

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/06/2014 10:10 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Cook County School District 104 (U351C140034)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	5	4
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Services</b>		
1. Project Services	15	13
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	15	15
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	30	29
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	25	23
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	94
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP-Technology</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority-Technology</b>		
1. CPP-Technology	20	18
<b>Sub Total</b>	20	18
<b>Total</b>	120	112

# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - Professional Development Arts Educators - 6: 84.351C

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

Applicant: Cook County School District 104 (U351C140034)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

#### General:

**Strengths-** Overall, the applicant presents a proposal designed to increase Arts education through the use of several digital tools that include videos, online documentation and website postings, teacher papers presentations and manuals. **Weaknesses-**there are some areas of the application that lack some detailed information such as how the proposed project will measure rigorous academic standards and how the time commitment of key staff will be maintained without a written MOU provided.

Reader's Score: 4

#### Sub Question

1. **(A) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.**

#### Strengths:

The information provided by the applicant indicates there is a need to expand and build the capacity of the Arts education programs as currently students only receive 30 minutes of Arts instruction once per week. According to the applicant, most of the Arts instruction is developed in isolation and the ratio of students to Arts education teachers is 612:1. Additionally, there are few opportunities for professional development for teachers. The applicant presents specific plans by which they propose to build capacity. For example, a few activities proposed include increasing district leadership support, to provide high quality intensive professional development and establish a teacher-led professional development model (pgs. 5-7)

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not include any specific information regarding the current status of Arts education programs or academic performance levels of the students to be served by the project in detail. Therefore it is difficult to ascertain the significance of the project as related to the targeted populations needs.

Reader's Score:

2. **(B) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.**

#### Strengths:

The applicant proposes to provide a variety of effective ways by which to disseminate project information and strategies. The use of videos, online documentation and website postings, teacher papers presentations and manuals will be produced for dissemination. Additionally, the applicant proposes to offer technical assistance and on-site visits where educators can visit targeted schools and observe program implementation (pgs. 7-8).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

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

**General:**

Strengths-The applicant presents a four-theory, research-based approach which was used to create the logic model for the proposed project. The model presented is aligned with project objectives and will address the needs of the target population. The applicant provides specific strategies to ensure the longevity of the project after the grant has ended.

Weaknesses-No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Sub Question**

- 1. (A) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is supported by strong theory.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a four-theory, research-based approach which was used to create the logic model for the proposed project. The model presented is aligned with project objectives that include increasing student achievement in reading and mathematics, increased professional development opportunities for teachers, improving student academics through Arts education and creating a support system comprised of educators, community partners and standards based curriculum. The logic model is linked to the projects activities (pgs. 10-11).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

- 2. (B) 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:**

There are specific strategies the applicant proposes to implement to ensure the work is ongoing after the grant has ended. For example, the applicant proposes to seek opportunities for funding at the State level and from private foundations. The use of on-going organizational teams will build capacity amongst teachers and through professional development collaborations with local artist who will support the project through instruction and follow-up (pgs. 10-12).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services**

**The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In**

**determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**General:**

Strengths-The applicant presents evidence to show there is a plan which is a solid approach to ensure equal access to the project. The targeted population is identified and the plan to provide access to teachers is reasonable. Weaknesses-The applicant does not describe how the activities will be measured against rigorous academic standards, only National Arts Education Association standards is discussed.

**Reader's Score: 13**

**Sub Question**

- 1. (A) The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents evidence to show there is a plan which is a solid approach to ensure equal access to the project. The targeted population is identified and includes 85% African- American and Latino, 37% are limited English proficient and 87% low income. To further support equal treatment to eligible program participants, the applicant will ensure curricular and program literature is translated in alternative formats to support non-English students. Additionally, the plan to provide access to teachers is reasonable and includes notifying them through teachers meetings, newsletters, websites and announcements (pg. 13).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

- 2. (B) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides sufficient evidence to ensure professional development services are of high quality. For example, the applicant will pair eight teaching artist with eight teachers who will work together to enhance instructional content in Arts education, Math and reading through the use of digital tools. A variety of Arts activities will be provided to enhance the learning experience of teachers who will be able to transfer their knowledge to students through classroom instruction. The intensity of the project activities is reasonable as well as the duration. For example, the applicant proposes to provide forty hours of the professional development in addition to thirty hours of follow-up support and Teacher Arts Leaders will participate over sixty hours of professional development as well and resources will be made available online (pgs. 14-17).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

- 3. (C) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.**

**Strengths:**

The approach is an evidenced-based project which will lead to academic improvements because the activities are aligned with the National Arts Education Association standards. There is sufficient information to show that the

**Sub Question**

integration of Arts education will enhance the learning experience of students socially, physically, mentally and academically. More specifically, increased understanding in both reading and mathematical skills have been noted through research (pgs. 17-19).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not describe how the activities will be measured against rigorous academic standards, only National Arts Education Association standards is discussed.

**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 following factors:**

**General:**

Strengths-The applicant describes in detail the plan to ensure equal employment opportunities for potential employees. The plan includes an applicant search and screening process through the use of a search committee and positions will be advertised in minority newspapers, journals and publications. Weaknesses-No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Sub Question**

- 1. (A) 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.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes in detail the plan to ensure equal employment opportunities for potential employees. The plan includes an applicant search and screening process through the use of a search committee and positions will be advertised in minority newspapers, journals and publications. Additionally, the applicant states there is a written policy from the school district which states that they prohibit the discrimination of employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (pgs. 19-20).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

- 2. (B) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

**Strengths:**

The key personnel qualifications, experiences and trainings are presented by the applicant in detail and show they are qualified to implement and oversee the project. The educational experience is also defined and indicates that their staff are capable of providing the support needed to assist the target population. For example, the project director has over 15 years of experience as a program director, teacher and administrator. Additionally, she has experience managing grant projects and will oversee the project (pgs. 19-20).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**3. (C) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.**

**Strengths:**

The qualifications and training of the project consultants are clearly defined by the applicant and show they are qualified to support the projects goals and objectives. The plan to support student instruction through the use of cultural organizations is to support Arts education instruction. For example, the National Museum of Mexican Art is a community-based organization Latino museum. Additionally, the applicant will partner with DePaul University's Center for Urban Education who will integrate Arts instruction into the improvement of reading and math (pgs. 23-24).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

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

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

**General:**

Strengths-The staff qualifications, education and work experience are described by the applicant. The time commitment of the key personnel associated with the project is appropriate for most of the staff and contractors who will work with the project. Weaknesses-Some of the time commitment for the key personnel is in-kind and there are no MOU's provided to ensure the time committed to the project will be honored.

**Reader's Score: 29**

**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 timelines, and milestones presented are appropriate for the project and the information provided is specific to each project activity. The person/persons responsible for implementation and oversight of each activity is identified and the budget is logical to support the project. The Project Director will be responsible for overseeing the overall project and work with project contractors to ensure goals and objectives are met (pgs. 37-40).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Sub Question**

- 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 the key personnel associated with the project is appropriate for most of the staff and contractors who will work with the project. The project director will devote 50% of her time to the project, while Teaching Artist Partner and Content Coordinator will devote 75% of their time to the project (pgs. 37-40).

**Weaknesses:**

It is noted in the budget narrative that the Project Director and some of the other key staff member's time commitment to the project is in-kind and there is no MOU or other documentation presented to show they will commit the time to the project as indicated by the applicant.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**Strengths:**

The plan to oversee project procedures to ensure program feedback is provided by the applicant. The support of the Management Team comprised of key personnel and contractors is a logical approach. The Management Team will meet monthly with principals in the targeted schools in addition to meeting quarterly to discuss the programs; and database reporting will be made available to review progress, goals and objectives. Additionally, the Management Team, External Evaluator and project team will assist with the evaluation process (pgs. 40).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

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

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**General:**

Strengths-The evaluation plan is a reasonable and logical approach for evaluating program progress. The external evaluator and project director will work together to use a quasi-experimental design approach to evaluate the project.

Weaknesses-The applicant does not mention the strategies they will use to measure teacher and student engagement.

**Reader's Score: 23**

**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 is a reasonable and logical approach for evaluating program progress. The external evaluator and project director will work together to use a quasi-experimental design approach to evaluate the project. The use of baseline data to measure progress will be used at the beginning of the project and used throughout to measure program progress. The use of surveys, interviews, attendance, enrollment data, observations and other

### Sub Question

quantitative/qualitative data will further lend to the viability of the project and will measure academic achievement, cultural enrichment, career development and other activities (pgs. 42-52). Furthermore, a power analysis study will also be used as another means to evaluate the project whereby classroom teachers and students in the treatment schools will be compared to teachers and students not in the treatment schools to gauge student success (pgs. 42-24).

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not mention the strategies they will use to measure teacher and student engagement.

#### 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 methods of feedback the applicant presents are adequate and will provide feedback to the stakeholders and staff. The process will include the annual collection of program data that includes the use of pre/posttest, surveys, student data and Likert scales and other items to evaluate teacher professional development. The feedback for the Management Team is presented and includes the use of focus groups to discuss student's academic performance, parent participation pre-post assessments and other effective measures to gauge program progress (pgs. 50-51).

#### 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 plan the applicant proposes to evaluate the levels of student and teacher knowledge and skills is appropriate to gauge evidence of promise. The applicant will use a quasi-experimental approach to evaluate the project. They plan to measure teacher knowledge annually; and they will use comparative school data to analyze whether there is evidence of promise (pgs.36-37).

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not define how they identified the schools to be used in the comparison study.

#### Reader's Score:

### Priority Questions

#### CPP-Technology - Competitive Preference Priority-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 proposes to use a variety of technology to implement the project. The teachers and students will have access to digital video, photography, animation, recordings and scripts to actively engage them in the Arts education process (pg. 2).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not describe the current status of the technology in place; therefore it is difficult to ascertain whether the digital tools and materials to be used will enhance the learning experience.

**Reader's Score:** 18

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 08/06/2014 10:10 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2014 01:46 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Cook County School District 104 (U351C140034)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	5	4
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Services</b>		
1. Project Services	15	14
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	15	15
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	30	29
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	25	23
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	95
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP-Technology</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority-Technology</b>		
1. CPP-Technology	20	18
<b>Sub Total</b>	20	18
<b>Total</b>	120	113

# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - Professional Development Arts Educators - 6: 84.351C

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

Applicant: Cook County School District 104 (U351C140034)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 4

#### Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

#### Strengths:

The proposal clearly outlines a need for arts-based educational professional development. The interest in arts-based education described by the teachers on page 6 and the large percentage of teachers that may be willing to participate indicate a grassroots interest in the topic. In addition, the limited access to arts education in Cook County, including limited weekly engagement (30-min., p. 7) and the high student-to-art teacher ratio indicate a pressing need. Lastly, the full description on page 7 related to building local capacity indicates the project will have a sustained impact on students and teachers.

#### Weaknesses:

No specific information about the participating schools was provided. In order to adequately assess the need on the targeted schools, academic performance and demographic data should be provided.

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

#### Strengths:

A clear dissemination plan is described on page 8 that includes development of a formal manual and distribution of project evaluation findings at local conferences and professional journals. The inclusion of teacher papers for distribution to teachers demonstrates a commitment to bringing research-based strategies directly to teachers.

#### Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score:

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 10

Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is supported by strong theory.

**Strengths:**

The logic model adequately connects inputs and outcomes for the project.

The proposal describes four theoretical/research-based foundations that inform the development of the project. The research is connected to the project design/goals and the theories are supported by evidence of promise. Of particular interest was the inclusion of effect sizes on page 10 related to academic achievement of treatment students in similar research projects.

**Weaknesses:**

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

Reader's Score:

2. (B) 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:**

A comprehensive plan is outlined describing efforts to sustain implementation beyond the end of the grant on page 12, including institutional commitment and continuation of established professional development teams. The proposal also describes efforts to identify and obtain additional funding to support implementation beyond the grant.

**Weaknesses:**

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

Reader's Score:

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services**

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 14

Sub Question

1. (A) The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The project activities will be offered to all students in participating schools (p. 13) and no student will be denied access to the project. Efforts to ensure equal access include translation of materials for English learners and accommodations for students with disabilities. Teachers will also have equal access to the professional development and efforts were describe to encourage participation from teachers from diverse backgrounds.

### Weaknesses:

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

### Reader's Score:

2. **(B) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**

### Strengths:

The professional development model includes extensive follow-up activities (p. 15), support from arts experts (e.g., National Museum od Mexican Art), coaching and performance feedback, and online support (p. 16). The program will provide 40+ hours of the professional development to 45 teachers. Overall, the project is designed to be of high quality and intensity to meet the program goals.

### Weaknesses:

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

### Reader's Score:

3. **(C) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.**

### Strengths:

The intensity of the program is clear, including a series of coaching and performance feedback components. The professional development activities are aligned with the Consortium of National Arts Education Association Standards (p. 17) and connects the project design to the academic achievement gains found in the Project Zero study (pp. 18-19).

### Weaknesses:

Although national arts standards are cited, connections with the Common Core State Standards would assure academic achievement measured against rigorous academic standards.

### 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 following factors:**

### General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 15

Sub Question

1. (A) 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.

**Strengths:**

The proposal provides a clear and deliberate plan to ensure applicants from traditionally underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply and that non-discrimination policies are in place for the hiring process.

**Weaknesses:**

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

Reader's Score:

2. (B) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

**Strengths:**

Overall, all relevant staff appears to have the requisite experience and training to successfully complete the project on time and on budget. The project director appears to have extensive grant management experience, and experience as an educator and administrator (p. 21)

**Weaknesses:**

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

Reader's Score:

3. (C) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

**Strengths:**

The diverse cadre of partnering organizations is a strength of the proposal and demonstrates an interest in leveraging local resources to increase teachers' arts-based educational performance. The addition DePaul University's Center for Urban Education and the Illinois Institute of Technology, Office of Professional Development as professional development partners will ensure that all professional development activities are high quality and involve technology.

**Weaknesses:**

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

Reader's Score:

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

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

**General:**

N/A

Reader's Score: 29

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 comprehensive management plan described between pages 27 and 40 outlines (a) key tasks to be completed by objective, (b) persons responsible for each task for each year, and (c) measureable milestones for each objective. For example, on page 38, a project management Table describes the milestone for activity one under object 3 as 80% of student connecting the arts to reading and math. This milestone is specific, observable, measurable, and includes a criterion for success.

**Weaknesses:**

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

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 project includes a significant amount of FTE as described in the narrative and the budget. The project director will provide .50FTE, a Project Training Manager will provide 1.0FTE, and the project evaluator will provide 300 hours of service (p. e109-e110). Overall, these time commitments are appropriate to ensure the project is completed on time and within budget.

**Weaknesses:**

The budget narrative indicates that the Project Director and the Teacher Professional Development and Arts Educator are providing their time in-kind. A letter of support from each of the key personnel's employers should be included to support the in-kind donations.

Reader's Score:

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

**Strengths:**

The project has a series of meetings and planned data-based reporting periods to ensure performance feedback. For example, project staff will meet quarterly to collect and assess student-level data (e.g., needs assessment data, p. 28) to improve instructional practice if necessary.

**Weaknesses:**

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

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

**General:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 23**

**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 descriptions of proposed objective measures for each of the four primary objectives on pages 44 to 49. Clear connection between many of the proposed measures and the project objectives are made. For example, the project will use the Illinois test of achievement (p. 49) to assess summative differences between treatment and control students.

**Weaknesses:**

Although a series of measures are described, more detail is necessary to ensure measures are objective, and importantly, not overly aligned with the treatment condition (i.e., assessing content taught in the professional development and uses the assessment to demonstrate growth/difference with comparison group). For example, the Teacher Arts Content and Integration Assessment Instrument of Professional Practice will be designed to be aligned with the professional development content and, as such, may be over aligned when comparing treatment and control students. Further, the project does not adequately address how the evaluation will measure student engagement (p. 48). The description of measures does not include classroom observations or a proxy for assessing engagement.

**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:**

A comprehensive plan is described to ensure performance feedback on page 50. For example, data will be provided on a monthly basis to the project director and management team. This frequent distribution of data should ensure performance feedback will be used to augment and adjust programming as necessary based on teacher and student data.

**Weaknesses:**

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

**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 proposal describes a quasi-experimental design study that will employ an interrupted time-series analysis when appropriate to assess overall project effects. As currently structured, the evaluation has the potential to result in evidence of promise assuming school-level equivalence.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant indicate that comparison schools will be identified and matched, more detail is necessary about how schools will be recruited and methods that will be used to match to ensure baseline equivalence between target schools and comparison schools.

**Reader's Score:**

**Priority Questions**

**CPP-Technology - Competitive Preference Priority-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 proposal includes a complete list of connected digital tools that will be used in both classroom instruction and professional development (pp. 2-3). The inclusion of the Illinois Institute of Technology as a professional development partner will further ensure that teachers are receiving additional technology-based professional development to integrate into their respective classrooms.

**Weaknesses:**

Although the project integrates digital tools, the use of online digital resources for collaboration could increase the integration technology. On page 16, the proposal discusses an online component, but it unclear how the online component will be used for increasing teacher performance/knowledge and used as a resource beyond the grant.

**Reader's Score: 18**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/14/2014 01:46 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/06/2014 11:21 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Cook County School District 104 (U351C140034)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	5	4
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Services</b>		
1. Project Services	15	15
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	15	15
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	30	29
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	25	24
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	97
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP-Technology</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority-Technology</b>		
1. CPP-Technology	20	18
<b>Sub Total</b>	20	18
<b>Total</b>	120	115

# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - Professional Development Arts Educators - 6: 84.351C

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

Applicant: Cook County School District 104 (U351C140034)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

#### General:

This 4-year project is requesting \$1,399,762 for a professional development/arts integration project for 5 elementary schools to serve a total of 45 classroom and art teachers serving approximately 1,600 at-risk 3rd-8th graders.

Note: The total project budget is \$1,886,702.due to the applicant's match of \$486,940.

Reader's Score: 4

#### Sub Question

1. (A) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides convincing descriptions and data to demonstrate the project will serve schools serving high-poverty and high-risk students, with diverse needs. For example, 100% of the district schools are not meeting Average Yearly Progress (AYP) and have been identified for school improvement per the AYP specifications of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

The applicant effectively describes how the project will build local capacity while providing, improving and expanding needed services that address the diverse needs among the teacher and student populations to be served. For example, The applicant clearly describes how the project will provide specific techniques, described in the arts and academic content connections, for using the arts to increase vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and writing for LEP students, and for students with special needs (p48).

The applicant provides specific examples (p 25) of how this project is designed to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services for the identified needs. Furthermore it provides a detailed workplan that details (p 47-58) how it will accomplish and assess the strategies for each of the planned objectives (e.g., leadership support at all levels, 360 feedback and engagement through project teams, high quality PD with continued monitoring and follow-up, etc.).

#### Weaknesses:

The application narrative (p 24), states that approximately 75% of the teachers would participate and take full advantage of Professional Development on lesson plan/curriculum development and arts integration, without indicating which teachers provided this estimate on or how it was determined.

The application narrative lacks strong, significant evidence of the need for teacher professional development among the schools to be served. The need is described in general terms (such a cuts in funding to support the arts) that apply to most schools in the nation, rather than identifying a specific and crucial need for arts instruction at the specific schools in the participating district.

### Sub Question

Furthermore, the application indicates that the participating schools already have at least ½ hour of weekly arts instruction, with an average ratio of students to arts education teachers in the district to be served at 612 to 1, but failed to describe how this resource will be aligned with the project school and class activities or whether current arts instruction is integrated within the classroom core curriculum and standards-based instruction (p 25).

#### Reader's Score:

- (B) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.**

#### Strengths:

The applicant describes a convincing range of products and methods it will develop to facilitate dissemination of this project model and discusses them in specific detail. For example, (p 26) it will publish written "tool box manual" with project results and lessons learned, a resource binder of lesson and unit plans, case studies and best practices, evaluation results with strategies to replicate the results. It will also provide video, photo and online documentation of performances and products as sharing results through teacher papers and presentation at local, state and national conferences.

#### Weaknesses:

None noted.

#### Reader's Score:

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

#### General:

The application addresses this criterion fully. Please see the comments for details.

Reader's Score: 10

### Sub Question

- (A) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is supported by strong theory.**

#### Strengths:

The applicant clearly explains how the project design and implementation are supported by strong theory. (p27) The application narrative outlines a clear rationale for the proposed process, strategies, or practices, within its logic model. The project's logic model is supported both by strong theories and by linkages between its inputs, intermediate outcomes, and final outcomes, aligned with the project's four objectives.

The research and studies cited are current and relevant to the project design components, its implementation strategies and the participants to be served. For example, (p27) the research informing the theory behind the project's logic model was carried out in identified nearby geographical areas serving similar populations.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:**

2. **(B) 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 appropriate and detailed explanations for how it will develop and implement plans to sustain the project beyond the grant period. For example, the project Management Team has committed to develop detailed plans during years 3 & 4, on how funds and resources can be allocated within partner institutions to continue project activities beyond the project-funding period. (p30). The application narrative includes letters of support from each of the partners committing to use their own resources to explore their options for sustaining the project. All of the partners have agreed to collaborate on how it can be sustained through appropriated school funds, private grants, and reallocation of funds and resources from all partners. Furthermore, the application describes how aspects of the project will provide the tools and resources to continue the project at a lower cost (\$7500/year) to minimize need for fundraising, and identifies some specific sources for continued finding (p30).

The project design also includes other sustainability strategies such as the establishment of on-going organizational and professional development teams, described in the application (p30)

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score:**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services**

**The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**General:**

The application addresses this criterion fully. Please see the comments for details.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Sub Question**

1. **(A) The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes a variety of strategies the project will use to ensure that no eligible participant is denied equal access. For example, (p31) strategies for ensuring equal treatment for All students include translation and interpretation of curricular materials where necessary; program materials in alternative formats; accommodation for varied learning styles; and inclusion for students with Individual Education Plans. The project is designed to serve students from traditionally underrepresented groups because those are the students expected to participate (p31).

Furthermore, teachers will be ensured equal and full opportunity to participate using a variety of recruitment

### Sub Question

strategies. Furthermore, members of traditionally underrepresented groups will be actively encouraged to participate through established recruitment and program strategies. The applicant provides specific examples of for how resources and services will take into account teacher particular backgrounds, content areas, skill levels and professional context (p31).

#### **Weaknesses:**

None noted. This criterion was thoroughly discussed in our panel and I did not find any notable weakness in this section.

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

2. **(B) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant provides specific strategies to ensure that the project's Professional Development (PD) services will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration. For example, (p31) the applicant provides specific examples and research citations to demonstrate how the project is grounded in comprehensive research and a standards-based approach.

The applicant describes specific examples of how this research has informed the project design and implementation plans. For example, (p32) it describes the research base for monthly professional development sessions with weekly one-hour follow-up sessions in the form of coaching, demonstrations, mentoring and peer sharing that will reinforce the content of the project training. The application clearly describes additional follow-up activities at the school level to improve classroom practice and student achievement (p 33).

In addition, (p34) 45 site-based teachers will participate in at least 40 hours of the offered 61 hours of PD, plus 8 Teacher Arts Leaders will participate in 36 hours the first year and 60 hours in years 2 through 4. The applicant clearly describes how the follow-up activities, which ensure effectiveness through more hands on practice time to support the PD, are built into the projects' timeline of planned activities (p34).

#### **Weaknesses:**

None noted.

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

3. **(C) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant describes specific examples of how classroom curriculum units will focus on local, state and national arts standards for the four art forms (Dance, Theatre, Music and Visual Arts) to support student success (p 35). Furthermore, the applicant cites and describes the research base for how the project's integrated art learning approach improves student educational performance and engagement through specific examples, such as increasing student motivations to learn, critical habits of mind and achievement in content areas etc. (p36).

Furthermore, the Project's curriculum and activities are planned in specific and comprehensive detail to meet the needs of all students. For example, the applicant describes how the curriculum is adapted to serve the needs of English Language Learners and Students with Special Needs, plus the significance of parent engagement with

**Sub Question**

plans for how parents will be involved in year-end culminating performances at each grade level (3rd-8th), (p48).

**Weaknesses:**

None 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 following factors:**

**General:**

The application addresses this criterion fully. Please see the comments for details.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**Sub Question**

- 1. (A) 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.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a clear description and explanation of how the applicant and the project partners' opportunity diversity planning processes actively encourage applications from underrepresented groups (p37). The application narrative includes clear descriptions of the variety of specific strategies used by the applicant to do this, for example, using search and screening committees composed of individuals of diverse backgrounds, including individuals from underrepresented backgrounds.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:**

- 2. (B) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes the key personnel, by role and responsibilities in the project, plus their background and expertise where available. Where personnel have been identified, the applicant identifies them by name and supports their relevant training and experience with attached resumes. Furthermore, the partners demonstrate strong support for the project by providing certain key personnel at their own cost.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:**

- 3. (C) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes the project partners, consultants and subcontractors by name, role and responsibilities. It also describes their background and expertise which is further supported with attached resumes (p41).

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:**

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

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

**General:**

The application addresses this criterion very well. Please see the comments for details.

**Reader's Score: 29**

**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 clearly explains how the management plan is designed to ensure that program objectives will be achieved in a timely manner and within budget. For example, (p43) the applicant clearly delineates the timelines, milestones and persons responsible for accomplishing project tasks.

The applicant describes how the project will function within budget and achieve objectives on time under the direction of a collaborative management team, which is identified by specific personnel (p44). Furthermore, the tasks required for the management team to ensure effective implementation and to monitor all activities are described in clear details. The Management Team working together with the five school principals will function as a Governance Council to provide overall leadership for the project. The Governance Council will work with the school teams to ensure successful implementation and timely feedback at the site levels (p 44).

The applicant provides a detailed overview of how the management timeline, persons responsible and activities are clearly aligned with the projects' objectives and milestones. (p 45-53,Chart, p 53-57). The activities, as described, are relevant, feasible and appropriate for achieving the project goals.

**Weaknesses:**

The application lacks sufficient evidence, such as a signed Memorandum of Understanding, to fully support the in-kind support as described in the application and budget narratives.

**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.**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly demonstrates how the time commitments of the key personnel are appropriate and adequate. For example, it discusses the specific responsibilities for each of their key personnel in clear detail; including how and where their time has been assigned to address the various components required to fulfil the goals of the project (p 58). Furthermore, to ensure an effective use of time and to provide for efficient administration, the key staff members have been organized into teams: the school-based SCT team and the cross-school PDST teams (p 59).

**Weaknesses:**

None 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 project is designed to provide multiple opportunities for planning, observation, and feedback meetings with colleagues and coaches (p25/84).

The applicant clearly establishes that teachers, school administrators, district personnel and project staff will learn to collect and use data to continually assess the effectiveness of program activities and their progress toward project goals. Furthermore, the project makes use of feedback from classroom observations and coaching sessions to assist teachers in understanding how they can continue to improve instruction (p34/117).

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:**

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

**The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**General:**

The application addresses this criterion very well. Please see the comments for details.

**Reader's Score: 24**

**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 describes how the project's evaluation methods and activities are tightly aligned with the management plan activities and schedule. (p46). The alignment between evaluation and management tasks demonstrates the project's commitment to use appropriate and objective performance measures which are clearly aligned to the intended outcomes to produce useful data in a timely manner.

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

None noted. This criterion was thoroughly discussed in our panel and I did not find any notable weakness in this section.

### 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 evaluation includes a wide range of formative, implementative and summative methods for on-going feedback data and continuous project monitoring. (p 44)

The applicant describes clearly how the project is designed for collaborative collection, analysis and use of data to drive decision-making and continuous improvements at the program and site levels (p34). For example, (p34) participant teachers, school administrators and district personnel with the project staff will all learn to collect and use data to assess the effectiveness of the program activities. Furthermore, they will discuss and then use the classroom observations to assist teachers in understanding how they can continue to improve instruction and enhance student achievement.

Furthermore these activities will be supplemented by an online component connecting all participants with monthly postings, where they can share practices, access arts education resources, and post evaluation results, lesson/unit plans, and samples of student work on the project website (p43).

### Weaknesses:

None 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 describes how the project will employ a quasi-experimental design to ensure that objective performance measures produce effective data (both quantitative and qualitative). The project will choose a comparison group of five schools, working with both the External Evaluator and Management Team to ensure that evaluation activities are fully implemented, and the feedback utilized, throughout the life of the project (p 60).

The applicant organization clearly describes how it will apply a wide range of quantitative and summative measures to determine the degree to which the project has achieved its objectives (p 60). Furthermore the multiple measures are described in detail under each objective. The applicant discusses the variety of collection and analysis methods to be implemented (both qualitative and quantitative), to ensure reliability and validity of results in specific detail (p61).

The evaluation plan includes measurable and attainable benchmarks for each objective and for each year of the project ( p 64). Not only have the benchmarks and timelines been set to annually gauge the extent to which project's activities are meeting program objectives, but the project will also apply a range of formative evaluation measures and the information will be used in a variety of ways to manage progress towards meeting the project's objectives (p 68).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not describe the process for identifying and obtaining permission to include the comparison group of 5 schools.

**Reader's Score:**

**Priority Questions**

**CPP-Technology - Competitive Preference Priority-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 describes in detail how the project design, implementation and professional development activities draw upon research demonstrating how digital tools enhance both teaching and learning (p20). It also provides multiple citations to support the application of research into the design (p20).

The technological tools are utilized through the project's objectives and activities. The applicant groups the types of digital tools into 8 categories (p. 20: on-line, virtual depictions, visual, audio, graphic, software, textual, and editing digital tools) and explains how they will be used throughout each component of the project. They are also extensively integrated into all professional development for teachers and instruction for students.. It also provides specific examples for how and why teachers and students will use each specifically identified technology tools, the instructional approaches and student activities to enhance and enrich teaching and learning (p20, 21, 23).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not describe the status of existing technology skills and equipment in place among the schools, teaching staff, or students to served. For example, the project's includes \$25,800 for 43 iPads, 8 at each site and 3 for staff, (p 110) without explaining if there is a need for training among any of the participants or a technology requirement to be in place at the participant sites.

The applicant does not provide full details for how the online support will be implemented or its benefits sustained past this funding cycle.

**Reader's Score: 18**

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