

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 - 12

Applicant Name UNITED WAY OF BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY **PR/Award No** U215J140029

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Selection Criteria		
Project Design	25	25
Adequacy of Resources	20	20
Management Plan	25	24
Project Services	20	20
Project Evaluation	10	6
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

Technical Review Form

Applicant Name UNITED WAY OF BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY **PR/Award No** U215J140029

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 FSCS-CTG Consortium will address non-academic barriers to student achievement by integrating a strong pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 continuum of high-quality, evidence-based, and culturally informed services within these schools. The program will serve two high need schools, Southside Elementary and South Park HS. The CTG Consortium was originally funded by the FSCS program in 2008 and this application draws heavily on the experience and past success of these efforts.

The applicant clearly establishes the need in the community, with a high poverty rate and low graduation rate characterizing the schools. Only 50% of BCSD students graduate from high school, BCSD students perform 40% below their peers on New York State (NYS) assessments, and suspensions have grown 7% over the past three years, with an alarming increase in pre-kindergarten and early grade suspensions due to extremely disruptive behaviors. The number of individuals served (2,600) is clearly explained on page 2.

The applicant clearly and specifically describes eligible services to be offered that are based on student and family needs and school/community service gaps. These services are as follows: high-quality early learning (#1); remedial education/academic enrichment (#2); family engagement (#3); mentoring and youth development (#4); assistance to students who have been chronically absent, truant, suspended, or expelled (#6); access to and use of social services programs and family financial stability programs (#10); and mental health services (#11). Each eligible service is described, including responsible partners, program structure, location and frequency of services as well as the number of students and families served.

The applicant successfully demonstrates the potential for incorporation of the project activities into their ongoing work through a discussion of the recent track record of several initiatives including the existing FSCS programs within the City. Services are being expanded and the program has attracted substantial partner funding and support. Notable is the Say Yes organization which extends community support by providing scholarship support to successful students and families.

WEAKNESSES:

No weaknesses noted.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 25

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 agency (United Way) has extensive experience managing this program and has served as the lead partner for the FSCS-CTG Consortium since its inception in 2000. UW has extensive experience managing grants and contracts, handling over \$21 million in resources annually including \$3.7 million in grants and contracts last year. FSCS-CTG Consortium is a major initiative of the Education focus area, managed by UW's Program Director of Education (30% time).

UW and Consortium partners will contribute a total of \$233,782 in matching funds for personnel, supplies and equipment, weekly backpacks of food, camp scholarships, transportation, and housing case management. Matching funds are 32% of the total project budget (\$729,611) and 47% of the total federal funds request (\$499,591) for Year 1. Consortium partners will sustain a similar level of commitment over the life of the grant and will continue to seek resources devoted to project outcomes (page 17 and 18).

The signed MOU is extremely detailed and specific. Activities are described for each partner, and each activity is aligned with project goals and eligible services. All signatures are included.

The MOU is further supported by numerous letters of support from local government representatives, educators, and community agencies.

The applicant indicates the cost per student is just over \$200, a very reasonable figure. The budget focuses the majority of resources on direct student services provided through partners.

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 states on page 21 that their plan is integrated with the district Comprehensive Plan (2013-18), a strength of this design that will contribute to success and sustainability. A Leadership Team is established with representation from all stakeholders that meets quarterly and provides oversight of the project. A clear plan for coordination and management at the

project level and school site is provided on pages 22 and 23. This proposed structure is comprehensive and includes the principal, partners, families and community members in meaningful roles.

The FSCS coordinator and all key personnel are fully qualified for their roles in this project, and the majority of roles and positions described are already staffed. Job descriptions are provided for those that require recruitment, and resumes are included in the appendix. In addition to holding educational and experiential qualifications, many of the personnel involved have worked together on community schooling initiatives.

The applicant addresses time commitments in the budget section, and includes funding for a FT project director as well as significant time (25% to 30%) for executive staff at United Way, Catholic Charities and other partners.

WEAKNESSES:

Parents and community members do not have a specific role to play in the broader leadership and planning of this project, and the application would be strengthened by addressing that.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 24

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 model is informed by scientifically-based research and best effective practice with proven results. The proposal is clearly aligned with a focus on improved academic outcomes

(BCSD Strategic Plan, 2013-2018) and NYS Common Core Standards (described on page 27).

To achieve improved student achievement and preparation for college and career among the children and the project will integrate eligible services that show proven results and reflect well-informed, up-to-date research. The applicant has also thoughtfully integrated service elements to meet the holistic needs of students and their families.

The project goals include rigorous, measurable student achievement goals that will support monitoring of success throughout the project period.

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 will partner with an outside evaluator (Via) to complete these activities. They present a strong, comprehensive list of performance measures that are comprehensive and measurable. The analysis plan includes testing at multiple levels (program, site, project) to test the intervention across settings. The evaluator plans to meet monthly consortium members to

maintain communication and feedback.

WEAKNESSES:

This section (and the evaluation) would be strengthened by the addition of a plan for reporting that includes specific information on project implementation across sites and elements. This approach would help put differential outcomes into context and help program developers identify strengths and challenges at each site.

The evaluation would also be strengthened by an intentional plan to disaggregate and examine client level data by ethnic, racial and language characteristics. The applicant describes the population of the area as rapidly shifting and changing, making the need to understand the program impact on sub-populations particularly worthwhile.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 6

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

None noted.

Weaknesses

This community is not in a designated Promise Zone.

Question Status: Completed**Reviewer Score: 0**

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Panel Details

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

Panel Name Full Service Community Schools - 12

Applicant Name UNITED WAY OF BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY **PR/Award No** U215J140029

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Selection Criteria		
Project Design	25	25
Adequacy of Resources	20	19
Management Plan	25	22
Project Services	20	20
Project Evaluation	10	8
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 UNITED WAY OF BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY **PR/Award No** U215J140029

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 makes a strong case in their narrative about its declining economy and low area incomes (p1), poverty is the most pressing social issue; coupled with poor attendance and high rates of suspension--even in early grades, low graduation rates (less than 50%), poor standardized test scores (40% below state levels), and a 59% increase in languages spoken. (p2) High-risk, low-income students at two schools will be served; 79% of students receive free- and reduced-price lunches. (Abstract) The district has 44 of 57 schools failing from which the applicant designates two schools--Southside Elementary and South Park High School to receive FSCS services, based on these schools' very high needs. These schools have numerous problems they are addressing that include: low student achievement on state standardized assessments; an increase of refugees, low student achievement in academic areas, and high levels of student behavior risks such as depression. Services will benefit 1,200 Pre-K-8 students; 800 high school students; and 400+ family/community members. (Abstract)

Seven of the 12 qualified services will be provided at each school with FSCS funding: high-quality early learning, remedial education, family engagement, mentoring/youth development, assistance to absent students; social services programs and family financial stability programs, and mental health services. (Abstract) Each of the services and how partners will be involved in their delivery are detailed and relevant to the identified needs. (p5-12)

The presence of an ongoing consortium that includes United Way, school district, Catholic Charities, the county and BOCES, and a national group, Say Yes to Education (p2), has been in operation for ten years and is currently managing a FSCS grant. Given the experience, and success (p3, 4), of this collaborative group, the likelihood that activities will continue beyond the end of the grant period is high. Additionally, the district has implemented a 'Closing the Gap' strategy in 14 of its schools and will continue rolling out this model through this grant; this indicates that the proposed project will build on similar efforts to improve relevant outcomes. Support and funding from Say Yes to Education and the local United Way will augment local Promise Zone efforts, as well as county and school district funds that are already going to support the project's outcomes. (p14-15) These funds cover staff, assessments, scholarships and health services, all of which will provide a sustainable web of support for the students and families.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 25

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:

Each named partner has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (Attachments, p18); partners' commitment of services and staffing is highlighted (p18-20) and directly correlated to the named services to be provided, and verified in letters of support. With extensive grant management experience, managing the previous Department of Education FSCS grant for \$2.5 million, the local United Way will continue to serve as the fiduciary manager. (p16) Brief descriptions of board and staff, with time commitments and relevant financial policies discussed are appropriate to successful implementation.

Partners will contribute matching funds for personnel and supply at nearly a 1:1 ratio with federal funds, totaling \$233,782 in Year 1, and with a commitment to continue over the life of the grant. (p17) Partners Say Yes to Education and the South Buffalo Promise Zone are to contribute personnel and college scholarships that are key to supporting the desired outcomes of student/family participation in learning and meeting family basic needs.

The project will serve all of the student body--2,400 students--at two low-performing schools at a cost of nearly \$500,000 annually for five years. (p2) At \$200 per student, with additional family

members to be served, and with the significant partner resources that have been committed to the project outcomes, these costs are reasonable.

Weaknesses:

As many of the services take place after school or in private counseling sessions, the application would have been strengthened if the specific facilities that would be available to provide these programs were identified. (p16)

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 management plan describes the planning and coordination of eligible services. An ongoing leadership team consisting of partners and school officials meets quarterly to provide oversight; members include the two school principals, district and partner personnel, and county mental health and social services representatives will provide support for the project's implementation.

(p21) School-based teams meet monthly (p22) and weekly to discuss services.

The leadership team and partners will build on their 10-year history of implementing full-service community schools to integrate evidence-based services in the two target schools. (Abstract) As the consortium leadership was involved in creating the district's current strategic plan, the FSCS project goals will be well-integrated to overall operations. (p20)

At each school, a full-time Site Coordinator will coordinate a provider team in partnership with the principal. (p22) The key project personnel at United Way, the fiscal agent, and their qualifications are well-detailed, including operating similar programs and youth-serving collaborations. (p23-24)

Overall, many appropriate personnel are engaged in project implementation, and their qualifications and involvement are generally discussed. Planning and coordination for FSCS-CTG expansion at Southside and SPHS will be provided collaboratively by the Program Director of Education at United Way and the Catholic Charities Site Coordinator Supervisor. (p23) The two site coordinators are to be full-time (p22).

Weaknesses:

The management structure is unclear. The supervision of the school site coordinators will be shared by two partner agencies (p24, by the Program Director of Education at United Way and the Catholic Charities Site Coordinator Supervisor); their time commitments and methods of coordination, supervision and oversight are not specified in the narrative. (p23, 24-25)

The application would have been strengthened if the role of the principal was defined more clearly by specifically addressing the coordination with the school site coordinators, (p22). There needs to be a clear organizational structure explaining the decision-making authority, methods of staff interaction and program coordination. Additionally, the narrative does not describe, as required, the role of parent or community member input to the planning, coordination, leadership or program design, or as members of the leadership. (p21)

The relevant training and experience of the to-be-hired FSCS coordinator at the elementary school is not described. (p25)

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 22

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 project model is structured on scientifically based research, including state Common Core standards and integrated services, and has been recognized nationally by the Department of Education, the Coalition for Community Schools, United Way Worldwide, and New York State Department of Education. (p27) The narrative cites a research study (p27) indicating that, in accordance with its project design, social-emotional and basic needs support must be intertwined with learning goals to attain strong academic achievement.

The likelihood that the services of the proposed project will lead to improvements in student achievement is significant, as they are based on cited studies and models. The proposed services' theory and methods are outlined (p28-32) and use evidence-based practices (out-of-school and mentoring support, p30), related interventions (young children's conduct, p29), and best practices of service integration (mental health and school-based, p31-32).

Weaknesses:

None 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:

An external evaluator will assess performance measures including process and outcome measures aligned with the stated goals and outcomes. (p32) Each of three goals is supported (p28) by two or more relevant, measurable outcomes. Goals are to: improve school culture and positive interactions between children and adults, improve academic achievement, and increase family and student engagement (p1, 28, 33-25) Outcomes include: improved attendance, grade-point averages, and performance on standardized assessments; student/family participation in learning (home and school environments); fulfillment of families' basic needs; and decreased school disciplinary incidents. (Abstract, p33-35)

Measures will be taken annually, indicated as the month of end-of-school evaluation measures, or as trainings occur. (p33-35) Annual outcomes for each of the goals are indicated. Several of the outcomes will be monitored monthly, which will provide timely and valid information on the project.

The external evaluator will meet with the leadership team monthly (p35) to review data, progress toward outcomes, and recommendations. These meetings will also review lessons learned and indicate possible replicable activities.

Weaknesses:

The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance on or strategies for replicating the project, or provide results from testing the project intervention in the multiple settings of the two schools, is not specified. (p35)

The application would have been strengthened by identifying performance data that would indicate continuous improvement. There is a lack of documentation of baseline data from which to measure improvements. The link between valid and reliable performance data and the identified goals is not always made. For example, the measurements of participation and surveys for Goal 3 will not provide sufficient information to indicate if family and student engagement has actually increased. (p34-35) There isn't a clear picture of how the coordination of data across partners and their multiple systems will be implemented for this project.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 8

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

Not applicable. Although the project will serve a high-poverty community of a locally-designated South Buffalo Promise Zone in Buffalo, NY, this is not a federally designated Promise Zone.

Weaknesses

None noted.

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 - 12

Applicant Name UNITED WAY OF BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY **PR/Award No** U215J140029

Questions

	Points Possible	Points Scored
1. Selection Criteria		
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Management Plan	25	22
Project Services	20	20
Project Evaluation	10	9
TOTAL	100	96

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	96

Technical Review Form

Applicant Name UNITED WAY OF BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY **PR/Award No** U215J140029

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, student' 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 proposal presents a detailed accounting of the population it intends to serve in two target schools: Southside, a Focus School and SPHS a Priority School (page 3). The estimated number to be served annually at the two Title 1 schools will be 2,600, which includes 1,169 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 8 at Southside; 839 students at SPHS; approximately 400 family members of these students; and 200 community members. Southside is the largest school in the Buffalo City School District and the primary feeder school for SPHS. Southside has been identified as a Focus School and SPHS a Priority School. Both schools are part of the South Buffalo Promise Zone (SBPZ).

The large number of at-risk participants, pre-kindergarten through Grade 12, and family and community members, not only positions the project to reach a numerous population continuum, but also, in terms of the per-participant cost, makes the project relatively cost effective.

The applicant has a history of developing sustainable programming in 14 Buffalo schools based on the successful FSCS-CTG model instituted with the previous FSCS US DOE grant (page 3). Say Yes to Education, a national nonprofit, has made a substantial commitment to community school work in Buffalo and is a FSCS-CTG Leadership partner. With the support of South Buffalo Promise Zone, Say Yes to Buffalo, United Way, and all other FSCS-CTG partners, plans are already underway to sustain current FSCS programs and activities at Southside Elementary and SPHS beyond the grant period.

The applicant proposes to provide 7 of the 12 eligible services. The application indicates which of the partner agencies is positioned to provide each of these services and provides details regarding the extent of those services. For example, the eligible service, “Remedial education aligned with other supports”, will be provided mainly by Western New York United Against Drug & Alcohol Abuse (WNYU) to 10 select at-risk 7th and 8th grade students through a multi-year academic enhancement, social development, and service-learning course provided for five-weeks, six hours per day in the summer (page 7).

The applicant, United Way, is the key fiscal and program agent for BCSD’s community school work. Funding streams that currently support and are expected to continue to support FSCS work being accomplished and planned at Southside and SPHS include funds from United Way generated investment, corporate funding, South Buffalo Promise Zone, Child & Adolescent

Treatment Services, the Volunteer Lawyers Project, Erie County Department of Social Services, and Say Yes to Buffalo.

The applicant demonstrates a well-planned project by indicating its attention to detail. For example, it provides specific participant and timeline information (pages 11-12) about proposed social-emotional development strategies that are designed to increase appropriate behaviors in 20 Southside students annually who have been identified as in danger of suspension or expulsion. The agency will also address behavior issues of 300 Southside students per year in Grades K-2 with its five-session Conflict Resolution program, and the ten-session Too Good for Drugs Program will seek to improve the resiliency, social behaviors, and problem-solving skills of all Southside 7th-8th grade students (230+ each year).

The applicant is commended for the specificity of information presented in relation to this criterion since it reflects positively on its potential attention to detail and ability to accomplish its goals as it implements the program.

No weaknesses noted.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 25

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 Consortium will provide resources not identified in the grant budget by integrating FSCS-

CTG services with existing initiatives at the two schools – for example, annual college scholarships, a full-time Family Support Specialist, after-school programming, and startup and annual funding for a mental health clinic.

Memoranda of Understanding and letters of commitment included with the application demonstrate commitment to expand and enhance the applicant’s full-service community school model. The proposal (pages 18 – 20) specifies the services that each partner provides.

The Buffalo City School District, although not funded through FSCS-CTG, agrees (page 7) to provide the FSCS-CTG Site Coordinators access to school-wide evaluation data, adequate space in the schools, and the full support of central District administration in the coordination of non-academic services on site at the school.

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.

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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

Project oversight will be provided by a Leadership Team which includes representatives from each partner agency, the Commissioners of the Erie County Departments of Mental Health and Social Services, and Principals of participating schools. The Leadership Team meets quarterly to act upon key issues. In addition, the respective boards of the consortium partners provide specific oversight for grant-funded activities and assurances. A full-time FSCS-CTG School Site Coordinator at each school coordinates services.

Site-Based Management Teams (SBMT) comprised of the ELA and Math Committees, the Parent Action Team, and the Student Support Team develop Comprehensive School Education Plans (CSEPs). School-Based Provider Teams comprised of all FSCS-CTG partners, meet monthly to discuss school and program issues, outcomes, and budgets, and also meet informally at least once a week to coordinate services. Overall planning and coordination for FSCS-CTG expansion at Southside and SPSHS will be provided collaboratively by the Program Director of Education at United Way and the Catholic Charities Site Coordinator Supervisor.

Qualifications and relevant training and experience of FSCS partially or fully funded full-time positions are displayed on pages 24 – 26 and in Grant-Funded Personnel resumes on pp. e52+. They document a competent staff appropriately experienced to carry out their responsibilities.

Since the FSCS coordinator and other key project personnel are dedicated full time to the program, it can be reasonably expected that their time commitments are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

WEAKNESS

It is noted that other than site level involvement, no indication of parent or community membership in project oversight leadership teams or comparable roles is provided for.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 22

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

Research cited by the applicant related to eligible service #1, High-Quality Early Learning and Services, show that studies related to the proposed interventions indicate statistically significant, lasting improvements in children's behavior (McNeil, Capage, Bahl, & Blanc, 1999; Schuhmann et al, 1998; McNeil, Eyberg, Eisentadt, Newcomb, & Funderbunk, 1991; Boggs, et al, 2003; Querido & Eyberg, 2003).

The program's history implementing the FSCS-CTG community school model has been recognized nationally by the US Department of Education, the Coalition for Community Schools, United Way Worldwide, and New York State Department of Education (page 27). Therefore, it can be reasonably presumed that the applicant will continue to provide services that will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.

It is noted (p.29) that high-quality early learning experiences will, for the first time, be implemented by FSCS-CTG in a school setting (Southside). Services will link early childhood education and elementary practices, and address extremely challenging and disruptive behaviors.

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 Consortium proposes to report the overall percent of individuals targeted for the various project services who receive services each year, in line with the USDOE performance measure. The application includes a table (pp.33 - 35) that presents performance measures aligned to the project goals and outcomes, Data Sources, and Timelines. This table will serve as the basis for a more detailed evaluation plan to be completed upon project award in collaboration with an external evaluator.

The applicant states that the evaluation will focus on providing highly useable and contextual information to improve the project in an ongoing way. It enlarges upon this statement by explaining that data will be analyzed by program, school, and overall initiative, as appropriate, to test intervention across settings and provide databased recommendations to inform current programming and possible replication of program activities to additional schools in the future.

The evaluator will meet with Consortium members at least monthly. Reports and meetings will include discussions of lessons learned and provide databased recommendations to inform current programming and possible replication of program activities to additional schools in the future.

WEAKNESSES

Lacking is a description of the database collection instrument and, other than a general statement, detail of its relation to potential program sustainability.

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

Applicant did not respond to the CPP.

Weaknesses

Applicant did not respond to the CPP.

Question Status: Completed

Reviewer Score: 0