeline provided was detailed by year and by quarter allowing adequate check points for program modifications. The timeline ties directly to specific project personnel and their overall role and responsibility in that regard. The comprehensive logic map displayed on pages 29-38 of the management plan demonstrates the extent to which resources (the management team) are allocated within the district and the targeted schools. The thorough logic plan also reflects the needs being met of the low performing schools to receive high quality professional development. The applicant demonstrates the efficiency and effectiveness to which the project will accomplish the project milestones for completion of project tasks.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicants involve highly qualified key personnel to facilitate completion of project goals and objectives. The project director, principal investigator, and other key personnel and their time commitment to this grant proposal are clearly delineated in the program logic map within the management plan.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicants provide ample details in the proposed project to ensure feedback and continuous improvement. There are particulars outlined on the feedback loop between the partners, stakeholders, teachers, and students are promising. On page 41, the applicants describe the collaboration efforts between the university consultants, the teachers, the coaches, and the professional learning communities.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score:**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

**Please provide a brief summary and your scores for Question 6 - Project Evaluation in the space below. If you opt to not include a summary, please indicate N/A in the comment boxes. Your detailed analysis and comments for each of the sub-criteria should be provided in each of the subsequent, specific sub-questions. Scores are not captured at the sub-question level and can only be provided here.**

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

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 20****Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The evaluation plan for this grant proposal to improve teaching, learning, and student achievement through the design of a standards and research based arts integration project. The measurable project outcomes on page 43 and 44 are aligned with the overall project goals. The evaluation team appears to be appropriate and strong with evaluation and content level experience being professional development, arts, and leadership. The project timeline for the evaluation is embedded and consistent with project goals and objectives. The researchers appear to have effective formative and summative assessments projected for a successful evaluation of this grant proposal. This is a flexible evaluation plan allowing for changes as needed. The evaluation methodology is solidly designed for this project. The evaluators plan to use a rigorous quasi-experimental research design. The use of a mixed method approach is robust for this evaluation. The project logic model is also strong. The project objective measures are clearly delineated and well- supportive of indicating project success.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

Performance feedback and periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes is highly likely to occur as the applicants have outlined in the grant proposal. The evaluation logic map and the fidelity chart illustrate communication loops between the evaluation team and other key project personnel as well as the project personnel and the partners and other stakeholders. The communication methods include professional events, focus group meetings, and publications.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

The implementation rubric on pages 44 and 45 clearly demonstrate alignment of short and long term goals with project expectations. There is also a solid set of evaluation questions that will guide the evaluation purpose and the overall purpose of the project. It is apparent that with the evaluation questions, the evaluation methodology, the rigorous research design, the formative and summative assessments, and the close alignment with the What Works

**Sub Question**

Clearinghouse guidelines all support a highly likely implementable with fidelity and will lead to successful evaluation of this proposed project.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score:**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - 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:**

There applicants addressed priority preference four on technology. The applicant demonstrates the use of technology, the video creations, and virtual digital tools such as Blackboard and Moodle.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses in this section of the grant.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 07/15/2014 09:50 AM