

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/27/2010 04:56 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Public Schools -- Accountability , (U215J100055)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	20	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	20	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	100
Priority Questions		
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
1. Competitive Preference	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Total	102	102

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel - 7: 84.215J

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Boston Public Schools -- Accountability , (U215J100055)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project consists of a comprehensive plan that includes a description of--
 - (i) The project objectives;
 - (ii) The students, students' family members, and community to be served, including information about the demographic characteristics and needs of the students, students' family members, and other community members and the estimated number of individuals to be served; and
 - (iii) The eligible services (as listed in the Absolute Priority described elsewhere in the notice inviting applications) to be provided or coordinated by the applicant and its partner entities, how those services will meet the needs of students, students' family members, and other community members, and the frequency with which those services will be provided to students, students' family members, and community members.

Strengths:

The applicant outlines a clearly specified project vision and goals for the project (p. 2-3). Objectives outlined to meet the goals are clearly defined and measurable. Project goals address the support and strengthening of family and community participation in the education of students, with a particular focus on English Language Learners (ELL) who are experiencing poverty and who are at-risk academically, and students participating in services and programs to help improve student achievement, discipline and social skills.

The applicant provides a detailed description of the students to be served by the project. The project will target students at three schools who are experiencing poverty, and who are at-risk academically. Student poverty rates range from 75-83% (p. 2-3). English is not the native language of 40% of Jeremiah Burke High School students as compared to the state rate of 15.6% (p.6). In addition, Burke High School has a transfer rate of 65.1% compared to 25.3% of Boston Public Schools as a whole and 10.3% of the state of Massachusetts. Reports are provided to identify student who stray off the graduation track as early as 7th grade. Risk clarification is provided on the students to be served by the project based on number of years of low attendance, cumulative suspensions, English and math course failures, and times failing the state assessment test (Appendix).

The applicant presents a clear description of the demographic characteristics of the community to be served by the project. Statistical data is provided on the percentages of persons living below the poverty line and the educational status of adult residents. 28.5% of all families lived in poverty in 2006 while 34.5% of adults do not have a high school diploma. 46.3% of all persons 16 and older were neither employed, officially unemployed, or looking for employment (p.7).

The applicant outlines specific community needs. The community has identified the need for activities for families to become learning partners with schools and parental resources (p.9).

In a clearly designed chart, the applicant outlines the number of students enrolled at each of the schools participating in the project. Approximately 1,790 students will participate in the project in year one, increased to 2,163 by year five (page 8).

The applicant presents a detailed description of qualified services at each school to be provided by project partners that will meet the needs of the target population and community. Project services at all three schools will focus on specific areas including academic support/enrichment, mentoring/youth development, truancy, family education, engagement and

support, primary health, dental care, and mental health. Some project partners include Private Industry Council, Freedom House, NAACP Boston Branch, and The Efficacy Institute, The Black Ministerial Alliance, The New England Eye Institute, the Children's Hospital Boston, and Boston Medical Center's Department of Pediatrics (p.12-19). Services will include remedial education and academic enrichment, mentoring and youth development, nutrition services, full range of preventative care and oral health education, including dental care to children who are low-income and uninsured, programs to help address discipline, character, and service, and the provision of mental health counseling for students and family members(pages 12-19). Additionally services will specifically address family engagement, including parental involvement, parent leadership, family literacy, and parent education programs (page 12-19).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. (1) **The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.**
- (2) **In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
 - (i) **The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources to be provided by the applicant and consortium partners;**
 - (ii) **The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project; and**
 - (iii) **The extent to which costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and services to be provided.**

Strengths:

The applicant specifies resources that are adequate to support the project. The project schools will commit the full range of school facilities and grounds, including classrooms, cafeteria, auditorium, gym, and computer lab space for programs (p.20).

The applicant presents a Memorandum of Understanding for each project partner involved in the project (Appendix). The agreements specify commitment to the development and implementation of the project by both the applicant and the project partner.

The applicant presents a budget to support each year of the project. The resources requested through the grant are reasonable in terms of meeting the needs of students. \$2.9 million in matching funds combined with \$2.5 million in grant funds over the 5-year project cycle will support the increasing number of project participants.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The extent to which the proposed project consists of a comprehensive plan that includes a description of planning, coordination, management, and oversight of the eligible services (as listed in the Absolute Priority described elsewhere in the notice inviting applications) to be provided at each school to be served, including the role of the school principal, the FSCS coordinator, partner entities, parents, and community members;
 - (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the FSCS coordinator and other key project personnel including prior performance of the applicant on similar or related efforts; and
 - (iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director, the FSCS coordinator, and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant presents a well-defined management structure for the project (p.21-24). The project coordinator of each school will ensure the implementation and lead the development of the project. Additionally, the coordinator will participate in existing school leadership teams such as the Instructional Leadership Team (responsible for guiding the school's instructional program) and the Student Support Team (responsible for monitoring the social-emotional and developmental needs of students). The schools principals will be charged with ensuring that parents, teachers, and other school stakeholders share a common vision for improving student achievement (p.22). While maintaining effective communication with school staff, teachers, students, and families, partners will participate on the Student Success Leadership Team and provide high quality services. The Boston Public Schools Department of Extended Learning Time, Afterschool, and Services (DELTAS) will provide coaching and technical assistance to each school. The District will oversee the project evaluation plan. Governance of the project partnership will be created by blending the advisory committees of existing collaborative projects. To ensure clear communication channels and decision-making roles, the Advisory Board will meet twice a year and will include the Full-service Schools Roundtable and DELTAs (p.23). The Boston Public Health Commission will serve as the liaison to participating schools to support the health and mental health initiatives.

The applicant presents a clear description of staff assigned to work on the project. Key staff include principals of each school and a project coordinator at each school. Principals will supervise the project coordinators and provide overall management of the program (22-25). The staff identified to work on the project are qualified and experienced as evidenced by the resumes provided in the Appendix, including credentials and trainings in areas linked to the project services.

The applicant presents a description of the time commitments of key staff assigned to work on the project. The Project Director will devote .5 FTE to the FSCS effort. The evaluation staff will commit to .5 FTE. FSSR and the Public Health Commission will each devote the equivalent of 7.5 to 9 days per year to the project (p.25).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers the following:
 - (i) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice; and
 - (ii) 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 cites adequate research to support project services to be provided on the project (p.27-29). For example, clearly specified research is described in support of family engagement raising student achievement. Children in grades K-3 whose parents explain educational tasks are more likely to participate in class, seek help for the teacher, and monitor their own work (p.27).

The applicant cites research to support the link between project services and increased student achievement. Research supports the link between family engagement and increased student achievement, and after school program activities and increased student achievement (p.28-29).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.
(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed evaluation--
 - (i) Sets out methods of evaluation that 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;
 - (ii) Will provide timely and valid information on the management, implementation, or efficiency of the project; and
 - (iii) Will provide guidance on or strategies for replicating or testing the project intervention in multiple settings.

Factors Applicants May Wish to Consider in Developing an Evaluation Plan.

The quality of the evaluation plan is one of the selection criteria by which applications in this competition will be judged. A strong evaluation plan should be included in the application narrative and should be used, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the project period. The plan should include benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and also outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. More specifically, the plan should identify the individual or organization that has agreed to serve as evaluator for the project and describe the qualifications of that evaluator. The plan should describe the evaluation design, indicating: (1) what types of data will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) what methods will be used; (4) what instruments will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and about effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Strengths:

The applicant outlines an evaluation plan that is sufficient to measure the impact and success of the project. The evaluation will focus on the progress toward the project's goals/outcomes and objectives. The evaluation plan includes a formative evaluation of the implementation of the project at the district level including implementation of activities and programs, a summative evaluation of the goals and expected outcomes, and documentation of strengths and weaknesses of the project (p.29).

The applicant presents a timeline to demonstrate that it will provide timely and valid information on the management, implementation, and efficiency of the project (p.32-33). Evaluation activities and the year of completions are provided. Key activities include evaluation of stakeholder questionnaires, interviews, focus groups and site visit data, including

center activities, participation in activities, and use of instructional strategies; changes in benchmark data for BPS, DELTAS and FSCS goals through the project; and analysis and summary of outcome measures identified by the district and by each FSCS (p.31-32).

The applicant presents a reasonable strategy to provide guidance on replicating the proposed project. Evaluation results will be used to disseminate lessons learned in local, regional and national forums (p.33).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Priority Questions - Competitive Preference Priority

1. Strategies that support turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools

The Secretary gives competitive preference to applications that propose to serve persistently lowest-achieving schools and are currently implementing or plan to implement one of three school intervention models, to enable these schools to become full-service community schools. Applicants seeking to receive this priority must describe (a) the school intervention model that would be or is being implemented to improve academic outcomes for students; (b) the academic, social, and/or health services that would be provided and why; and (c) how the academic, social and/or health services provided would align with and support the school intervention model implemented.

Strengths:

One of the targeted schools is a Level 4 school, while the other two are Pathways to Excellence schools that have just completed their first year as newly constituted schools. 1. The Jeremiah Burke High School has 730 students in grades 9-12 and is located in Grove Hall, Roxbury. Challenges include a student poverty rate of 75%; annual dropout rate of 13.2%; and a large percentage of English language learners entering the BPS for the first time at the high school level. The Burke is a Level 4 school and is implementing the transformation school turnaround model. The Burke had a new principal in SY 2009-10 and will have 50% new teachers for 2010-11 (page 2). Additionally, community support and partnerships are aligned with the instructional practices specified for the project. Activities also align with reform measures (page 3).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/02/2010 07:34 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Public Schools -- Accountability , (U215J100055)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	20	19
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	97
Priority Questions		
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
1. Competitive Preference	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Total	102	99

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel - 7: 84.215J

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Boston Public Schools -- Accountability , (U215J100055)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project consists of a comprehensive plan that includes a description of--
 - (i) The project objectives;
 - (ii) The students, students' family members, and community to be served, including information about the demographic characteristics and needs of the students, students' family members, and other community members and the estimated number of individuals to be served; and
 - (iii) The eligible services (as listed in the Absolute Priority described elsewhere in the notice inviting applications) to be provided or coordinated by the applicant and its partner entities, how those services will meet the needs of students, students' family members, and other community members, and the frequency with which those services will be provided to students, students' family members, and community members.

Strengths:

The comprehensive description of the school communities and populations served and alignment of needs to service array to be provided is clear. (p. 5-8) The chart on page 8 clearly demonstrates planned numbers of students, families and community members to be served over the 5 year period. The succinct description by school of each service to be provided, why it will be provided and to whom is indicative of a well thought out plan tailored to the needs of each school community while taking full advantage of neighborhood partners.. (p. 12- 20)
The project objectives detail outcomes at each school site as well as district wide goals.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. (1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources to be provided by the applicant and consortium partners;
 - (ii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project; and
 - (iii) The extent to which costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and services to be provided.

Strengths:

The funding commitment from the district and across its partners is extensive and partners have been chosen who have demonstrated success and commitment to the populations targeted in the project. (p. 20) Costs per student/family are decreasing over the five year period due to increasing the numbers served and a per person cost of \$279 (yr 1) - \$231 (yr.

5) is very reasonable. (p. 20)

Weaknesses:

The description of facilities, resources, equipment and supplies could be expanded; space is addressed but information about equipment and supplies is lacking. (p.20)

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.
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 - (i) The extent to which the proposed project consists of a comprehensive plan that includes a description of planning, coordination, management, and oversight of the eligible services (as listed in the Absolute Priority described elsewhere in the notice inviting applications) to be provided at each school to be served, including the role of the school principal, the FSCS coordinator, partner entities, parents, and community members;
 - (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the FSCS coordinator and other key project personnel including prior performance of the applicant on similar or related efforts; and
 - (iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director, the FSCS coordinator, and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The use of the Student Success Team and the Student Support Team with the FSCS Coordinator as a member of each provides a very clear picture of how services will be coordinated around students. Additionally the commitment of BPS to equipping principals to lead FSCS and the clear alignment of the Coordinator as a direct report to the Principal at each school will ensure regular and ongoing communication of challenges and success. Using DELTAS needs assessment to inform the proposal and access to the MIS system will allow informed decisions by the teams regarding student progress. Parent participation on the Student Success team will be invaluable.

The FTEs for the site based Coordinators and the Director is adequate and the key personnel involved have extensive experience with family engagement, community partnerships and full service schools. The FSCS Coordinator job description is clear and has appropriate qualifications and expectations outlined.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers the following:
 - (i) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice; and
 - (ii) 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:

There is sound support from the research for the services and activities related to family engagement, academic support/enrichment and socio-emotional and overall health identified in the proposal and the linkage to successful outcomes for the students and families who will be served. (p. 26-27)

Weaknesses:

The research support for the services to students who have been chronically absent, truant, suspended or expelled needs to be expanded. (p.28) While there is a citation that the combined effect of whole school reforms targeting attendance, behavioral and extra help interventions are likely to increase graduation rates there is not information about the evidenced based strategies that will be implemented for these students by this program.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.
(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed evaluation--
 - (i) Sets out methods of evaluation that 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;
 - (ii) Will provide timely and valid information on the management, implementation, or efficiency of the project; and
 - (iii) Will provide guidance on or strategies for replicating or testing the project intervention in multiple settings.

Factors Applicants May Wish to Consider in Developing an Evaluation Plan.

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Strengths:

The evaluation plan provides a strong mix of quantitative and qualitative measures and provides regular formative evaluation results to allow adjustments to implementation as needed. The emphasis on sharing progress and promoting reflection and learning among participants is impressive and appropriately align with district related objectives. Methods of analysis of the data are detailed and thorough (p. 32)

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Priority Questions - Competitive Preference Priority

1. Strategies that support turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools

The Secretary gives competitive preference to applications that propose to serve persistently lowest-achieving schools and are currently implementing or plan to implement one of three school intervention models, to enable these schools to become full-service community schools. Applicants seeking to receive this priority must describe (a) the school intervention model that would be or is being implemented to improve academic outcomes for students; (b) the academic, social, and/or health services that would be provided and why; and (c) how the academic, social and/or health services provided would align with and support the school intervention model implemented.

Strengths:

The High School involved in the proposal is implementing the transformation model (P. 33) and the K-8 schools have recently merged with low performing schools
The explanation provided of each of the four targeted service areas; academic success for ELL students, increased family engagement, increased engagement of students with history of low attendance , negative behavior and/or academic failure and positive social and emotional health outcomes is strongly tied to needs and demographics providing a clear reason for the selection. (p 7-9)

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted
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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/31/2010 06:09 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Public Schools -- Accountability , (U215J100055)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	20	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	20	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	100
Priority Questions		
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
1. Competitive Preference	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Total	102	102

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel - 7: 84.215J

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Boston Public Schools -- Accountability , (U215J100055)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project consists of a comprehensive plan that includes a description of--
 - (i) The project objectives;
 - (ii) The students, students' family members, and community to be served, including information about the demographic characteristics and needs of the students, students' family members, and other community members and the estimated number of individuals to be served; and
 - (iii) The eligible services (as listed in the Absolute Priority described elsewhere in the notice inviting applications) to be provided or coordinated by the applicant and its partner entities, how those services will meet the needs of students, students' family members, and other community members, and the frequency with which those services will be provided to students, students' family members, and community members.

Strengths:

Each of the three schools will realize significant improvement in the a) academic success for ELL students, b) increased family engagement in children's academic success, c) increased engagement of students with history of low attendance, negative behavior, and/or academic failure, and d) positive social-emotional and health outcomes (page 5).

The applicant gives clear and specific data to support the need for the proposed project interventions in each of the four priority areas. For example, the focus on services for ELL students is supported by the following data, nearly 40% of Boston students do not speak English as their first language (page 8). The applicant states that Boston has struggled to build the capacity of schools to welcome, involve, and understand families of diverse racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds (page 9) to support the need for family engagement. A third to more than half of some classes at each school is likely to drop out without sustained intervention (page 9) is one of the data points given to support the focus on increased student engagement. Only 20% of preschoolers have their vision screened (page 10) supports the partnership with the New England Eye Institute.

The applicant will serve 1,790 individuals in year one with an increase to 2,163 by year five (page 8). The applicant provides a table of the target number of students, families, and community members to be served in each school, each year.

The Build Her Up program will meet weekly afterschool with 20- 40 girls (page 13). The applicant provides detailed information on the frequency of services at each school.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. (1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources to be provided by the applicant and consortium partners;
 - (ii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project; and
 - (iii) The extent to which costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and services to be provided.

Strengths:

Schools will provide office space for coordinators and classrooms, cafeteria, auditorium, gym, and computer lab space for programs. Each partner named in the service plan is also committed to the implementation and success of this project and cumulatively they are contributing \$2.9 million over five years in matching funds. The set of partners in this plan was carefully chosen for their expertise serving high-risk populations, including ELLs, academically failing, and disengaged students. The per person total cost decreases from \$603 in year one to \$506 in year five (pages 20-21).

The applicant demonstrates a strong level of commitment from program partners. Each partner contributes to the overall goals of the project and provides high quality and relevant program services. The applicant presents a clear budget that details in-kind contributions as well as specific use of grant funds. The cost per person is reasonable.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The extent to which the proposed project consists of a comprehensive plan that includes a description of planning, coordination, management, and oversight of the eligible services (as listed in the Absolute Priority described elsewhere in the notice inviting applications) to be provided at each school to be served, including the role of the school principal, the FSCS coordinator, partner entities, parents, and community members;
 - (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the FSCS coordinator and other key project personnel including prior performance of the applicant on similar or related efforts; and
 - (iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director, the FSCS coordinator, and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant has established two levels of infrastructure to drive planning, coordination and oversight at each school including a student success leadership team and a student support team. Each school will hire an FSCS Coordinator who will be supervised by the principal. The applicant will conduct focus groups and communicate regularly with parents to include their input into planning (pages 21-22). Project Director Marta Gredler is the former director of the Full-service Schools Roundtable (pages 24-25)

The applicant has a well-designed management plan that establishes two committees of school staff, stakeholders, and community members to maintain regular involvement in program planning and oversight. The principal maintains a significant role in ensuring the overall success of the project. The level of staff time is appropriate for the scope of services and number of individuals served by the project. The selected project director was instrumental in the preparatory activities and planning that will make this project possible and has already established relationships with the partners.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers the following:
 - (i) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice; and
 - (ii) 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 applicants emphasis on family engagement as a key lever of school improvement is supported by recent research by Tony Bryk and a team in Chicago examining 200 stagnating or declining elementary schools and 100 schools that made progress. The researchers found five characteristics of successful schools, including leadership, professional capacity, student-centered learning climate, instructional guidance, and parent-community ties (page 27).

The research conducted by Eccles and Wolfe demonstrates that afterschool enrichment practices build student skills and motivation and address their specific learning styles and challenges (page 28).

The project design, partnerships, and evidence-based interventions selected for this project create a very high likelihood that this project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards. All of the proposed project elements address the five characteristics of successful schools as described in the cited research.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed evaluation--
 - (i) Sets out methods of evaluation that 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;
 - (ii) Will provide timely and valid information on the management, implementation, or efficiency of the project; and
 - (iii) Will provide guidance on or strategies for replicating or testing the project intervention in multiple settings.

Factors Applicants May Wish to Consider in Developing an Evaluation Plan.

The quality of the evaluation plan is one of the selection criteria by which applications in this

competition will be judged. A strong evaluation plan should be included in the application narrative and should be used, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the project period. The plan should include benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and also outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. More specifically, the plan should identify the individual or organization that has agreed to serve as evaluator for the project and describe the qualifications of that evaluator. The plan should describe the evaluation design, indicating: (1) what types of data will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) what methods will be used; (4) what instruments will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and about effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Strengths:

The applicant has developed a web-based MIS to share student data such as, standardized test scores, home contact information, and school-day attendance with program providers (pages 26-27). The applicant will work through the Full-service Schools Roundtable to disseminate evaluation results and identify replication strategies and policy recommendations (pages 23-24).

The BPS Office of Research and Evaluation will partner with Brigham Nahas Research Associates to implement a multi-pronged, mixed methods evaluation approach that includes: 1) formative evaluation of the implementation of the project at the district level, 2) summative evaluation of the goals and expected outcomes; and 3) documentation of the lessons learned through the project (page 29).

The use of technology to share valid and timely student data with program providers will enhance project management to create the data-driven project delivery that the applicant proposes. A network for sharing information and potentially replicating the program model already exists in the community and the applicant is a key part of that network. All of the project objectives are measurable and the evaluation plan outlines the tools and methods that will be used for data collection.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Priority Questions - Competitive Preference Priority

1. Strategies that support turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools

The Secretary gives competitive preference to applications that propose to serve persistently lowest-achieving schools and are currently implementing or plan to implement one of three school intervention models, to enable these schools to become full-service community schools. Applicants seeking to receive this priority must describe (a) the school intervention model that would be or is being implemented to improve academic outcomes for students; (b) the academic, social, and/or health services that would be provided and why; and (c) how the academic, social and/or health services provided would align with and support the school intervention model implemented.

Strengths:

One of the three proposed schools is a persistently low-achieving school and is implementing the transformation school turn-around model. The school had a new principal in 2009-2010 and will have 50% new teachers for 2010-2011 (page 2).

Community partnerships will align with each school's instructional priorities and focus on 1) improving achievement of English Language Learners; 2) increasing family engagement, education, and support; 3) re-engaging students who have a history of low attendance, negative behavior and/or academic failure; and 4) meeting the health needs of students and their families (page 3).

The applicant provides a thorough analysis for how the proposed activities will support their existing school reform efforts. The applicant uses student data and research to identify four areas of focus that will turn their schools around and has selected project partners and activities that provide high quality program delivery in those focus areas.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: **2**

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