

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/10/2014 09:39 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Dramatic Results (U351D140076)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	15	13
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	23
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	19
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
Sub Total	100	94
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Technology		
1. CPP: Technology	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	99

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Development & Dissemination Grant Program - 4: 84.351D

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Dramatic Results (U351D140076)

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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 13

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 identifies specific high-risk factors that will be addressed by the project (pp. 5-7). LBUSD's diverse population, large number of students living in poverty, low achievement levels in math, and identified learning needs of students with low levels of language proficiency demonstrate a compelling need.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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 identifies and explains four gaps in the district that will be addressed by the project: academic achievement gap for students living in poverty, schools in which art is not part of the curriculum, students' limited access to technology, and lack of teachers who are trained in the arts (pp. 8-15).

The applicant provides specific examples of how the project proposed to address each of these gaps.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

While the applicant identifies “limited exposure to technology at home and at school” as a gap in services to be met by the project, no information is provided that is specific to the project schools. An inventory or survey to determine what is available to the target population would demonstrate a stronger need for the project.

No information is provided about the level of student achievement in art in the target schools, which makes it difficult to assess the need for this aspect of the 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 applicant lists seven products that will result from the project and provides persuasive evidence that these products could transfer to other settings (pp. 15-19). The products include 24 lessons, iPad support materials, instructional strategies, PD videos, evaluation data, information on the model, and a dissemination plan.

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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 23

Sub Question

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

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant provides support for the project by citing research regarding the benefits of linking the arts to other core subjects (pp. 24, 26) and by outlining how technology will be used to help students interact with information (p. 25).

Weaknesses:

This section could be stronger if the applicant outlined each aspect of the project - i.e. reed baskets, social studies connections mentioned on p. 3 - and identified the research or effective practices that form the basis of these decisions.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant includes a logic model (p. 66) that describes short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes.

The applicant identifies specific skills that will be fostered by the project and that have the potential to increase students' interest in and motivation for learning (pp. 26-28).

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 project focuses on multiple facets that impact student learning: increasing teacher knowledge, skill, and agency in arts integration (pp. 29-30); using iPads as tools for research, creating content, and interacting with information (p. 29); and accessing many different ways of knowing (p. 31).

Additionally, as the applicant's latest iteration in a long line of arts-integrated programming, this project successfully builds on previous lessons learned.

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:

As mentioned throughout the application, including on p. 31, the applicant has a history of implementing successful arts-integrated projects in the district. These past projects have been adopted in other contexts and have drawn additional non-federal funds (p. 3).

Sub Question

The applicant lists multiple ways in which the project activities will continue to impact the community after the grant period ends, primarily that the mini-lessons and iPads will continue to be used by teachers in the district, and teacher practice will change to include more arts-integrated strategies.

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 project personnel reflect diversity in a way that is welcome in a school community as diverse as LBUSD (p. 33). Project personnel speak four languages, represent seven different cultural groups, and include people who identify as gay and straight.

The project personnel have both broad and deep experience in the arts, education, and community engagement. The evaluation team seems well-suited to evaluate the impact of this particular project based on team members' experience in education and child development (pp. 34-36).

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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 19

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 includes project timelines with specific milestones, responsible parties, and proposed deliverables (pp. 38, 73).

The applicant recognizes that success comes when project tasks are broken into smaller, manageable pieces; this is reflected in four lessons being converted for digital use in each year of the project (p. 39).

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 identifies FTEs for each staff member, including principal investigators (pp. 39-42), and the FTEs are adequate based on the proposed timeline.

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 lists multiple ways in which formal feedback will be gathered (p. 42).

Weaknesses:

The applicant notes that "informal feedback will be gathered weekly" from participants in the project (p. 42), yet no information is given about procedures used to gather or compile this feedback to increase its usefulness.

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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 19

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 defines three goals (p. 47) that will form the basis of the evaluation.

For each goal, the applicant outlines evaluation questions, ancillary questions, and performance objectives (pp. 48-52). The performance objectives are clear and measurable, and they include procedures for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that evaluators will share interim evaluation results with project staff to guide project activities. Specifically, data will be used to change professional development activities based on student outcomes (p. 53).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 proposes using a randomized control trial (pp. 44-45) with schools as the unit to avoid contamination of data. To further evaluate the efficacy of technology and strengthen conclusions drawn from the evaluation, the applicant proposes two treatment conditions: one using eight technology-based lessons and one using sixteen technology-based lessons (p. 44).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

By using schools as the unit of comparison for three different conditions (p. 44), the applicant is limiting its sample size. It is unlikely that statistically significant change will be observed when only three schools comprise each sample group.

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:

Technology is an integral part of the project; the applicant proposes to create a new iPad app that increases students' engagement with math and art content (pp. 11-13), and the Technology Supervisor identified in the application seems well-suited to coordinate this task (p. 36). Additionally, the school district's strategic plan includes a technology goal that parallels the goals of this project: "to provide differentiated, technology-based learning options, supported with a teaching and learning goal to provide technology-enhanced curriculum." (p. 12) The applicant also proposes to use technology to support students' 21st century learning skills, including facilitating research, communication, problem-solving, and collaboration (p. 12).

The applicant includes a technology plan with clear goals, benchmarks, and responsible parties (p. 68).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
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Last Updated: 06/17/2014 07:36 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Dramatic Results (U351D140076)

Reader #3: *****

	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. Quality of Project Design	25	25
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	19
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
Sub Total	100	96
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Technology		
1. CPP: Technology	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	101

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Development & Dissemination Grant Program - 4: 84.351D

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Dramatic Results (U351D140076)

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:

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 15

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 project will serve a student population in the Long Beach Unified School District, a majority of which is at risk because of family circumstances, poor academic performance, and/or problematic behavior in school (p. 11). The project will be conducted in 6 Title 1 schools in the district, all of which have more than 35% students from low-income families (p. 6). The project is intended to address the identified significant achievement gap between students of high or low SES in the district. The narrative also identifies gaps in teachers' understanding of arts integration (p. 3), which will be addressed by the project.

Weaknesses:

None

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 narrative identifies four specific gaps in the school district that are addressed by the REAL project (p. 8). The narrative is detailed and explicit about how the REAL project will address each of these gaps.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None

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 narrative provides detailed description of a set of 7 products that will be developed as part of the REAL project (p. 15) and indicates how they might be used in other settings, including REAL lessons that include iPad programming, identification of effective instructional strategies for arts integration and teacher PD lessons on arts integration (pp. 16-17).

Weaknesses:

None

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:

Weaknesses:

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 REAL project builds upon three previous arts-integration projects that reported significant gains in student art knowledge and math achievement and gains in teacher self-efficacy and use of arts integration. The narrative cites research on the impact of arts integration as justification for the project (pp. 30-32). The promise that the technology component of DR will be able to support differentiated instruction is supported by research on the impact

Sub Question

of individualized instruction.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The REAL project is well situated in current research. There is a well-articulated logic model that specifies inputs, short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes for students and teachers.

Weaknesses:

None

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 narrative notes that the district is interested in innovative curricula to improve student achievement (p. 31); the district has a goal of 70% of 5th graders proficient in math by 2015, and the REAL project represents an innovative strategy for achieving this goal. The goal of the project is the transfer of the REAL lessons and PD model to become part of curriculum-wide instructional improvement, leading to overall increases in student academic achievement (p. 32). The project is designed to increase the integration of standards-based arts education with 4th grade curriculum and to strengthen standards-based arts instruction (p. 32). Also, the project expects to change the motivation and engagement of teachers in the district in integrating arts into the classroom (p. 33).

Weaknesses:

None

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 project plans to disseminate the Making it Real: Math in at least one new school district by Year 5. The work under the REAL project will continue in the district beyond the end of the grant through the training of classroom teachers in improved instructional practices and the lessons and iPad technology, which will remain after the end of the grant (p. 32). The REAL project plans to work with classroom teachers within the framework of gradual release of responsibility as classroom teachers move from 3 teaching artists and in-class coaching in Year 1 to teachers and 2 artists-in-residence/classroom sharing the lead role in instruction in Year 2 (p. 29). In Year 3, classroom teachers are the primary instruction for the majority of the lessons. Also, the software program for DR is being developed for the iPad to align with the technology in place or being planned by the school district (p. 17).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None

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:

Beyond being an Equal Opportunity Employer, the grantee encourages applications from diverse individuals and is interested in hiring staff who reflect the diversity of the students in the district (p. 33). As evidence, the project staff are diverse in terms of language and culture (p. 33). The proposed project staff have training and experience that is highly relevant to the successful implementation of the project. Both the proposed project director and the director of arts education have many years of experience in these same positions with Dramatic Results. The project director has previously managed three AEMMD grants. The proposed project director has a long history of working with Dramatic Results and has been recognized for her previous grant management and dedication to the arts (p. 34). The director of arts education has a teaching credential in art, with special emphasis on multicultural classrooms (p. 34). The teaching artists have relevant experience working with high-risk students with Dramatic Results. Finally, the proposed Technology Supervisor has relevant experience transitioning organizations to digital systems.

Weaknesses:

None

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:

Weaknesses:

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 team includes individuals from different organizations, but the responsibilities of each organization appear to be clearly spelled out (p. 39). There appear to be a sufficient number of staff proposed for the project with a sufficient amount of time to ensure successful management of the project. There are systems for integrating the multiple organizations/staff in a unified project implementation.

Weaknesses:

None

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:

All key project staff appear to have adequate time to meet the objectives of the project. The proposed project director is committed to .75 FTE to administer the grant (p. 39), and the director of arts education will also be committing .75 FTE to lead the training and classroom integration activities (p. 40). The technology supervisor has committed .30 FTE (p. 41) to guide the conversion of REAL curriculum to the digital medium (p. 41). The school district has committed its K-5 Visual and Performing Arts Math and Technology Curriculum Coaches to participate in this project up to 50 hours in Year 1-4 to review and advise on the implementation of REAL and to support participating teachers (p. 40).

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The narrative describes formal and informal feedback loops. Weekly meetings of the project staff will be used to discuss project progress. The informal feedback will be generated during weekly staff meetings (p. 42). Formal feedback will occur at key points in the implementation (end of program unit, end of year), feedback will be obtained from teachers via pre and post teacher surveys and Teaching Artists will keep activity logs.

Weaknesses:

The narrative also indicates that informal feedback will be obtained from the implementers—classroom teachers, teaching artists, and students, but the methods and schedule for collecting this feedback is not clear. Although the sources of formal feedback are identified, and measures are described, the process of collecting, analyzing, and reporting on formal feedback is not clearly specified.

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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 17

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 proposed project will use a randomized control trial to estimate the effect of two forms of REAL with a control group. The outcomes to be assessed include student achievement and socio-emotional behavior. The project will use the state math test to assess math achievement (p. 52) and standards-based art rubrics to assess student skills in creating, performing and responding to art (p. 51). The evaluation will assess the effects of REAL on teacher instructional behavior as well as on student achievement. Measures of the quality of the art instruction will use a Teacher Knowledge Survey and classroom observations using REAL lesson fidelity checklists (p. 50). Focus group interviews with participating teachers, teaching artist, and REAL PD staff will collect more qualitative data on evaluation of the PD and how it has affected the use of arts-integrated instruction in math (p. 48).

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The evaluators are expected to share interim results with REAL staff, based on annual assessment of short- and long-term progress towards goals (p. 53).

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score:

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

Sub Question

Strengths:

The proposed evaluation design has the potential to produce strong evidence on the effectiveness of REAL. The proposed design is a cluster randomized control trial (i.e., at the school-level) (p. 45). If the research question is about the effect on schools (i.e., on clusters), the RCT design could produce evidence that would meet WWC standards without Reservations; or, in the event of high attrition at the cluster level, the study could meet WWC standards with reservations if the baseline equivalence of the Treatment and Control schools on student outcomes can be established. If the study inference is about students, the highest rating the study could receive is Meets Standards with Reservations. Regardless of whether the study is assessed as an RCT or a QED, the design will produce evidence of promise.

Weaknesses:

The fact that the design is a cluster (school-level) RCT and not a student RCT has ramifications for the power of the design. Assigning a small number of schools to 3 conditions means that the contrasts between different groups of schools will have low power to show a statistically significant effect. There is no discussion about how the random assignment will handle teacher turnover and whether the research questions in the later years will consider the different numbers of years teachers may have been implementing REAL.

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 project is designed to integrate iPad technology to an ongoing project that has already developed curriculum, teacher PD, and dissemination strategies. Students will use the iPads to research and design their art to enhance their basket-making and math learning (p. 15).

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 5

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Dramatic Results (U351D140076)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	15	13
Significance		
1. Significance	10	9
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	24
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
Sub Total	100	93
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Technology		
1. CPP: Technology	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	98

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Development & Dissemination Grant Program - 4: 84.351D

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Dramatic Results (U351D140076)

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:

General Comments:

This is a proposal from a previous grantee with a clearly written, in depth proposal submitted in alignment with the goals of this grant program. The applicant has a high level of regard for the process of randomly selecting program participants and control populations, while also establishing measureable achievement goals. This proposal is a logical progression of the grantee's previous work in support of arts integration through the MIAB (Math in a Basket) program. The use of technology as an addition to the program seeks to engage both educators in teaching and students in learning, while maintaining a balance between the hands-on creation of art and building understanding of the ways in which artists use technology to research and explore sources and resources for the creation of their work. The project plan reflects the thoughtful and replicable development of a program which engages both students and teachers which enables authentic learning in both the arts and mathematics.

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 13

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 project will be implemented in 4th grade classrooms in Long Beach Unified School District in California. The randomly selected campuses will come from among the 32 Title I Schools with a total of 560 students served per year of the project, totaling 1,680 over three years. Based on current demographics, the student population served are at risk of educational failure based on 64% from low SES backgrounds, 60% ELL (page 6). In addition, while 73% of LBUSD elementary students were proficient in mathematics in both 2012 and 2013, it is estimated that mean scores for LBUSD students eligible for free and reduced lunch were 45 points lower (page 7).

Weaknesses:

While Dramatic Results has a 22 year history of working with LBUSD, there is no mention in the needs section of the proposal whether or not they worked with any of the district's third graders in 2013-2014 school year (pages 3-15).

Sub Question

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 proposal notes several gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, and opportunities, including: arts-poor environment, limited access to technology, and lack of qualified arts specialists and arts-trained classroom teachers. The applicant notes that other LBUSD partnerships in the arts primarily provide after-school programs, and that art supplies go unused as classroom educators do not feel confident to integrate the arts in their classrooms (page 11). The project "provides multiple years of hands-on training, emotional support and professional coaching to enable non-arts specialists to become comfortable and creative in integrating arts into their classrooms (page 11). The proposal indicates a clear need for professional development to ensure success of the project as well as its sustainability (pages 13 and 14).

Weaknesses:

Dramatic Results notes that they have "a 22 year history of modeling "these promising practices" with classroom teachers in LBUSD," and it would have been helpful to understand the ways in which their work has offset the gaps among other school populations, and/or to clarify that this set of classes will or will not overlap previous classrooms served by Dramatic Results (page 11).

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 proposal identifies several products that will be useful not only for the project but for use in a variety of other settings. These include the 24 re-designed REAL lessons with measurable outcomes, iPad-based programming to support 16 of the 24 lessons, arts integration instructional strategies with a math/art focus, and the mini-lesson teacher professional development videos that parallel the 24 lessons (page 15). Because this project builds upon the lessons learned from previously supported work, the potential utility of these new products is strengthened (pages 15, 16, and 16). The combination of technology and hands-on practice noted in the professional development, supported by the mini-videos, is also a strength as it remains authentic to teaching the art form of Math in a Basket (page 18).

Weaknesses:

The provision of "one family workshop on-campus each year to foster and sustain parent interest" should be reconsidered. Having more than one workshop each year would enable parents to realize the growth of their children's work and provide opportunities for involvement that would be better sustained over time. Repeat engagement is also important given the lack of ongoing support for their teachers to integrate the arts in the classroom so that there is a greater level of family involvement and support for the arts in their schools. One experience can make it difficult to accurately measure impact and model this aspect of the project in other settings (page 21).

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. 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: 24

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 acronym REAL - research, exploration, analysis and learning - "that occurs when creating art" is an authentic approach to the creative process. The arts integration approach of the project design is based on research (page 62), and the project's engagement with technology is a valid application of technology enhancing instruction. The project design has the potential to encourage student engagement in learning in the arts and other subjects while building skills in both the creative process and in the use of current technology, including the concepts of volume, perimeter, color and pattern (pages 24-25).

Weaknesses:

There are no specific weaknesses in this aspect of the project design.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The proposal cites two areas within this section: developing lifelong learners and stimulating an enduring change in teachers' instructional practice. The next step noted within this section of the proposal (pages 27 and 28) notes an interest in investigating whether "increased intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy translates to increases in persistence and resilience, and ultimately academic achievement, and whether these skills persist over time. To support sustained learning beyond the project timeframe, the evaluation will investigate whether these skills persist through the end of 5th grade as the students leave elementary school and enter middle school. The full range of approaches to professional development are based on strong theory as well as practice (page 28).

Weaknesses:

The interest in exploring the impact of the project on developing lifelong learners is commendable. The case for how this investigation is supported by strong theory is not fully explained (pages 27 and 28).

Reader's Score:

Sub Question

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 project builds teaching and learning skills in mathematics and the arts from year to year, with the first year as a planning year, the second year focused on the teaching team (classroom teacher, teaching artist and in-class coaching) modeling the REAL units in the classroom while developing a community of learners among the teachers. Teachers are supported in building their teaching capacity as their students are learning art, math and technology through the REAL units and by working with the teaching artists (page 29). By year three, the classroom teachers are taking the lead on more of the instructional units and identifying ways about how the arts can be integrated into the regular curriculum. Data from MIAB in 2004 showed that teachers increased their confidence in teaching math from 35% to 55% through this type of modeled professional development (page 30).

Weaknesses:

There is a notation (page 31) that "REAL students and teachers analyze their artwork according to California and National Visual and Performing Arts Standards" (page 31). No mention is made that the new National Core Arts Standards will be released in 2014 and whether or not these new standards will be taken into consideration in this project.

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:

Dramatic Results has a track record of sustaining its work by building capacity among the classroom teachers who are part of the program. The strategy of modeling and gradually shifting responsibility from teaching artists to the classroom teachers as part of hands-on instruction and professional development bodes well for sustainability beyond the life of the grant project. The mini-video lessons, the district's investment in the iPad technology, and the development of a community of learners among the teachers also addresses the district's commitment to sustaining the benefits of both teacher and student learning beyond the grant period (pages 31-33).

Weaknesses:

There are no specific weaknesses in this aspect of the project design.

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 staff (personnel and teaching artists) contracted by the applicant organization is diverse, representing four languages, seven cultures, and broad age ranges (page 33). The project director and the project team have years of experience and education background aligned with the project (pages 34 -35). The evaluation team is experienced in arts education (page 35). The qualifications of the technology staff will enable all design or development efforts to take place without

outsourcing (page 36).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses regarding the training or experience of the key project personnel (pages 33-36).

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 management plan, including the description of responsibilities, timeline, milestones, and budget, support the applicant's goals for accomplishing the project (pages 37, 38, and 39). LBUSD's support for the budget (page 37), specifically in terms of the investment in technology, is excellent. The chart on page 38 provides a clear overview of responsibilities and milestones for completion of project tasks in year one.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this aspect of the management plan (timeline, responsibilities, milestones) (pages 37, 38, and 39).

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The time commitment of .75 FTE of the project director, the director of art education's time commitment of .75 FTE (to train and supervise art team, develop and revise the integrated arts curriculum, and other technology, supervisory, and liaison work), the time allocated by the four teaching artists of .88 FTE each week over 32 weeks all speak to the high degree of hands-on involvement of project staff (pages 39 and 41). LBUSD's time commitment

Sub Question

for the curriculum coaches, professional development by classroom teachers, convening of principals, and the technology supervisor are described in detail which supports a clear understanding of time expectations (page 40). Time for feedback is built into the technology personnel's work (page 41). The time allocation of the principal investigator at .35 FTE is appropriate at the outset of the project (page 41-42).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this aspect of the management plan (time commitments of the project director, principal investigator and other key project personnel).

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The inclusion of both formal and informal procedures at regular intervals (i.e. monthly, end of each program unit, and year-end) as well as pre/post anecdotal surveys and activity logs kept by teaching artists support continuous improvement throughout the project (page 42).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this aspect of the management plan for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 17

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 proposal provides extensive explanation regarding the methods which will be undertaken by an independent evaluator to conduct a randomized control trial measuring the impact of the REAL program (pages 43-52). The

Sub Question

evaluation team has substantial experience in working with arts integration projects (pages 43 and 44). The randomized control trial supports the selection of three different treatment conditions, including a control group and two levels of intervention (page 44). Schools will remain at the assigned treatment level for all three years of the project (page 45 and 46). The tracking of outcomes in arts, math, and social-emotional outcomes each year supports the goals of the project (page 46). The tables on pages 48-52 provide quantifiable measures of success.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in the methods of evaluation described along with the measurable outcomes proposed for the project.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The intention to gather data in order to evaluate both short and long term progress will enable periodic assessment over the life of the project (page 53). It is appropriate that the proposal notes that the professional development plans will be adjusted based on this data collection, if needed, in order to improve teacher practice (page 53). It is good to see the way in which progress regarding both teacher and student outcomes will be monitored.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this aspect of the evaluation plan.

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:

Data collection includes both qualitative and quantitative methods to support five evaluation questions, ancillary questions, performance objectives, and annual benchmarks (pages 47-52). Baseline data is collected in the first year of the project (page 47). The logic model includes short term, intermediate and long term outcomes (page 66). There is a detailed timeline for the evaluation plan (page 72) which indicates the ways in which evaluation is embedded throughout the four years of the project. The project seeks to build reliable tools which can continue to be used over time and in a variety of settings (page 53). These resources include, whenever possible, previously utilized measures to help the field begin to develop a set of reliable and valid assessment tools (page 53). Collectively, these methods of evaluation combined with existing program data, will continue to produce evidence of promise pending achievement of program outcomes.

Weaknesses:

The hierarchical design, in which the individual schools are the unit of assignment, may result in findings which are not statistically significant (pages 45 and 46).

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 project's Logic Model (page 66) and Technology Implementation Plan (68) supports this competitive preference priority. The project supports the LBUSD's strategic plan for technology: to provide differentiated, technology-based learning options, supported with a teaching and learning goal to provide technology-enhanced curriculum (page 12) and the need for evidence-based curricula integrating arts and technology (page 3). The project is designed to blend traditional art forms with a digital tool (page 3 and 4).

Weaknesses:

here are no weaknesses in this aspect of the proposal.

Reader's Score: 5

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