

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: NYC Department of Education (U351C140068)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	4
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	6
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	12
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	13
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	25
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	25
Sub Total	100	85
Priority Questions		
CPP-Technology		
Competitive Preference Priority-Technology		
1. CPP-Technology	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	120	105

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: NYC Department of Education (U351C140068)

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 program that has promise to be successful. The program is designed to provide literacy programs through puppetry for young learners who reside in low poverty areas with little or no resources. The ability to build capacity and address the needs of the targeted population is feasible. Weaknesses-The applicant does not describe how the project will build capacity or expand services.

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 plan the applicant presents in order to build capacity and address the needs of the targeted population is feasible. The plan is a logical approach as the applicant proposes to expand services to underserved youth in five high poverty schools where more than 70% of the students are eligible for Title I services, and 25% are English Learners. The project has the ability to reach over 1500 students if it is successful as it will offer kindergarten students the opportunity to increase their language and literacy skills through the use of puppetry (pgs. 1-2).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide any information regarding the Arts Education program currently in places within the targeted schools. Additionally, there is no information provided to show how they are going to help build capacity and support 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 dissemination plan is described in detail as the applicant presents the means by which they will provide information to all participants and stakeholders. The methods are logical and include the use of both digital and written program documentation that will allow teachers to access online and through video study. Additionally, teachers will serve as mentors which will further support other teachers and help to ensure that the goals and objectives are met (pgs. 4-5).

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 successfully identifies the theory by which the project activities are based. For example, the curriculum is aligned with a state school standards whereby the standards place heavy emphasis on English, Literacy and cultural through arts. The applicant's program entitled the "Bridges" project proposes to the use of puppetry/theater and literacy to implement the project activities. Weaknesses-The model presented by the applicant lacks theory design. There is no data provided regarding the model they used to create the activities presented.

Reader's Score: 6

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

According to the applicant, the model is aligned with the State Core Standards whereby heavy emphasis is placed on cultural and educational knowledge through Arts (puppetry/theater and literacy) which is the focus of the project. The applicant provides specific elements, i.e. building content knowledge, engaging students in Art, using formative assessment tools, and contributing to the profession through digital and written media (pgs. 6-9).

Weaknesses:

The model presented by the applicant lacks theory design. There is no data provided regarding the model they used to create the activities presented.

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 goals and objectives for the project are provided by the applicant. For example, the applicant proposes to increase Arts Education programming which they hope will increase school achievement by implementing programs to incorporate project activities and ongoing work after the project had ended. For example, the applicant will offer opportunities for teachers to mentor other teachers through video study and online instruction (pgs. 7-10).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide any information to show how partners will be maintained or how they will help sustain the project after funding has ended.

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 applicant presents evidence to show that there are non-discriminatory policies in place that ensure the program will be made accessible to all early-childhood youth/teachers who want to participate. The applicant further indicates that the project will specifically provide support for students with learning disabilities and English Learners as the goal is to increase school preparedness and increase the literacy skills of young learners (pg. 14). Weaknesses-The model presented by the applicant lacks theory design. There is no data provided regarding the model they used to create the activities presented.

Reader's Score: 12

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:

There is evidence presented by the applicant to show there is a non-discriminatory policy in place to ensure that the program will be made accessible to all early-childhood youth who want to participate. The policy according to the applicant states the programs will not discriminate against anyone regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. The applicant further states that the project will provide program services for students with learning disabilities and English Learners (pgs. 14-15).

Weaknesses:

There is no clear plan described regarding the process by which the project will support the transitional home to school phase for young learners. Furthermore, the applicant does not explain how they will provide specific support to children with disabilities or English Learners in detail.

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**

Sub Question

practice among the recipients of those services.

Strengths:

The professional development activities are described by the applicant. For example, one such activity is designed to build content knowledge and pedagogical skills in puppetry curriculum and classroom instruction for teachers. The plan proposes to provide 30-50 hours of professional development for teachers and an additional 15 hours of classroom observations and support by the contractors each week (pgs. 15-16).

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that weekly classroom support by an Arts Education contractor will be offered to 70 teachers. However, it is difficult to ascertain how one Arts Education contractor will support all 70 teachers over the course of a one week span. It is also difficult to ascertain which teachers will receive 30 hours of professional development because the applicant does not specify this in the application; in some places it is noted that they will receive 50 hours of professional development; and in other areas of the narrative it is stated that they will receive 30-50 hours (pg. 16).

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 likelihood of the project leading to improvement in student achievement is reasonable because the project offers a logical approach to teaching young learners through puppetry. For example, the project focuses on language/literacy and the goal is to surpass the State's Core Standards by having young learners learn 500 words instead of the required 300 words by the State. This strategy will help better prepare students for entry into first grade and beyond. The applicant proposes to increase this level of learning especially in underserved students so that they will perform at or above grade level (pgs. 17-19).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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

General:

Strengths-The overall strategies provided are reasonable as the applicant will utilize various coalitions and collaborative partners who will help to recruit applicants in addition to posting open positions in areas where underrepresented populations can be reached. The educational experience is defined and based upon the information provided staff will be able to implement the project with ease. **Weaknesses-**The applicant does not provide the work experience, qualifications or educational background for the ArtsConnection Program Manager.

Reader's Score: 13

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 information presented to show that the project will encourage applications from underrepresented populations is clearly outlined and presented by the applicant. The overall strategies include the use of websites, various coalitions and collaborative partners who will help to recruit applicants in addition to posting open positions in areas where underrepresented populations can be reached (pgs. 23-24).

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 are described by the applicant which includes their work experience and training. For example, the Director of Practitioner Research at the ArtsConnection agency has over 8 years of experience, and is the designer of the video study program that will be used by the applicant to instruct teachers (pgs. 23-24).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The key qualifications, experiences and training of some of the consultants is presented by the applicant in detail to show that they are qualified to oversee and implement the project. For example, the Grants Manager has been the Director of Operations for four years and has worked with the New York Department of Education for over ten years in budgeting, fiscal management and compliance (pgs. 24-25).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide the work experience, qualifications or educational background for the ArtsConnection Program Manager.

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 timeline and milestones for the project which supports the goals and objectives of the project. The timelines and milestones are logical for the project and are aligned with the project activities to be provided.

Weaknesses- The applicant does not include the persons responsible for the activities presented on the logic model.

Reader's Score: 25

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 presents a timeline and milestones for the project which supports the goals and objectives of the project. The timelines and milestones are logical for the project and are aligned with the project activities to be provided. For example, the applicant proposes to serve 70, K-12 teachers, 5 visual arts/theater specialists, and 5 literary specialists in the first year of the project, and proposes 28 hour per year of full day cross school workshops.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not include the persons responsible for the activities presented on the logic model. Additionally, the applicant does not include the targeted schools within the plan.

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, qualifications, roles and responsibilities of the key personnel are clearly outlined by the applicant and are appropriate to support the project's activities. The Project Co-Directors will commit 50% of their time to the project and will work with staff to implement the project. Additionally, the applicant provides information indicating that the project evaluator will commit to at least 40 site visits which will help gain valuable information regarding the programs progress and help to evaluate the program (pgs.31-33).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not describe the process by which the Co-Directors will split their roles and responsibilities to ensure project activities, goals and objectives are met.

Reader's Score:

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a reasonable plan for feedback regarding the program that will be disseminated. The Program Managers at each school site is responsible for overseeing the project and for providing feedback during monthly meetings. Additionally, there is an overall Project Team comprised of the Program Managers, Co-Directors, and the Project Evaluator who will meet bi-annually to discuss project successes, concerns, goals and objectives. Additionally, the team will post and monitor the programs website to make sure the information is current on a regular basis (pgs.33-34).

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 extensive and is a logical plan to ensure that all program activities goals and objectives are met by the project. The applicant proposes to utilize various measurement tools which will collected regularly and submitted to the independent evaluator for analysis and then shared with with all stakeholders. Weaknesses-There were no weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

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 extensive and logical to ensure that all program activities goals and objectives are met by the project. The applicant proposes to use a quasi-experimental approach whereby outcome variables will be aligned with program activities. An independent evaluator and evaluation team comprised of staff, collaborative partners and other stakeholder will be used to consistently monitor and evaluate the project. It is further noted that baseline data, surveys, interviews, school data, classroom observations and other measurement tools will be used to measure program progress. The use of formative and summative data will help to gauge student progress in literacy and will help to ensure the curriculum is appropriate and will also allow for adjustments if needed. (pgs. 34-40).

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.

Sub Question

Strengths:

The plan to ensure performance feedback is logical and is outlined by the applicant. The Program Team will meet regularly on site, via phone and email to discuss program activities and strategies to implement changes if needed. An independent evaluator will be responsible for creating the final evaluation reports for dissemination to program staff, consultants, teachers and other stakeholders (pgs. 35-36).

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 presents a logical approach to evaluate the levels of teacher knowledge and pedagogical skills. The process includes the use of surveys, baseline data, school data and other variables that will be used. The plan is to use a match group of teachers who are not participating in the project to gauge teacher knowledge and to gain comparative data is an innovative approach to gain evidence to see if the project has promise (pgs. 45-46). Additionally the use of exploratory and confirmatory analysis will also be used and will include multiple years of participation in the program, teachers with multiple years of teaching (in/not in the program), in addition to ongoing data collection will provide the information so that the applicant can review and disseminate to show the project has promise (pgs. 39-40).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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 detailed information to show that the organization is eligible to receive competitive preference points based upon the program activities and outcomes presented. More specifically, the use of technology includes a Video Study component which is adapted through research that will be used to help with the professional development process for teachers. The use of technology will help gain valuable information regarding classroom instruction and how students learn through video observations. Additionally, learning and teaching videos will be made available via the internet (pgs. 3-4).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: NYC Department of Education (U351C140068)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	4
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	7
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	12
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	13
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	25
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	25
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 #3: *****

Applicant: NYC Department of Education (U351C140068)

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 \$ 1,363,797.00 for a professional development/arts integration project to serve 5 schools. The goal of the project's professional development model (Bridging the Achievement Gap through Puppetry) is to help educators in Grades K, 1 and 2 provide multiple entry points to literacy practices for their students through a sequential puppetry curriculum in collaboration with puppetry artists.

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 discusses how the project will build local capacity in many ways. For example, the project design and services are aligned with current reform mandates affecting educators in the district. Examples include new literacy curriculum materials and recently updated standardized tests with stronger writing components plus a new teacher evaluation system (p22/106).

The applicant provides specific evidence for how the project will effectively build local capacity by expanding on services designed to meet the needs of the targeted population and to fulfill the goals of the project. It also states that the use of technology will strengthen teacher capacity,

The project is based on a proven effective model, using puppetry to strengthen engagement, literacy and academic performance among students.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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 provides a convincing discussion for how the proposed project will disseminate its results and share its strategies and project-developed tools with other educators.

The applicant describes how the reporting and dissemination activities and products will be made available to other

Sub Question

schools and educators, including multiple national conferences, by project personnel who have experience presenting findings at such events (p57).

At least one teacher from each grade at each school will share his or her documentation of classroom activities at cross-school meetings at the end of Project Year 2 (p 29/106).

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 adequately. Please see the comments for details.

Reader's Score: 7

Sub Question

1. (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 and why they will be successful with the students and teachers to be served. (p38/109).

The research base is supported with an extensive bibliography of research sources (p 59/109).

The project is designed so it will contribute to the growing body of knowledge about how puppetry/theater leads to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards, in this case the Measure of Student Achievement (MOSL) in ELA (p35/109).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide data or a detailed description of the results from the decades old program upon which this project is based. Therefore, it is not possible to assess the significance of the contributions from the previous project, which is described as successful. Also, the applicant does not provide a detailed discussion describing the research base for the previous project.

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 project is designed to strengthen the collaborative efforts among teachers so they can continue the benefits of the project in their classrooms and mentor others beyond the life of the project (p29/106).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The application lacks details for how the project plans to incorporate the activities of the project into the ongoing work beyond the funding of the grant. There is no detailed discussion for how the components may be financially sustained beyond the grant.

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 well. Please see the comments for details.

Reader's Score: 12

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 will use its current non-discrimination policies to ensure equal access and treatment for all participants. The applicant states it has designed the project to build capacity of all early-childhood educators, to work with students of differing abilities, including English Learners and those with other learning challenges, many of whom have not had access to arts programs due to their participation in mandated services to address their particular challenges. The project will also be implemented in schools with students from diverse populations and backgrounds (p31/106).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide examples of specific strategies to be adapted to early childhood educators and students. For example, the applicant does not mention the need for translated materials or a home to school connection or use of cultural community liaisons with the early-childhood students to be served. Also, the applicant does not discuss how the adapted model will be adapted to serve the high need or language minority students to 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 provides specific strategies to ensure that the project's Professional Development (PD) services will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration. For example, it describes the 50 hours of PD teachers will receive. It discusses how they will work in teams, within and across schools each year (years 2-4), participate in 4 day long cross-school workshops (28 hours) that introduce major concepts and themes, and school-based meetings (7 hours) during and after school. Participant teachers will also collaborate with teaching artists in a 15-session arts residency in their classrooms (p 30/106).

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:

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 provides a very clear and comprehensive description of how the instructional model is designed to improve student achievement. The Early Childhood Puppetry and Theater curriculum plus instructional activities are scaffolded from grade to grade (K-5) to support student growth in the language arts (p24). It also establishes how they are aligned with the Common Core Standards (p90).

The applicant provided supporting information to explain the professional development content, time lines, and milestones.

Furthermore, as part of the Video Study (defined as professional development process used by a Professional Learning Community to support teacher inquiry and improve teaching practice, (p88), teachers will work with students so that they are engaged in arts and literacy practices offering a variety of entry points to accommodate all learners (p 27).

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 well. Please see the comments for details.

Reader's Score: 13

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 and their partner have non-discrimination policies in place.

The applicant also demonstrates its increasing rate of hiring teachers from underrepresented groups over the last dozen years to demonstrate the success of their policies to improve teacher recruitment. Both agencies provide data to support the ethnic diversity currently represented within the organizations (p39-40/109).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The application describes the key personnel, from both the district and the arts partners, including their role and responsibilities in the project. The application identifies key personnel by name and supports their relevant training and experience with resumes.

Weaknesses:

The application indicates that an ArtsConnection Program Manager will be in place (20%) at each school (p 41 & 49/106); but lacks a clear description for how they will be selected, their qualifications or if these are paid positions.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The application identifies the project consultants and partners by name and supports their relevant training and experience with resumes (p41).

Weaknesses:

The applicant has not obtained letters of support from the schools to be served, making it unclear to what extent the schools have agreed to participate in the project or coordinate site activities with the project's ArtsConnection Program Manager at their site.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

General:

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

Reader's Score: 25

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 describes how the project management is designed around 5 school-based teams, each with up to 12 classroom teachers working in collaboration with at least 1 school-based arts specialist (visual arts and/or theater), an ESL teacher or Literacy Coach, an ArtsConnection teaching artist, and an ArtsConnection Program Manager who facilitates and documents the work in the school (p45/106).

Sub Question

The applicant's Logic Model demonstrates the tight alignment among project resources, activates, and outputs, with clearly measurable objectives plus a reasonable timeline with milestones (p79/106).

Weaknesses:

The discussion of the applicant's management procedures lacks a clear description for how meetings will be conducted to include all members of the management team and other relevant stakeholders. For example, the applicant has not obtained letters of support from the schools to be served, making it unclear to what extent the schools have agreed to participate in the project or to coordinate site activities with the project's ArtsConnection Program Manager (20%) serving at their site.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

The applicant states the project will be actively managed by a five-person Project Team consisting of the Project Co- Directors, CFN 204 Literacy Achievement Coach, ArtsConnection's Project Associate, and the Director of Practitioner Inquiry, who will meet quarterly to review the progress of the project toward goals and benchmarks, and schedule and plan the professional development activities. (p50/106).

Weaknesses:

The time commitments as described in the narrative do not align directly with those described in the budget narrative. There is no explicit plan for how the Project Co-Directors will split their responsibilities 50% to effectively oversee all aspects of the project. (p49/106).

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 includes a clear description for how student progress will be documented. It explains how the project approaches are both integrated within existing curricula and instructional approaches, and how the project will enhance existing teaching practices using feedback (p39/109).

Also, results from state tests on teacher's overall ratings and student learning in ELA, will be shared by the evaluator to assess progress toward goals as well as providing formative feedback to the Management Team on the progress of the project (p39/106).

The final two years of the project will focus not only on teacher Professional Development (PD), but also on the digital documentation and dissemination of the materials and information about the PD processes, along with examples of selected teachers' implementation of the elements of puppetry into their literacy curriculum (51/106).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Sub Question

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:

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

Reader's Score: 25

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 explains how the evaluation will employ a quasi-experimental design (according to What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards), with an additional, systematic qualitative component (p51/109). The applicant describes how the project will analyze the results using exploratory and confirmatory analyses with various contrasts. It also provides extensive details regarding the data sources and methods to be used continuously throughout the project (p53 & 57).

Weaknesses:

None 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 application clearly describes how the project methods have been selected to allow for collaborative collection, analysis and use of data to drive decision-making and continuous improvements at the program and site levels.

The applicant describes the variety of tools and methods the project will use such as formative assessment practices, instructional practices, and technology tools (p 28/106).

The project's use of assessment activities, tools, and use of feedback is integrated throughout the projects implementation and evaluation activities.

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.)**

Sub Question

Strengths:

The evaluation methods are designed to produce evidence of promise assessing the impact of the project and intended outcomes as supported by the project logic model and the project Activity Timeline and Milestones.

All the implementation and outcome variables in the evaluation will be matched with the program activities and objectives described in this application narrative and logic model. The evaluation will investigate whether the program is effective at achieving its three objectives (p51/106).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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 a thorough overview of the technology to be used by the project.

The applicant provides sufficient background and implementation information to clearly describe its development, applications and benefits for improving instructional practices and learning for students. Furthermore, the district has used this system with its upper grade teachers with proven success (p20/106).

The training of teachers in the use of the technology is embedded in the professional development content and timeline of activities.

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: 20

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2014 03:03 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: NYC Department of Education (U351C140068)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	5	4
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	8
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	12
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	15	14
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	30	23
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	25
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 #1: *****

Applicant: NYC Department of Education (U351C140068)

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 project is designed to impact 70 teachers in five high poverty schools (p. 1).

The principals in the target schools have expressed interest in participating in the project (p. 2).

The sequential puppetry curriculum is not currently implemented in the five target schools.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear whether or not other arts integration efforts are currently underway and what arts-based resources are currently available in the target schools.

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:

Teachers will develop video studies (p. 4) that will be made available online for other teachers to access. As noted on page 4, educators seeking information/assistance on the internet have found 3-min videos to be most helpful. Therefore, the video studies should be useful resources to enable others to utilize project strategies.

The evaluator noted that results would be disseminated at national conferences (e.g. AERA) and in peer reviewed journals.

Weaknesses:

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

Sub Question

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 project design is supported by Danielson's Framework for Teaching to inform the key components of effective instructional practice (pp. 5-6).

The project is based on four elements (a) content and pedagogical knowledge, (b) engaging students, (c) using formative assessment practices, and (d) contributing to the profession (p. 6). The authors provide research connecting each of the four elements to the professional development model supporting appropriate evidential basis.

A clear logic model is included linking inputs, outputs and outcomes.

Weaknesses:

Limited evidence to support the effectiveness of puppetry curriculum was provided. The authors describe other studies and projects utilizing the curriculum, but no effect sizes or project impacts are described with enough detail to assess the puppetry curriculum.

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:

Teachers will receive extensive professional development supports and build local capacity, as described on pages 11-12, to continue the project activities. For example, teachers and artists will collaboratively develop digital reports with tips and advice that will be distributed within and across schools.

Weaknesses:

No formal plan was provided for sustaining the partner relationship with ArtsConnection or plans to garner future financial resources to sustain project activities.

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: 12

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:

A non-discrimination policy statement is provided on page 14 ensuring all students will have equal access to project activities. The project will include all early childhood teachers and the curriculum is designed to work with children of differing ability levels (p. 14).

Weaknesses:

No clear plan for how the project will accommodate diverse learners was provided, only a statement that the project "works" with students from diverse backgrounds. It is unclear if materials will be provided in different languages and the types of accommodations to be made for children with disabilities.

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 project provides 50 hours of professional development each year (p. 15). The total professional development includes 15 hours of classroom-based residencies, 4 day-long workshops (28 hours), and school-based meetings (7 hours).

In addition, the ArtsConnection teaching artist will visit one class each week and explore ways to integrate content and pedagogy from the workshops into the classrooms.

Weaknesses:

Page 15, the applicant indicate that teachers will receive between 30-50 hours of professional development, but earlier in the narrative, it states that teacher will receive 50 hours (also page 15). It is unclear why some teachers will only receive 30 hours.

On page 16, the proposal describes weekly classroom visits. The feedback procedure for these visits is not described and it is unclear how the ArtsConnection teacher will successfully visit 70 teachers' classrooms and give meaningful feedback if only one classroom is visited each week.

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.**

Sub Question

Strengths:

The project is designed to address the Common Core State Standards in literacy, and the Danielson Framework of effective teaching practice.

A clear link between the program and early literacy skills is presented on pages 18-20. Student learning will be assessed using Running Records (p. 21) and the Measure of Student Learning (p. 23).

Weaknesses:

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

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:

A non-discrimination policy is described on page 23. The district has an established plan for recruiting diverse applicants called Children First (p. 23), and ArtsConnection has in place procedures to encourage diverse applicants, including connections and membership with a number of diverse arts organizations.

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, the key staff described in the proposal has the requisite experience and training to successfully implement the project. The co-directors as described on page 24-25 both have extensive experience and have worked on prior grant projects.

Weaknesses:

ArtsConnection Program manager described on page 32 is not included as key staff. As such it is unclear about their qualifications and experience. The proposal should include a description of these staff.

Reader's Score:

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The listed consultants have extensive expertise in their respective areas. The evaluator in particular has extensive expertise and experience and will deliver a high quality evaluation.

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: 23

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:

On pages 28-30 the proposal provides a narrative description of key activities for the four years of the project. The descriptions are clear and provide an adequate overview of core activities by year.

A complete table is provided in the appendix that outlines specific timelines and milestones.

Overall, the management plan provides enough detail and the adequacy of the activities should result in all tasks and objectives accomplished.

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:

Assuming the narrative figures, all key staff described on pages 31 and 32 provide adequate FTE to the project to ensure most activities will be completed on time.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The budget narrative does not align with the project narrative. The co-directors are not listed in the budget. Additionally, the project associate is described on page 32 as providing 1.0FTE, yet the budget narrative suggests she will only provide 350 hours or approximately .17FTE for a 12-month employee. Overall, the time commitments cannot be adequately judged, as they are not aligned across the proposal.

It is unclear as to how the co-directors will split the tasks and activities.

Reader's Score:

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

Strengths:

A five-person project team will meet quarterly to review progress and benchmarks and make adjustments as needed (p. 33).

School-based teams will provide guidance to ensure progress at the school-level (p. 33).

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: 25

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:

A comprehensive series of objective performance measures are described in the proposal on pages 35-36. All measures are aligned with project objectives and are either standardized measures or have been used and validated in prior studies. For example, on page 36, the proposal describes the Classroom Teacher Arts Inventory to assess teacher knowledge of core content and the Classroom Assessment of Learning observation system to guide all classroom observations.

Weaknesses:

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

Sub Question

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:

An implementation fidelity measure will be developed that is aligned with the Department of Education guidelines for other grant programs (p. 37).

Members of the evaluation team will meet regularly with teachers and artists to identify implementation challenges (p. 37).

Data will be shared bi-annually with key project staff and, as noted on page 38, emails and phone calls will routinely be made if and when a concern arise.

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:

A quasi-experimental design study with equivalence established (p. 39) will be used to assess project impacts. As currently described, the evaluation will meet What Works Clearinghouse Standards as 10 schools with up to 70 teachers in each condition and their respective students standardized assessment scores will be included in the evaluation.

Weaknesses:

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

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 includes a Video Study as a core component of the professional development process (p. 3). The videos and lessons associated with each video will also be shared via the project website. The use of Video Study represents the use of technology to improve instruction and the evaluation of the project will assess the utility of the technology approach on both teacher and student outcomes.

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 20

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2014 03:03 PM