

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: District 75/New York City Department of Education (U351C140066)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	5
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	9
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	13
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	14
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	29
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	24
Sub Total	100	94
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	120	114

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: District 75/New York City Department of Education (U351C140066)

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 \$1,361,987 for a professional development/arts integration project serving educators of elementary school students with disabilities. The project will provide direct professional development services to 150 educators and 2,000 students with disabilities in New York and Los Angeles, with an additional 500 non-treatment educators. The application addresses this criterion fully. Please see the comments for details.

Reader's Score: 5

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 application includes strong evidence for how this project will build upon a previous, successful and similar project to improve the depth and breadth of services that target the needs of a high risk, high poverty, special needs population.

The applicant describes how the project will build local capacity by both providing and improving services. (p23/103). The project will provide direct services in a high need context, plus it will create a national online network for teachers who are mastering arts-integrated approaches and developing the creative competencies necessary to engage their special needs students. (p18/103).

The application establishes that the partners have demonstrated a long-standing commitment to serving the special education community with proven success. (p18/103)

The proposal clarifies how all the schools selected for inclusion in the direct services project have a 50% or higher poverty rate among their students and identifies the schools by name and location. (p18/103).

Weaknesses:

The applicant states although the visual arts are well-represented in participant New York district, the majority of students do not receive theater or dance instruction without providing a strong argument to support academic and behavioral outcomes among elementary school students with disabilities. (p24/103)

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.

Sub Question

Strengths:

The application indicates how the capacity for multiple dissemination activities is built into the design structure of the project. For example, the project will pilot a beta-level e-learning course which will broaden the program and can be disseminated broadly by digital means to support educators across the nation as well as other training resources, curriculum guides, and a lesson plan database. (p26/103)

The applicant will also share its findings with parent and advocacy groups, so that more families and children may benefit from what is learned. (p 27/103)

Weaknesses:

None 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:

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

Reader's Score: 9

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The applicant has embedded multiple references and citations for the relevant research which has informed the project design and implementation components throughout the application.

The applicant states that in its previous professional development partnership project, Everyday Arts for Special Education (EASE), they saw compelling evidence that in addition to improving arts skills, integrated arts instruction can help address core communication and socialization deficits and improve academic learning in students with disabilities (p28/103). The project supports these claims with a discussion of results for both students (p39/103) and teachers (p35 /103) results from the EASE Year 3 Annual Performance Review, Evaluator's Report.

Weaknesses:

The application does not fully support some of the assertions upon which it is founded. For example on p. 28/103, it states that "for students with severe disabilities, the need for arts-based instruction is imperative" without providing empirical and research-based justifications to support the statement. It does not provide details to support how the expectation that the integration of digital tools into our methodology (p28/103) will significantly improve professional development results.

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.

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates its commitment and that of the project partners, to ensuring the project components will continue in several ways. For example, the partnership has a continuing commitment to incorporate the project activities into their organizational work. (p32/103) .

The project design also includes other sustainability strategies such as the development of a national wide interactive digital community and resource center with a sustainable design to systematically continue to support special education and arts educators in reaching their students effectively. (p32/103).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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:

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

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:

Requiring equal access and treatment for students with disabilities is a hallmark of this program because it is specifically designed for students with disabilities, including autism, intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, learning disabilities, and multiple disabilities. (p33/103).

The project is located in geographical areas, which are home to very diverse populations, in which the partners have been serving for many years. (p24/103)

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that it has worked successfully with educators with disabilities in the past (p33/103) but failed to provide examples of how the project has been adapted, or describe procedures for how they will ensure equal access and treatment in the current project.

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.**

Sub Question

Strengths:

The application includes a comprehensive description of the various levels of planned professional development activities to be implemented. (p36/103) Furthermore, this is supported with a detailed timeline of activities plus charts aligning the levels of training with time commitments to demonstrate that the duration and intensity of the professional development and support activities are appropriate. (p36 & 48/103).

The applicant draws upon the success of its previous project and its research-based foundation to demonstrate that the proposed project services are of sufficient quality, intensity and duration to fulfil the project goals. (p28/103) Furthermore, it supports a brief discussion of these results for both students (p39/103) and teachers (p35 /103) from the (EASE Year 3 Annual Performance Review, Evaluator's Report).

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 project explains how the services will produce the outcomes for improved teaching and learning through its track record as established through the data of previous successes. This is supported with strong student results data from their previous project arts-integration model in a variety of both behavioral and academic goal areas. (p39/103) .

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not fully explain how the project services are clearly aligned with rigorous academic standards and practices. For example, it is unclear (p28/103) how the expected increase in IEP academic goals is connected to increased performance on state assessment measures or correlated with 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:

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

Reader's Score: 14

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.**

Sub Question

Strengths:

The application provides a succinct description of the inclusive policies in place that the applicant has used in the past to ensure that members of traditional underrepresented groups will be encouraged. (p42/103)

Weaknesses:

While this project has services to benefit special needs students at its core, the application lacks a detailed description of how its services are adapted for special needs participants or for encouraging participation from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The application provides a detailed description of the strong staffing qualification, relevant training and experience including their title in the project. This is further supported with a thorough presentation of their role and responsibilities, plus time commitments. (p45/103) and attached resumes.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The application provides a detailed discussion of the relevant training and experience of project consultants and subcontractors. This is further supported with a thorough presentation of their role and responsibilities, plus time commitments. (p45/103) and attached resumes.

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.

Sub Question

Strengths:

The application includes a detailed and comprehensive Chart of Activities with a relevant timeline, demonstrating that the project is well poised to achieve the objectives of the project. (p48-52).

The commitments among partners to work together to achieve the objectives of the project, on time and within budget is further supported with a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU among the partners provides evidence of their continued commitment beyond the project and their responsibilities during it. (p68/103)

Weaknesses:

None 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 application includes a thorough discussion of the time commitments and responsibilities for each of the key personnel which are reasonable and appropriate. (p52/103) .

Weaknesses:

The application's description for the complex personnel matrix lacked clear explanations in some instances. For example, the application lists 4 school administrators as having a role coordinating with other staff, without identifying which schools or communities they represented, or explain why only 4 school administrators were identified. (p 48/103).

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant describes how the project will ensure feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the project using multiple approaches, which are described in clear detail. (p53-55/103) Examples of the year-round planned methods include, Weekly activities (Teaching Artist Reports, Teacher Feedback, monthly activities (Learning Technology Developer Meeting, Evaluator Meeting, School Meeting), quarterly activities (Teacher Feedback, Teaching Artist Trainings, Check-in with District Coordinator & Instructional Specialist) plus a Yearly Meeting with School Administrators.

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 provides a comprehensive and detailed discussion for how it will use appropriate methods to evaluate this project to produce both quantitative and qualitative data relevant to assessing intended outcomes and improving operational practices. For example, it describes how teachers will be divided, based on differing aspects of service delivery to assess the effectiveness of different components of the professional development delivery options. (p23/103)

The evaluation team has designed an evaluation plan that is grounded in the project's logic model. (p55/103).

Weaknesses:

The project evaluation includes the use of systematic observations and in-depth interviews, as two of the key methods of evaluation; but failed to show how the identified personnel will arrange their schedules to carry out these time-consuming activities.

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 application includes a detailed discussion of the evaluation's implementation and outcomes rationale and activities, including the specific data and methods to be drawn upon. The evaluation team will meet monthly and provide reports according to the annual timeline for periodic assessments. (p56/103).

It also describes how the evaluation is aligned with the management plan and schedule of activities to maximize the use of feedback among all participants, in mid and end of year reporting activities. (59/103). For example, the end-of-year report will offer a complete analysis of teacher outcomes and discuss how they vary across sites, plus provide recommendations for how the program may be altered to yield the desired outcomes in future years.

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 application clearly discusses how the methods of evaluation will produce evidence of promise. For example, it describes how it will assess the project's impact on two GPRA performance measures, by describing the specific actions to be carried out to produce evidence of promise on these two performance measures. (p62/103)

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The application does not specifically address how the evaluation design either meets What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards or fulfills the two exceptions, as defined in the proposal criteria.

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 project is designed to improve student achievement and teacher effectiveness through the use of existing, commonly available digital tools and software that are easily accessible and inexpensive such as cameras, tablets, computers, and smart boards, which the applicant's research has shown to be currently underutilized by teachers but could be useful to any educator regardless of specific circumstance.

The project trains teachers to maximize the impact and effectiveness of these resources, plus developing an e-learning system to augment professional development efforts. (p18-19/103).

The application describes how it is building upon their previously successful program and expanding that success with explicitly described strategies to improve learning and teaching effectiveness. (p20/103).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: District 75/New York City Department of Education (U351C140066)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	3
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	5
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	11
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	14
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	30
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	23
Sub Total	100	86
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	120	106

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: District 75/New York City Department of Education (U351C140066)

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-The applicant provides information to show that there is a need for improving and expanding arts education to the targeted areas as there are minimal offerings especially for youth with disabilities. The applicant proposes a variety of ways to ensure that the dissemination of project information and strategies will be made available to teachers so that they have the support they need to implement the project. **Weaknesses-**The applicant does not describe what the arts education that programs are currently mandated by the State only that they are required to offer four discipline areas. It is not clear as to why the applicant chose the targeted population to be served by the project as there is no data provided to support the need. Additionally, it is not clear how parents will have access to all of the resources needed to support them and their child(ren).

Reader's Score: 3

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 presents some reasonable information to show that the project is needed and will bring about opportunities to improve and expand services to the targeted areas. According to the applicant, the need exist because currently there is a lack of Arts education within the school systems despite New York States mandate to provide 10-20% of instructional time in four arts disciplines (pg. 9). The applicant proposes to address the problem by offering programming to include providing professional development for teachers in two treatment tracks, i.e. direct and digital to improve classroom effectiveness and through the increased use of technology through the Everyday Arts Network (EAN) (pgs. 10-11).

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that there is a need to provide Arts education for special education students and their teachers but provides no details regarding the five schools to be targeted for the study; therefore it is in not clear how the applicant chose this population to be served by the project.

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 e-learning courses is reasonable as it will provide opportunities by which program participants will have access to training videos, live webinars, online support, demonstration videos, program curriculum and a

Sub Question

lesson plan database will all be made available. (pgs. 11-12). Additionally, the applicant proposes to provide conference presentations which will further allow for program participants to gain hands on knowledge as to how to use the resources made available to them.

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 proposes that through the integration of arts education programs students will achieve academically especially special education students. Weaknesses-The applicant does not present a strong theory by which the model was created and reason for implementing the project. Additionally, there is little information provided in order to show that the project will be sustained after the project has ended.

Reader's Score: 5

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The applicant states that through the integration of an arts education program students will be more prepared to succeed academically. Additionally, students with disabilities show increased social and communication skills (pg. 13). The applicant offers a logic model which is detailed and includes long-term and short term goals which will support the success of the program. For example, the applicant states that teachers will have access to professional development workshops and online resources to increase their content knowledge in arts and arts-based strategies.

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that the project will impact teacher effectiveness; however there is no specific information provided to show how the research theory supports Arts education, professional development and teacher results. Additionally, there is no information provided to show how the model was created other than reference to a partnership with the Everyday Arts for Special Education program which is not described in detail (pgs. 8 & 13).

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's plan to support the program through partnerships after funding has ended is presented and will support some of the goals of the project. The identified partners include The Urban Arts Partnerships and the Los Angeles Unified School District who will help to expand services through the use of the e-learning courses. The project design will allow accessibility of program curriculum and program services from state to state for use in implementation of the project (pgs.17-18).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

Strengths-Overall, the applicant presents planned activities that will help to address students needs by offering a variety of professional development opportunities to be used in the classroom. The applicant provides some indication that they will make the program accessible to all populations especially within the targeted school districts. Weaknesses-The applicant does not fully provide details for some of the activities provided and how they relate to student achievement nor is there any discussion as to how the project will be aligned with Common Core Standards.

Reader's Score: 11

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 primary targeted population is identified by the applicant and includes students with disabilities and minority students from District 75 and the Los Angeles Unified School District which serve mostly African American and Hispanic Title I students (pgs. 18-19).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not describe in detail the process by which they will ensure equal access specifically to the program presented. . It is not clear if the process is voluntary, mandatory or through referrals. It is not clear if there is a plan in place to ensure the targeted population will be served.

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 proposes to offer a variety of professional development training for teachers who attend the program. For example, the 2-day mentor training support will include professional development workshops, in addition to over 10-18 hours of online professional development instruction. The applicant aligns the project activities to the goals and objectives of the project that include increasing student achievement through Arts education, increased content knowledge for teachers and creating and disseminating an Arts education model to be used in partnering school districts (pgs. e.30 Logic Model).

Weaknesses:

The presence of strong research theory is not evident by the project services presented; therefore it is difficult to ascertain whether the intensity or duration of the project presented by the applicant will ensure teachers receive the

Sub Question

tools and resources they need to successfully implement the project.

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:

According to the applicant, the approach to be used is based on the Everyday Arts for Special Education model which operates under the premise that the integration of Arts education has a profound impact on students, especially those with learning disabilities. The data regarding the approach indicates that students improved in the areas of communication, socialization and were engaged in school activities when exposed to the Arts. Additionally, the applicant proposes to utilize student data and Individual Education Plans (IEP) to ensure students receive individualized academic support (pgs. 23-26).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide information to show the IEP goals will be linked to rigorous academic standards; therefore it is not clear if the project will lead to student improvement (pg. 26).

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 project staff are qualified to implement the project based on their work experience and educational background. For example, the District 75 project director, has experience as an Instructional Specialist for the Arts and currently coordinates Arts programs for the district. Weaknesses-The applicant provides no information regarding the personnel or qualifications for the partners in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Reader's Score: 14

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 presents reasonable information to show that there is a policy in place whereby applicants are encouraged to apply for job opportunities regardless of their race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. Applicants who are members of underrepresented populations are also able to apply and will not be discriminated against (pgs. 27-29).

Weaknesses:

While it is clear a policy is in place, it is not clear how applicants are actually encouraged to apply for the project positions that might be available; especially applicants who have been traditionally underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

Reader's Score:

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The qualifications, experiences and training of the key personnel presented indicate that they are qualified to implement and oversee the project. The educational experiences are also defined and indicates that staff are capable of providing the support needed to assist the target population. For example, the District 75 project director, has experience as an Instructional Specialist for the Arts and currently coordinates Arts programs for the district (pg. 27). Additionally, the Urban Arts Partnerships, project director is also identified and she has experience coordinating arts programs across 37 schools in New York (pg. 27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant has indicated that there will be partnerships between District 77, the Urban Arts Partnerships and the Los Angeles Unified School District. The qualifications and training of the project consultants are clearly defined and indicate that they are qualified to support the implementation of the program (pgs. 29 -30). For example, the Program Coordinator for the Urban Arts Partnerships had worked as a teaching artist with the organization for seven years, has a background in video production and photography and is an artist (pg. 29).

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 applicant presents a reasonable management plan to support the implementation, goals and objectives of the project. The roles and responsibilities are outlined for most of the project activities and personnel are capable of carrying out the job duties presented. Weaknesses-There are no weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 30

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 timeline and milestones presented by the applicant are appropriate and aligned with the activities the applicant proposes to provide. The information provided is specific to each project activity and the person/persons responsible for implementation and oversight is identified and the budget is logical to support the project (pgs. 37-38).

Sub Question

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 time commitment of the project director is appropriate for the staff and contractors who will work with the project. For example, the Unified Arts Partnership director will devote 100% of her time to the project as she will be responsible for managing the project throughout the duration of the grant project. The time commitment of the other key personnel is noted and is logical to support the project (pgs. 37-38).

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 mechanisms for feedback are provided and are logical to ensure all staff and stakeholders are informed. Program monitoring and feedback will be the responsibility of various personnel to include the project director and the management team. The applicant offers a variety of solid methods by which feedback will be disseminated regularly. For example, weekly teacher reports, teaching artist reports and opportunities for teacher feedback will be made available, in addition to monthly evaluation and school meetings. These meetings will allow for opportunities to review program goals and objectives and make program adjustments if needed (pgs. 30-40).

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 overall evaluation plan is a logical approach in order gain insight as to whether the project is successful and measure whether the goals and objectives are met. Weaknesses-There is little information provided by the applicant to show whether there is evidence of promise.

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.**

Sub Question

Strengths:

The evaluation plan the applicant presents is feasible, as the evaluation process includes the use of an independent evaluator and evaluation team who will measure the project based on four activity goals which includes observations, website use, interviews and surveys. Additionally, the use of pre/post test will be administered to program participants to gauge whether they have been successful in obtaining and implementing the resources to ensure goal and objectives are met (pgs. 43-48).

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 evaluation plan is supported by assessment tools and data collection sources that will allow opportunities for periodic assessment and performance feedback to stakeholders. For example, various methods include the use of classroom observations, surveys, interviews, monthly progress reports and program data collection will allow for analysis of the programs progress to be shared with staff and other stakeholders and will project goals and objectives are met (pgs. 46-47). Furthermore, the creation of mid-year and end-of-the-year reports will track whether teachers are on track to meet goals set at the beginning of the year.

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 the evaluation will produce sufficient evidence to show that the project has promise. The applicant proposes to create an annual report describing project activities, goals, outcomes and methodologies used throughout the project (pgs. 47-48).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide any information to show if the project will use comparative schools and evaluation data to show that there is evidence of promise.

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 provides sufficient information to show that they will use technology to support the project activities presented. The teachers involved with the project will have access to cameras tablets, computers and smart boards to enhance Arts integrated instruction. Additionally, the applicant proposes to develop an e-learning system to augment their professional development efforts which will in turn support student achievement (pg.4).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Status: Submitted
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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: District 75/New York City Department of Education (U351C140066)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	3
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	8
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	13
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	14
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	29
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	23
Sub Total	100	90
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	120	110

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: District 75/New York City Department of Education (U351C140066)

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: 3

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 project is designed to increase access to high quality arts education for urban special education students in elementary school. The lack of arts education programming in Los Angeles schools described on page 9 highlights the significant need for additional arts instruction. The fact that there is only 1 arts specialist for every 2800 students highlights a gap in services for these students. Further, all five target schools defined as Title I schools and, as such serve low-income students.

Weaknesses:

Although a need was demonstrated for student in Los Angeles, the need in New York City was less clear. A stated on page 9, "visual arts are well represented". As such, a stronger case needs to be made for adding additional theater and dance instruction. Additionally, the proposal failed to include information specific to the five targeted schools identified on page 3.

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 complete plan for dissemination is described on page 11-13 that describes e-learning courses and access to training materials via mediated resources. In addition, research findings will be disseminated via conference presentations and to advocacy groups.

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: 8

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The proposal includes a comprehensive and clear logic model on page 15 that links inputs and outputs.

The project is based on another project that has found "compelling evidence" (p. 13) and has improved academic and social outcomes for students. Data is provided on page 24 indicating that students involved in the Everyday Arts for Special Education demonstrated increased performance on IEP goals.

Weaknesses:

The proposal includes statements that need research support. For example, on page 13, the authors indicate that "students with severe disabilities...need for arts-based instruction is imperative". This statement necessitates citation and research support.

The authors indicate that Everyday Arts for Special Education has resulted in positive results, but no specific information about how student results were compared to other students not receiving the program. It would have been helpful if the authors had included effect sizes or descriptions about differential performance compared with other students.

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 proposal describes efforts to maintain partnerships between Urban Arts Partnership and the two participating districts (p. 17). Further, the proposal describes an e-Learning Hub that will allow for continuation of the project beyond the end of the grant.

Weaknesses:

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

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:

N/A

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 project is designed to meet the needs of a diverse population of students in two large, urban school districts. Specifically, students will be receiving special education services and come from predominantly lower income families and be largely African-American and Hispanic.

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:

Connecting the prior professional development results from the Everyday Arts for Special Education Program to the implementation plan for this project demonstrates that the quality and intensity of the model should increase teacher performance (p. 20).

Overall, the significant number of hours of professional development for the Direct Track teachers is of adequate duration to suggest improvements in teacher practice. Although the Digital Track duration and intensity is less, the hours represent a significant time commitment and should improve/change teacher practice.

Weaknesses:

On page 19, the authors indicate that the "curriculum is built on a strong foundation of research showing arts-based instruction to be highly effective for improving outcomes for students with disabilities." This statement must be supported by citations and appropriate references.

On page 19, the authors use the term "autistic children". The authors failed to use person-first language when discussing children with disabilities.

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 proposal describes how the prior project increase student performance on IEP goals and how the professional development aligns with the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

It is unclear whether or not students increased their performance on standardized assessments of academic achievement, such as the alternative state assessment in the participating states. A stronger case needs to be made linking IEP goals to 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: 14

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 non-discrimination policy for New York Public Schools and states that applicants from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply for positions (p. 27)

Weaknesses:

No policies were described for Los Angeles Public Schools or Urban Arts Partnership.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

All project staff have the requisite experience and training to successfully implement and complete the project on time and budget. The experience of most of the staff on the Everyday Arts in Special Education project demonstrates that the key staff is qualified to coordinate a project of this magnitude.

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 Urban Arts Partnership staff and the project evaluator all have the requisite experience and training to successfully complete the project. The project evaluator has worked on a number of large-scale evaluation projects and has the quantitative expertise to develop high quality results.

Sub Question

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 management plan presented on pages 33 to 37 was complete and outlined a connected and comprehensive approach to implementing the project. The addition of staff and their responsibilities on pages 31 and 32 was also helpful to describe specific roles for each of the key program staff. The milestones were clear and measurable and are clear markers of successful implementation by year.

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 director from District 75 will contribute .20FTE to the project and will be supported by a cadre of other staff across the schools systems and Urban Arts Partnership. A particular strength of the proposal is the 1.0FTW program coordinator for managing day-to-day tasks.

Weaknesses:

The time commitments are adequate, but the overlap and incongruence of titles made some roles unclear. For example, the Project Supervisor on page 29 is titled the Urban Arts Partnership Special Education Program Manager on page 32.

Reader's Score:

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

Sub Question

Strengths:

The proposal outlines a comprehensive approach for feedback and use of data to inform fidelity of implementation. The weekly teaching artists reports (p. 38) modeled after the Project Zero approach allows for immediate, rich feedback on the weekly activities.

Weaknesses:

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

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:

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 describes two key evaluation components: implementation and outcomes. The implementation measures will include data on professional development participation and surveys and interview about the professional development. The primary indicator of implementation will be direct observations of teachers in practice. The outcomes measures include an assessment of arts-based instructional content knowledge and direct observations. Lastly, the evaluation will assess student impacts on arts proficiency, social/emotional and behavioral performance, and academic IEP goals. Overall, the measures are generally objective and should result in adequate qualitative data.

Weaknesses:

Overall, the proposal provides a clear description and motivation for each of the proposed measures. However, the details about the direct observation measures need more detail. First, it is unclear how many observations will occur, how long the observations will be, and the proposed scaling the observations (i.e., Likert scale or frequency count of discrete behavior). If many observations will be conducted, the evaluation budget may not accommodate the extensive number of hours required to assess and analyze the teacher and student observation data. Lastly, although the proposal indicates the measures for social/emotional and behavioral performance will later be identified, some examples of potential measures would be helpful to ensure alignment with program goals.

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 clear and deliberate plan to deliver and use performance feedback data is presented on page 46. The timeline for evaluation reports, including a monthly progress report, will enable the project staff to augment and adjust as necessary.

Sub Question

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 evaluation plan directly addresses the What Works Clearinghouse criteria for evidence of promise (p. 48) by describing a correlational study of teacher outcomes. The final regression models are designed to address selection bias by controlling for potential confounds.

Weaknesses:

Although the study design may provide correlational evidence of promise, the proposal should outline how the evaluation will analyze student-level outcomes and differences between the two different training formats (Direct and Digital). The staggered implementation of the program and the two implementation approaches requires much more description, particularly with regards to the research design and the ability to conduct a quasi-experimental study. Overall, the evaluation needed more detail related to the study design and potential analysis of all data.

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 entire project is designed around the integration of digital tools and technology to increase teachers' use of effective arts-based instruction for students with disabilities. The eLearning Hub was a particular strength and, if proven efficient and effective, may be an ideal platform for increasing professional development well beyond the five included schools.

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 20

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