

Technical Review Cover Sheet

Panel Details

Fiscal Year 2014 **CFDA/Subprogram** 84.215J **Schedule No** 1 **Tier No.** 1

Panel Name Full Service Community Schools - 13

Applicant Name Children and Families First Delaware, Inc. **PR/Award No** U215J140041

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Selection Criteria		
Project Design	25	20
Adequacy of Resources	20	20
Management Plan	25	23
Project Services	20	20
Project Evaluation	10	9
TOTAL	100	92

Priority Questions

1. Competitive Preference Priority: Promise Zones

CPP: Promise Zones	3	0
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TOTAL	3	0
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GRAND TOTAL	103	92
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Technical Review Form

Applicant Name Children and Families First Delaware, Inc. **PR/Award No** U215J140041

Reviewer Name

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 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

(ii) 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.

(iii) 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.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding stream from other programs or policies supported by community State and Federal Resources.

Strengths:

The applicant will serve two elementary schools where the entire student body is free and reduced lunch eligible, and where the climate and academic results have been impacted by high rates of pupil transiency. The two schools are located in an area of concentrated poverty where 23 percent of the residents live below the poverty rate. The target population for this program is those living within contiguous census tracts that comprise the feeder patterns for the two schools (2-4). The applicant will serve 800 low-income people each year.

The applicant provides strong evidence that the need exists to provide increased opportunities for parent and community engagement and professional development around behavior management (5). The applicant presents a sound strategy for coordination of resources from the 15 partnering entities to provide mentoring, nutrition, mental health, health care, physical activities, economic education, early childhood education, and other services that respond to the needs of students, students' family members, and community members, as evidenced by memorandum of understanding.

The applicant's plan to partner with the Delaware Center for Economic Education to provide to prepare students to make informed decisions in today's global economy is innovative.

The applicant's approach to address the needs of students at risk for hunger by providing backpacks filled with food on weekends and holidays is creative and this approach will have a positive impact the achievement of students (22).

The applicant's ability to leverage resources is strongly demonstrated in its relationship with Capital One who has supported library upgrades and facilities improvements at District schools (22).

Weaknesses:

The application does not clearly describe how parents will be recruited to serve on the advisory council or the estimated number of the parents to serve.

The application does not clearly identify frequency of parent/family night.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

2. (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 organization provides detailed information on the partners, the nature of their in-kind or monetary contribution, the knowledge and experience concerning the proposed project and its activities, as evidenced by letters of support. For example, the Delaware Center for Economic Education & Entrepreneurship commits to providing training in personal finance, economic, and entrepreneurship for families, teachers, and students in grades K-5 at no cost to the federal grant or district.

The District schools commit access to its facilities at no cost, as evidenced by memorandum of understanding. The applicant commits one full time Service Navigator position and two yearly Strengthening Families program series as in-kind support for the project (17). Private funding currently supports the costs associated with the full time site coordinators (19).

The applicant organization's proposed budget is reasonable given the number of individuals to be served annually (N=1,900) and the diverse services to be provided. The applicant's strategy to integrate primary care and behavioral health care resources in the propose project and improve students and students' family access to these services fills a critical service gaps for the targeted population (23).

Weaknesses: No weaknesses noted.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

3. **(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 organization clearly demonstrates the proposed key personnel have adequate knowledge, experience, and skills required to successfully carry out the project, as evidenced by resumes. The selected Site Coordinators have at least five years of experience working in the social service and education sector combined with undergraduate degrees (34).

The applicant organization provides evidence of sufficient time commitment for key personnel, as evidenced in the budget. The Site Coordinators and Service Navigators will be full time on the project (35, budget). The Site Coordinators will work closely with the school principal to drive the development and implementation of the program. The Site Coordinators will be supported by Service Navigators who will work directly with families to ensure access to resources such as healthcare, housing and financial; and Family Connectors will work with cohorts of families and develop achievements plans for each family (34). The Program Manager, who has over five years of project management experience, will supervise program staff and oversee the program (34 and resume).

The applicant has a long history of providing services to help children facing adversity on their

journey to adulthood (24-25). The applicant demonstrates it has significant capacity to accomplish the goals and outcomes of the proposed project, including appropriate systems to track outcomes (25).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly describe the composition of the advisory council or demonstrate the council will consist of a representative sample of the target population.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

4. (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 has chosen to implement all twelve of the eligible services in this project and a majority of the interventions are evidenced-based and directly support the improvements to academic achievement (19-28). For example, under the early learning programs, the applicant will develop an achievement zone that will build on the connection between the early childhood and the K-5 education system using existing evidenced-based home visiting services and other early learning resources (22-23).

The applicant's use of multiple strategies to engage parents provides a strong platform for meaningful parent education and involvement to support student academic achievement. For example, each school offers a Parent Resource Center where families can use computers, access information on education, social services, etc., and participate in workshops and training opportunities (24).

The applicant presents an innovative strategy for connecting families to needed social services.

For example, Service Navigators will provide resource connections directly with families who are in need of services and supports (28).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

5. (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) Will provide timely and valid information on the management, implementation, or efficiency of the project; and

(ii) Will provide guidance on or strategies for replicating or testing the project intervention in multiple settings.

(iii) Will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

Strengths:

The applicant includes a table that depicts the outcomes and data collection framework. For example, parent survey, health data, teacher surveys and disciplinary data will be collected to measure student's health status (32-33).

The evaluator will coordinate with the school district and its data center to ensure that data around academic achievement, school discipline, and school attendance are included in the evaluation process. This interface is critical and will help ensure the evaluation produces scientifically credible results on students and families and community members (32-33).

The applicant demonstrates it has a history of creating an atmosphere of trust with partners that allows useful evaluation to occur (31-32).

The applicant provides evidence of the lead evaluator's sufficiency in background, experience, and other qualifications to carry out a successful evaluation of the proposed project, as

evidenced by a resume.

The applicant's evaluation plan includes a process evaluation as well as a final report on outcomes and results. This information will be used by stakeholders to make informed decisions about the status of the project (46-47).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide baseline data for the proposed interventions.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 9

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority: Promise Zones - Promise Zones

- 1. The Secretary gives competitive preference to applications that propose to work with communities that have been awarded a Promise Zone designation. Promise Zone designees have committed to establishing comprehensive, coordinated approaches in order to ensure, among our goals, that America's most vulnerable children succeed from cradle to career. This designation is designed to assist local leaders in creating jobs, increasing economic activity, improving educational opportunities, leveraging private investment, and reducing violent crime in high-poverty urban, rural, and tribal communities. Promise Zone designations establish comprehensive, coordinated approaches in order to ensure America's most vulnerable children succeed from cradle to career. By partnering with Promise Zones designees, the Federal government will help communities access the resources and expertise they need--including the resources from various neighborhood revitalization initiatives--to ensure that Federal programs and resources support the efforts to transform these communities.**

Strengths

No strengths noted because the applicant is not a designated promise zone.

Weaknesses

The applicant is not seeking competitive preference priority points.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 0

Technical Review Cover Sheet

Panel Details

Fiscal Year 2014 **CFDA/Subprogram** 84.215J **Schedule No** 1 **Tier No.** 1

Panel Name Full Service Community Schools - 13

Applicant Name Children and Families First Delaware, Inc. **PR/Award No** U215J140041

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Selection Criteria		
Project Design	25	24
Adequacy of Resources	20	19
Management Plan	25	23
Project Services	20	19
Project Evaluation	10	9
TOTAL	100	94

Priority Questions

1. Competitive Preference Priority: Promise Zones

CPP: Promise Zones	3	0
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TOTAL	3	0
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GRAND TOTAL	103	94
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Technical Review Form

Applicant Name Children and Families First Delaware, Inc. **PR/Award No** U215J140041

Reviewer Name

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 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

(ii) 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.

(iii) 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.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding stream from other programs or policies supported by community State and Federal Resources.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a strong description of the challenges facing the community to be served. Census data is used to document the rate of poverty in the community (page e15). A convincing argument on increasing violence in the community is also made using data from the CDC and local news data (pages e15-16). The applicant demonstrates a wide reach of partnerships, which will provide a broad scope of eligible services for the target community. A reasonable description of how project partners will be engaged to provide services to the target community is also provided (pages e20-23). The project will build on existing work being done with the schools in the target community. Research is used to justify each of the eligible services to be provided in the project, which is followed by detailed descriptions of implementation (pages e35-43). The proposed project will be integrated with work done to realize the strategic plan of the RCCSD (page e23-24).

Weaknesses:

Although, pupil transiency was listed as a challenge to student success, the project does not appear to offer program elements that speak directly to this issue. Page e36 states that Connectors will work to keep families stable within the neighborhood feeder pattern, but no examples of how this work would occur are provided. A connection between the services provided and violence prevention is not directly stated.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

2. (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:

Integrated space for community school operations already exists within two schools. This space provides room for parent resource room and mentoring, food pantry and other resources, as well as work areas for the Community School Site Coordinator and mentoring staff (page e29). The signed Memorandum of Understanding (pages e76-84) clearly details the commitment to the project pledged by the applicant and project partners to provide services, oversight, coordination and/or space to the project. The project will leverage funds already secured through Capital One (page e91). The breadth of services to be provided to the targeted community is justified by the number of children and families to be served (page e43-44).

Weaknesses:

While it can be assumed that Connectors and Service Navigators will do a considerable amount of work in the field as they meet with families or build relationships with neighborhood resources, the amount of time and resources needed for these positions are not adequately described (page e34, 35). More detail is needed to describe the space and resource accommodations for the new positions of Connector and Service Navigator at each location.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

3. (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:

Previous experience in managing community schools has provided a number of lessons that inform the management plan of this project (page e30). As a result, the plan has incorporated a feedback loop (which also includes community members) to ensure improvement of implementation. The applicant thoroughly outlines the roles and responsibilities of project partners. Qualifications of site coordinators and other key personnel demonstrate sufficient experience to execute their roles in the project (page e48). Connectors and Service Navigators are innovative ways to frame family engagement support roles that is approachable and welcoming to families (page e49). Both positions provide families with a direct point of contact with whom they build relationships, and allow them to gain access to skills, resources and services specific to their needs.

Weaknesses:

More detail on the Advisory Council and its structure would be helpful to understand how council members will be engaged, as well as to ensure that the listed stakeholders in the council have equal voice in providing feedback (page e49). A description of how this feedback will be translated to project staff to make recommended adjustments should also be included.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

4. (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:

Descriptions of the eligible services to be provided are prefaced by a reference to research that speaks to the benefits of the selected services for youth and families. Research referenced includes findings by the RAND Corporation (page 36), the Harvard Family Research Project (page 37), the National Center for School Engagement (page 40), as well as others. The proposed project also intends to make use of evidence-based, and/or research based models for some program elements, such as the Strengthening Families Program (page 39). The approach to early learning services is based on a model of effective practice in use in Minnesota (page e34). There is a close link between early learning services and parent engagement services that will not only promote gains in student achievement, but also develop a greater sense of belonging for parents within the school community that will likely lead to greater advocacy for their children (page e37-38).

Weaknesses:

The chart used to describe the intended results of the program would benefit from greater specificity in the results column (page e47). It would have been helpful to have specific benchmarks used to determine successful results (e.g., % decrease in tardiness rates, target early childhood enrollment numbers, % increase in attendance, etc.).

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

5. **(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) Will provide timely and valid information on the management, implementation, or efficiency of the project; and

(ii) Will provide guidance on or strategies for replicating or testing the project intervention in multiple settings.

(iii) Will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

Strengths:

The evaluation plan makes strong use of varied data points and collection methods, both qualitative and quantitative (page e32). The applicant will retain the evaluator used for the FSCS grant received in 2010, which indicates familiarity with Federal FSCS goals and performance measures. The applicant also provides a clear example of how evaluation questions will be directly tied to the services provided (i.e., comparing outcomes for early intervention strategy and elementary age strategy; page e34). A detailed list of evaluation activities is provided (page e46).

Weaknesses:

Providing a specific timeline for key evaluation activities would add to the overall strength of the evaluation plan. As stated, the table of data to be collected is categorized only as short-term versus long-term (page e47). The intervals at which this data will be gathered and analyzed are not provided. Gathering baseline data will provide a point of comparison when evaluating the services provided. The proposal states “results will be shared with the school-based Advisory Committees every six months, at a minimum, to ensure success” (page e46). A description of how the committees’ feedback will be reported to project staff to ensure that adjustments are made should be included.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 9

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority: Promise Zones - Promise Zones

- 1. The Secretary gives competitive preference to applications that propose to work with communities that have been awarded a Promise Zone designation. Promise Zone designees have committed to establishing comprehensive, coordinated approaches in order to ensure, among our goals, that America's most vulnerable children succeed from cradle to career. This designation is designed to assist local leaders in creating jobs, increasing economic activity, improving educational opportunities, leveraging private investment, and reducing violent crime in high-poverty urban, rural, and tribal communities. Promise Zone designations establish comprehensive, coordinated approaches in order to ensure America's most vulnerable children succeed from cradle to career. By partnering with Promise Zones designees, the Federal government will help communities access the resources and expertise they need--including the resources from various neighborhood revitalization initiatives--to ensure that Federal programs and resources support the efforts to transform these communities.**

Strengths

No strengths cited.

Weaknesses

The application does not claim priority points as a Promise Zone.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 0

Technical Review Cover Sheet

Panel Details

Fiscal Year 2014 **CFDA/Subprogram** 84.215J **Schedule No** 1 **Tier No.** 1

Panel Name Full Service Community Schools - 13

Applicant Name Children and Families First Delaware, Inc. **PR/Award No** U215J140041

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Selection Criteria		
Project Design	25	24
Adequacy of Resources	20	19
Management Plan	25	23
Project Services	20	20
Project Evaluation	10	9
TOTAL	100	95

Priority Questions

1. Competitive Preference Priority: Promise Zones

CPP: Promise Zones	3	0
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TOTAL	3	0
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GRAND TOTAL	103	95
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Technical Review Form

Applicant Name Children and Families First Delaware, Inc. **PR/Award No** U215J140041

Reviewer Name

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:

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(iii) 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.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding stream from other programs or policies supported by community State and Federal Resources.

Strengths:

The narrative provides a graphic and substantiated picture of the characteristics and needs of the students and families, emphasizing their unsafe environment (p. 2) and fragile families (p. 2, 4). It demonstrates low student achievement (p. 3) and student transiency, high poverty (p. 4) and poor health records (p. 5).

The project has a healthy variety of robust service providers in its partnership that address the health, early childhood development, mentoring and financial literacy needs of the targeted population (p. 7-9). These are consistent with the intent of the funding and mirror the intended services.

The Superintendent meets regularly (p. 10) with key partnership managers and executives--a signal of the priority this project merits, and the attention the district leadership renders. "Service Navigators," "Connectors," and "parenting coach" are user-friendly titles for family support staff.

The narrative describes convincing strategies to build parenting and mentoring capacity (p. 25)

A significant strength of the project is that school and service provider activities are closely intertwined (p. 15). This negates the potential for lack of buy-in or lack of effective communications. Just as significant is the project's recognition that stakeholder feedback to drive programming is vital to program success.

This project builds on financial support from corporate contributors and a previous Full Service Community Schools grant, demonstrating efforts to improve relevant outcomes with cooperative funding streams.

Weaknesses:

Although the project provides for behavioral health services, it lacks focus on violence prevention after that was demonstrated so prominently as a community need.

Question Status: Completed

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

2. **(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 partners and their contributions are specific, clear and comprehensive (p. 7-9). The schools are providing facilities (p. 15) beyond the minimum. Children and Families First has business management, technology and governance structure in place and has met standards of the Council on Accreditation (p. 11). The proposal makes a good case for adequacy of support.

The MOU demonstrates strong adequacy of resources because it commits the partners to explicit and necessary roles, such as supervision of staff and project evaluation. The role of the schools is delineated in the MOU, ranging from sharing curricula to accountability. Private funding provides site coordinators and some activities (p. 19).

The consistent services of the individual partners, and the expansion of services by CCFF from three nearby schools to those currently proposed are evidence of the likelihood the project will be sustained (p. 13). The project will reach at least 800 children for academic assistance and provide many of them with additional services, either directly or through their families (p. 30). Addressing their most pressing needs, varied as they may be, will make maximum impact with the available funds and keep the clients from regressing due to unaddressed struggles.

Weaknesses:

Although the proposal tells how many students the project will reach with each initiative (p. 29), it does not put these into perspective in terms of impacts on the targeted schools.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

3. (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 managing partner has healthy governance, with an involved board of directors and active committees (p. 10), which gives credence to the statements that it has leveraged its relationships with financial institutions (p. 16) maintained a good track record of monitoring projects by reviewing records and outcomes and keeping a pulse on client satisfaction (p. 18).

Partners participate in school activities (p. 15) and are learning from experience (p. 16-17) as they add to resource contributors. The project demonstrates raised expectations, including from parents, who are asked to commit to specific goals for their children (p. 15, 20).

The applicant uses both objective data and records of client satisfaction to hone program practices (p. 18).

It is a strength that the early childhood activities will recruit families through the Nurse-family Partnerships and Healthy families America activities (p. 20).

Weaknesses:

There is no demonstration that stakeholders will value the Parent Universities (p. 20). The narrative mentions parent appointments to an advisory council (p. 25) but does not delineate their role or empowerment in that capacity.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

4. (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:

Outreach will enhance project success as "service navigators" help families get in touch with appropriate service providers (p. 24). The broad range of proposed services, from prenatal care to housing providers, will give site coordinators tremendous resources to draw upon. Working with a food bank (p. 29) shows attention to immediate family needs, as well as sensitivity to children who require this assistance in order to go to school prepared to learn (p. 7, 15, 27). These services are likely to impact the needs that the narrative describes, and to be genuinely helpful to families.

School nurses have access to Nemours health records for their students (p. 28), demonstrating their high level of commitment to overcoming barriers to best serve their mutual clients. The medical and food services that the project offers to families are likely to be the "carrots" to draw

parents into the parenting skill building classes that will help children succeed in school (p. 25).

Weaknesses:

The reviewer noted no weaknesses.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

5. (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) Will provide timely and valid information on the management, implementation, or efficiency of the project; and

(ii) Will provide guidance on or strategies for replicating or testing the project intervention in multiple settings.

(iii) Will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

Strengths:

The evaluation design is well rounded in that it will look at outcomes (academic achievement, school discipline, and school attendance) and also formative factors contributing to success or distraction from progress toward the stated goals (p. 31). The focus groups and interviews (p. 32) will enrich evaluation findings in the interest of determining stakeholder response and recommending project improvements. These indicate the managers will have timely and valid information to guide their activities should unanticipated results arise, or if certain components can be improved. It is a strength for improving project management that the project managers will be open to altering or even discontinuing components that aren't working as well as hoped (p. 32).

Weaknesses:

The evaluation plan gives no baseline data for the participating schools, and no goals or benchmarks for predicted improvements.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 9

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority: Promise Zones - Promise Zones

1. The Secretary gives competitive preference to applications that propose to work with communities that have been awarded a Promise Zone designation. Promise Zone designees have committed to establishing comprehensive, coordinated approaches in order to ensure, among our goals, that America's most vulnerable children succeed from cradle to career. This designation is designed to assist local leaders in creating jobs, increasing economic activity, improving educational opportunities, leveraging private investment, and reducing violent crime in high-poverty urban, rural, and tribal communities. Promise Zone designations establish comprehensive, coordinated approaches in order to ensure America's most vulnerable children succeed from cradle to career. By partnering with Promise Zones designees, the Federal government will help communities access the resources and expertise they need--including the resources from various neighborhood revitalization initiatives--to ensure that Federal programs and resources support the efforts to transform these communities.

Strengths

No strengths are noted.

Weaknesses

The applicant did not claim priority points, and is not in a Promise Zone.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 0