

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/23/2013 07:47 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130010)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	19
Sub Total	20	19
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Design and Services		
1. Project Design & Service	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Management & Personnel	15	15
Sub Total	40	40
Selection Criteria		
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
Sub Total	40	37
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority 2		
Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)		
1. Improving Efficiency	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Priority 3		
Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math		
1. Promoting STEM	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Total	104	99

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel 3 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130010)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The significance of the proposed project on a national level (as defined in this notice).
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices.
- (3) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Strengths:

The applicants in this proposed project articulate the need for the project based on call to reform teacher preparatory programs. The applicants establish the potential contributions of the proposed project based on their experience with prior product (TAP) and the intellectual merit of that product with inservice teachers. Improving teacher education and teacher effectiveness is one of the most significant part of school reform, this proposed project is significant with the potential to be an effective tool in the preparation of preservice teachers based on the toolkit. The year round residency will be significant in teacher preparation. The stipend will encourage high performing teachers and students to participate. The project has the potential to be a model for other colleges and teacher preparation programs across the nation.

Weaknesses:

There may be some elements of bias in the selection process utilized in this proposed project. The reliance of recommendations from community college teachers, school district personnel, and community organizations may lead to the elimination of highly qualified candidates from the pool. It may be necessary to include an online application process to allow all the candidate with interest to apply.

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Services

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design and services of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design and services of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.
- (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

Strengths:

The applicants clearly establish the goals and outcomes from the proposed project. The use of best practice models as well as research will enable teacher education program at ASU to incorporate these best practices in their effort to prepare highly effective quality teachers for the state and nation failing schools. The proposed rigorous selection and incentive process will ensure the effectiveness of the program in placing effective teachers in high need schools. The applicant establishes a high quality framework for the proposed project (P. 13-17).

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project and of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and the project personnel, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.**
- (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
- (3) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

Strengths:

The applicant establishes a coherent management approach that is necessary for professional development and mentoring with the goal of improving the efficiency of teacher preparation program. The description of roles and activities of project personnel is adequate. The key personnel seem to be highly qualified and experienced in managing projects based on the detailed management plan table. The time committed by project personnel is adequate and the resources are sufficient.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Sustainability

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to continue the proposed project after the grant period ends. In determining the adequacy of resources and the potential for utility of the proposed project's activities and products by other organizations, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations.**
- (3) The extent to which the applicant will disseminate information about results and outcomes of the**

proposed project in ways that will enable others, including the public, to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly establishes how the proposed project will impact the achievement of students across Arizona with the possibility of serving as a model for teacher preparation programs nationally. The proposed product will be disseminated widely through publications and Professional Learning Library for a wider audience. The need assessment at each school has the potential to lead to the development of specialized professional development for individualized schools.

Weaknesses:

The applicants establishes how the products from the project will be disseminated through the Professional Learning Library which is significant, however, the magnitude of this proposed project demands more than that. Also, there are tons of empirical evidence with regards to what works in teacher preparation unlike the statement on P. 55. Quality teacher education programs prepare quality teachers and there are tons of research that includes those of (Darling-Hammond, 2011; Nieto, 2009) on what constitutes quality teacher education programs as well as quality and effective teachers.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.**
- (2) The extent to which the evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.**
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**

Note: We encourage applicants to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/idocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1>; and (2) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/.

Strengths:

The evaluation plan presented in the narrative of the proposed project is very simple. The applicant establishes the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation team with a discussion on aggressive targets with rigorous benchmarks. The evaluation plan described in the narrative is research driven and includes measurable objectives with specific timelines with periodic feedback mechanism. The monthly review of the evaluation plan has the potential to provide the feedback needed to improve the project. The proposed resources is sufficient for the project.

Weaknesses:

Based on the magnitude of the project, there may be a need for an external evaluator.

Reader's Score: 19

Priority Questions

Competitive Priority 2 - Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)

1. This priority funds projects that will identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high-quality services at the State, regional, or local level by making better use of available resources. Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in the notice), or other strategies.

General:

One of the goals of the applicant in this proposed project is to increase the number of highly effective STEM teachers, however, the proposed project is not an innovative one and will not make a contribution to the efficiency in the preparation of teachers.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Priority 3 - Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math

1. This priority funds projects that address one or both of the following priority areas:

(a) Increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

(b) Increasing the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, including minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women, who are teachers of STEM subjects and have increased opportunities for high-quality preparation or professional development.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to measure the impact the proposed project activities have on teacher effectiveness. Applicants must determine teacher effectiveness through a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation in which performance is differentiated using multiple measures of effectiveness and based in significant part on student growth (as defined in this notice).

General:

One of the goals of the applicant in this proposed project is to increase the number of highly effective STEM teachers. The open education resource from this project is significant in preparing effective teachers.

Reader's Score: 3

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130010)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Design and Services		
1. Project Design & Service	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Management & Personnel	15	15
Sub Total	40	40
Selection Criteria		
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	20	16
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
Sub Total	40	36
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority 2		
Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)		
1. Improving Efficiency	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Priority 3		
Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math		
1. Promoting STEM	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Total	104	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel 3 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130010)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The significance of the proposed project on a national level (as defined in this notice).
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices.
- (3) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Strengths:

The applicant provides information about the need for strong educational preparation among educational institutions and references Secretary Duncan's remarks about the "urgent need for high quality teachers to enter the profession." P. 4

The Planting the Seed project is focusing on a partnership with NIET and ASU to establish a model that can be replicated across teacher preparation programs nationally. They identify themselves as reform leaders and see a focus on training, accountability, systems and support as important areas to address in teacher preparation. P.4

The development of a new model of collaborating with colleges of education through the partnership formed in this project would create a new model of preparing teachers and retain them in the profession. p.4

The current model of NIET working with ASU shows the distinction and national recognition already received by both agencies. The TAP program they reference currently works with practicing teachers and working with pre-service teachers will jump-start teachers from the beginning of their practice and socialize them into effective practice. P.5

The TAP program has currently shown itself to be effective and a potential contribution to advancement of teacher practice. The cite the correlation of teacher skills to value-added scores showing the teacher skills in the classroom impact student achievement gains. P.5

Developing a NIET and ASU toolkit to inform and utilize throughout the country will provide valuable research based advancement for teacher education programs and partnerships with school districts.

The responsiveness of the goals for the project increase the likelihood of success. The totals are based on identified needs of the partners (NIET, ASU, partner districts) and the data from the partners around student achievement and teacher attrition. They also include "strategies supported by strong evidence of effectiveness." P.7

The planting the Seed model is using the strategies and processes of Teach for America, a proven model, including a competitive selection process focused on individuals with strong academic backgrounds and leadership capabilities and requirements for entrance and application requirements. Candidates selected through this process are more likely to demonstrate significant improvements in teacher and student achievement. P.7

The project calls for training 214 new math and science teachers and has a large impact on the teaching field with the potential to impact over 180,000 middle and high school students. P.8

Use of a professional development school model is powerful as it partners universities and school districts bringing about reciprocal professional development and a shared commitment among the partners. Research based and tied to the NCATE model, both university instructors and teaching staff have the potential for continuous improvement. p.8

The project has a process in place to ensure fidelity to the model through the iTeachAZ Site Review Protocol process where key components of the model will be monitored. The project gives comprehensive process for monitoring professional development sessions, coaching of teacher candidates, and use of the TAP rubric. P.9

The project addresses teacher retention through an induction model that provides support to new teachers in high-needs school districts. P.10

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses seen.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Services

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design and services of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design and services of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.**
- (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**

Strengths:

Goals are clearly stated and show strong promise to reach the desired outcomes. Specific details, measurement of progress and clear alignment of the goals to the project are strong. Additionally, thorough charts are included to show how the project will be assessed and a clear timeline. Appendix D, p. 12 – 50.

The merit-based stipend is an innovative practice and is well-thought out. Providing support to participants as they commit to a longer term required training processes recognizes the issues that are identified by researchers as roadblocks to diverse candidates entering the field. P.14

The project partnerships are designed to give candidates more opportunities for focused field experience, and feedback to increase their knowledge and range of instruction, assessment, and classroom management models. P. 15

The applicant has used research based strategies from experts in the field such as Darling-Hammond, Levine, and others. They show a diligence in researching best practices in their approach to improving student teachers' effectiveness, retention support, and effective professional development models and partnerships. P. 14-15

The project proposes to increase by 3 times the amount of clinical time in comparison to traditional teacher preparation models. The inclusion of a stipend is an incentive for teacher candidates to both apply and remain in this enriched program. P. 17

The applicant is implementing an evaluation model for teacher preparation that prepares teachers for working with children in high-needs [populations. They propose looking at the data around Value Added (VA) measures to determine

the teachers' impact on student achievement and long term outcomes. The applicant gives ample research about the effectiveness of the TAP evaluation process and the focus on helping teachers improve instruction. The replacement of teachers who are not effective with a low VA score is a powerful practice in support of student success. P.18

The proposed model is strong in that there is an expectation for all candidates to be proficient in the identified teacher skills. If they are not proficient, a plan is drawn up and more training occurs. Ultimately, lack of progress will lead to dismissal from the program. P.19

The project is developing a process through which to identify cooperating teachers, moving away from the common volunteer approach, and moving to the master teacher model with training on how the project and student teaching experience will occur. Creating a strong student teaching experience must include recognition of the cooperating teacher as effective. P.22

The Planting the Seed project is building on the current work developed by the partnership of NIET and ASU. Building on work of the past three years to improve educational outcomes, the partnership has targeted 60 high-needs, low-performing schools. Adding the teacher preparation focus to the current support. Additionally, it adds the writing and STEM components to address identified areas of focus for the grant. P. 46

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses seen.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project and of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and the project personnel, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.**
- (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
- (3) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

Strengths:

The Planting the Seed project has identified and will use highly skilled educational researchers and administrators to manage the plan. The chart on p. 51 identifies the experiences and current roles of the managers as well as the time they will allocate to oversee and participate in the project. P.51

The management plan on p. e259 is thorough and matches the goals with the processes and the outputs. There is clear identification of the responsible parties and measures to be used. The timeline is clear and the plan gives a clear picture of how the grant will unfold during the duration of the project.

The application provides through rubrics, application processes, interview guides, assessment forms, and meeting process forms. The project is well thought out and there are tools and forms developed to support implementation of this project by the numerous parties involved. Well done!

There is adequate staff and time allocated to complete the project. It is clear how staff are allocated to accomplish the goals and meet the timelines of the project.

This is a complex and comprehensive project requiring substantive resources. The magnitude of the project is reflected in the budget allocations. Allocations and narrative show clear intention and ability to carry out the proposed project.

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Sustainability

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to continue the proposed project after the grant period ends. In determining the adequacy of resources and the potential for utility of the proposed project's activities and products by other organizations, the Secretary considers:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations.

(3) The extent to which the applicant will disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project in ways that will enable others, including the public, to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant project identifies that the benefit of this project will carry on through the partnership established. Specifically, the teachers in AZ schools who mentor and learn with teacher candidates will have their practice impacted and improve their instructional strategies and methodology. P.54

The applicant identifies the grant will extend beyond the funding period through by addressing a gap in the literature on teacher education programs and how to improve them. Examining their collection, analysis and reporting data will provide high-quality information to address program improvement and will inform the field nationally. P.54

The teachers college at ASU is the largest preparer of new teachers in AZ and one of the largest prepares in the nation. The results will inform restructuring of the Teachers College coursework and training around the Common Core Standards and TAP instructional rubric will impact teacher candidates who were not selected to be in the project, expanding the impact. P. 55

The applicants identify the development of teacher leaders in the Planting the Seed project will provide for leaders to deliver professional development on their own, after the grant funding is over. To support this effort, designers will conduct needs assessment in each school and create professional development plans to support the unique needs of each school, and support sustainability in each school. P.56

Materials will be developed and shared including training materials, handbooks, summaries of program specifics and training modules. These materials will be available to other partnerships or agencies who wish to reform teacher preparation programs. A summary will be written at the end of the project detailing the results. P. 57

Dissemination will occur through national conferences and professional learning libraries. P.69

Weaknesses:

The dissemination plan could be strengthened by writing results and including them in the AERA journals and conference, where teacher education programs present cutting edge research. Additionally, sharing results in the STEM subject area journals will allow a broader audience to access important information and results. The dissemination plan seems limited and not of the magnitude required for a project with such potential. The ASU Professional Learning Library seems to target the Arizona population. While the source may be available to a broad audience, this reviewer questions the awareness of the field of the availability of the resource. There was no plan to advertise access to the information.

Reader's Score: 16

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.**
- (2) The extent to which the evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.**
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**

Note: We encourage applicants to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/iddocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1>; and (2) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a complete evaluation plan that shows targets and benchmarks. The evaluation model is thorough, feasible and matches the goals, objectives and outcomes of the proposed project. The project uses data to make decisions and improvements in the services. A detailed evaluation plan exists with specifics about the actions and timeline to gather and report data. Appendix D, p. 58

The evaluation plan is shown in a clear and detailed chart in Appendix D. This chart identifies the type of measure, the frequency of data collection, the analysis method, and how the data will be used to monitor progress and provide accountability information. There is a good mix of qualitative and quantitative methods to capture a thorough picture of the results. p.165-185

The organization of the evaluation data collection charts is grouped by objectives which will allow evaluators and project managers the ability to check progress periodically throughout the funding period. This ability to assess and modify as needed is essential in assuring goals are met. P.59

The plan is sufficiently resourced to carry out the project evaluation with staff provided in the budget for the Arizona State University CREST and the partnering schools. The project provides for a director of research, a full-time research associate, the CREST director, and two ASU graduate students. P. 60

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses seen.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Priority 2 - Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)

- 1. This priority funds projects that will identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high-quality services at the State, regional, or local level by making better use of available resources. Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in the notice), or other strategies.**

General:

Strengths:

The project identifies open educational resources as a tool to reach more participants through technology. The Open educational resources will be available to participants during the project and into their teaching career. The project also states that the open educational resources will be available at a national level to promote information sharing and collaboration. p.11

Weaknesses: No weaknesses seen.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Priority 3 - Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math

- 1. This priority funds projects that address one or both of the following priority areas:**

(a) Increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

(b) Increasing the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, including minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women, who are teachers of STEM subjects and have increased opportunities for high-quality preparation or professional development.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to measure the impact the proposed project activities have on teacher effectiveness. Applicants must determine teacher effectiveness through a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation in which performance is differentiated using multiple measures of effectiveness and based in significant part on student growth (as defined in this notice).

General:

Strengths:

This project requires all teacher preparation candidates to become licensed to teach a STEM subject. They identify 214 new math and science teachers which will impact over 180,000 students in the first five years. Their goal is to increase the number of STEM teachers from 5% to 30% to serve at-risk populations. P. 8

The applicant has developed teacher evaluation measures to be used throughout the project that will provide frequent feedback on performance and the ability to increase professional development opportunities when issues arise. P.18

The provision of a stipend to teachers selected in this process will provide a pathway to underserved populations to enter into the teaching profession with support and powerful instruction. P.14

The TAP protocol that has been identified and used previously in partnership with ASU has provided value-added information that they have correlated with student achievement results. p. 5

Weaknesses:
None

Reader's Score: **3**

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/24/2013 12:10 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130010)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Design and Services		
1. Project Design & Service	25	24
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Management & Personnel	15	15
Sub Total	40	39
Selection Criteria		
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	20	19
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
Sub Total	40	38
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority 2		
Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)		
1. Improving Efficiency	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Priority 3		
Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math		
1. Promoting STEM	3	3
Sub Total	3	3
Total	104	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel 3 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130010)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The significance of the proposed project on a national level (as defined in this notice).
- (2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices.
- (3) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Strengths:

The applicant proposes to address issues of pressing national significance – recruitment and financial support to increase underrepresented candidates in STEM teaching in schools with high concentrations of high-need students, increasing the number of highly effective new STEM teachers serving in high need schools, providing induction support to these STEM teachers during their first year, providing inservice teacher development in Common Core Writing Standards, and implementing innovative and sustainable uses of technology and open educational resources. The applicant intends to operate at scale, working in 21 school districts across Arizona. The proposed project would adapt the applicant's teacher assessment system ("TAP") that has been used to assess and incentivize inservice teacher performance, to strengthen preservice preparation.

The project's activities would occur in the context of a comprehensive reform model whose key elements are teacher evaluation, multiple career paths, ongoing applied professional development and performance-based compensation. The applicant proposes to apply the Teach For America's (TFA) approach to recruitment and rigorous selection of educators to the recruitment of preservice educators; redesign a course on "Teaching as Leadership", utilize stipends for undergraduate and graduate teacher residencies to offset the lost income highly qualified candidates otherwise would be earning, and leverage Arizona State University's model of professional development school (PDS) partnerships which are intended to align with NCATE's national PDS standards. They propose to engage their candidates in "three times the amount of clinical time compared to traditional [preservice program] models". As the applicant notes, this two-semester student teaching model is supported by research on teacher education. Placement of candidates in cohorts has significant benefits, in addition to those cited by the applicant, such as benefiting inservice educators in ways that increase the likelihood they will want to sustain the PDS relationship and thereby sustain the project after grant funding expires.

The applicant intends to use the "iTeachAZ site review protocol" to assess for fidelity of implementation of its teacher residency model at all of the project's senior-year residency sites, using an solid mix of data sources (including observation, interviews, and analysis of site coordinator's use of data to inform preservice teachers' mentoring and pedagogy). The applicant also proposes to focus its first-year induction support for their cohorts of educators, focusing, intriguingly, on helping them regulate their emotions to improve their pedagogy and student achievement.

Of the proposal's several strengths in terms of significance perhaps the greatest is its emphasis on using the TAP protocol to assess for candidate proficiency in ways that have been found to correlate positively and significantly with student achievement. Candidates who cannot demonstrate proficiency using this protocol are dismissed from the program.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Services

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design and services of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design and services of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, aligned, and measurable.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.**
- (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project will be of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.**

Strengths:

The project design is thorough and highly detailed, with regard to numerous key matters as the means by which promising candidates are recruited, the application of the TFA model of selecting educators in the project's admission of highly qualified candidates into the preparation program, use of a substantial stipend to incentivize enrollment by highly qualified applicants who because of the intensive year-long residency would be forgoing income in order to participate in this intensive clinical program, the plan to provide the year-long teacher residency to substantially increase clinical experience (and, notably, provide more opportunities for rigorous evaluation of their effectiveness), use of the TAP protocol four times during the residency year to assess for their teaching effectiveness, placement of cohorts of candidates in schools that have entered into a professional development school relationship with the university, eight unannounced walk-throughs per teacher candidate per year in addition to the four formal TAP assessments each year, the biweekly evaluation of a candidate's progress by the cooperating educator, and a newly designed preservice course on the "disconnect between theory and practice".

The design calls for such noteworthy details as how the abovementioned preservice course will assess candidates, half in terms of their performance on the TAP assessments, and half on instructional units the candidates design using the EQUiP Rubric. These are important details for a project to have fleshed out in sufficient detail that they can be implemented with fidelity. It is commendable that the applicant has laid out these details so that the reader can assess them. Another noteworthy example – a facet of preparation programs often inadequately addressed is the means and criteria by which cooperating educators are recruited, selected and supported. Also, the applicant plans to utilize a validated emotional intelligence assessment in its support for first-year teachers, helping them manage their own emotions in order to better manage their classrooms and provide high quality instruction. As with each of the other project design elements above, the applicant notes the research underscoring the need for that design element, any evidence of the efficacy of the approach they propose to implement for that design element, along with operational details concerning how they plan to implement that element.

As noted earlier, the project design takes place in the context of a very thoughtful and detailed comprehensive school reform model that integrates the principals and practices of PDS partnerships. In addition, as the applicant states, the TAP itself is a comprehensive reform model, as discussed above.

Finally, the intensity, duration and quality of the professional development in the design are aligned with best practices – e.g., the year-long residency, intensive ongoing clinical supervision, frequent evaluation and feedback, and sustained emphasis on helping candidates to apply skills and concepts from their preservice education in classroom practice during their residency.

Weaknesses:

The technology aspect appears to be the least well-developed of the overall project design (see also appendix G). The ASU open educational resource portal is very new (March 2013) and it is unclear whether this will become a resource even distantly comparable to several major, already well-established OER portals. It is, meanwhile, unclear whether and in what ways the iTeachAZ Data Dashboard is a simple or an extensive expansion of the commercial TK20 software on which it is based. The portal of video and other professional development and instructional resources looks promising but, again, does not appear to be highly developed yet or comparable to other already established sites.

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project and of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and the project personnel, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.**
- (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
- (3) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

Strengths:

The management team members are well qualified substantively and in terms of their experience in managing projects of this complexity and scale. The management plan has allocated reasonable time commitments for key personnel, commensurate with their respective duties, which are all thoroughly detailed and consistent across all portions of the proposal, from the significance and project design narrative sections to the management time chart (Appendix I). For example, the applicant has wisely chosen to allocate substantial time to the project (80%) for the well-qualified project director.

The management plan addresses how the project will collect and utilize data for formative project evaluation and program improvement, and the timeframes by which project milestones are to be completed, and, significantly calls for leveraging university resource commitments – which bodes well both for project completion as well as sustainability and institutional commitment to project success.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Sustainability

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources to continue the proposed project after the grant period ends. In determining the adequacy of resources and the potential for utility of the proposed project's activities and products by other organizations, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings and products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that may be used by other agencies and organizations.**
- (3) The extent to which the applicant will disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project in ways that will enable others, including the public, to use the information or strategies.**

Strengths:

As the applicant notes, the project is design to build local capacity – in terms of growing the number of highly effective STEM teachers, developing inservice teachers’ skills in teaching writing across the curriculum, growing cadres of cooperating educators skilled in mentoring inservice as well as preservice educators, putting in place new norms of identifying each school’s professional development priorities then engaging the university as a partner in helping design and deliver ongoing embedded staff development.

The project shows considerable promise to contribute to research understanding about ways to strengthen preparation programs including making candidate selection more rigorous, and making the evaluation of candidates before they are either dismissed or recommended for state certification much more rigorous.

The applicant provides evidence that it is likely that the project will build the University’s capacity (see p. 55), such as by strengthening coursework and faculty development on modeling the common Core Standards and utilizing the TAP instructional rubric.

The project will build capacity for the each school/University partnership through a shared governance committee that will meet in person on a quarterly basis.

Plans for national dissemination appear sufficient, with presentations, its own TAP conference, and its currently fledgling Professional Learning Library.

Weaknesses:

The sustainability narrative would have been strengthened with more details about the extent to which each of the partnership schools does or does not embody NCATE’s national PDS standards or, in some other way, plans to bring the same wonderfully empirical data-driven approach to assessing and strengthening the PDS aspects of the partnerships as it does to virtually every other dimension of the project. This is particularly important to enable the reader to fully assess whether and how well the applicant will be able to institutionalize the project upon completion of grant funding. Several (accountability and quality assurance, collaboration and structures) but not all (learning community and structures, resources and roles in the partnership) of the national PDS standards are explicitly addressed in the project design and management plan Given the central role PDS partnership plays in the project and the fairly constant nurturing they require to endure the vicissitudes of changing economic circumstances, school board elections, new school and district administrators with their own philosophies and priorities, explicitly assessing and addressing “PDS-ness” will play an important role in project sustainability. The project is likely to require constant “care and feeding” of the partnership relationships and local participants’ continuously evolving commitment to the project goals during and upon completion of the project. (No points were taken off for this concern.)

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:**

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.**

(2) The extent to which the evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Note: We encourage applicants to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/idocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1>; and (2) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/.

Strengths:

As the applicant notes, the evaluation plan is sufficiently resourced. Nearly every aspect of the project design has a metric or other specific benchmark, with associated rubrics, milestones and role responsibility assignments set out in the management plan. The proposal espouses and embodies data-driven decision making at nearly every turn.

The evaluation procedures are detailed and enable concluding that they are fully aligned with the project's goals, objectives and outcomes. Numerous objective performance measures are identified – e.g., for the iTeachAZ site review, course observation TAP rubric, governance meeting planning worksheets, and case study checklist.

The evaluation plan table lays out with exceptional detail and clarity monthly, semester, and annual benchmarks for gathering and using quantitative and qualitative data, from which data sources, and laying out how the data will be used to formatively monitor progress and provide accountability information.

Weaknesses:

The project could have been strengthened through reliance on an external evaluator to conduct the project's formative and summative evaluation. Ordinarily, this would diminish the assessment of the proposal's evaluation plan but, because so many mission critical elements of a state-of-the-art evaluation design are laid out in clear detail, this represents a manageable concern. It is not a requirement of the program to engage an external evaluator, but remains a concern.

Reader's Score: 19

Priority Questions

Competitive Priority 2 - Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)

- 1. This priority funds projects that will identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high-quality services at the State, regional, or local level by making better use of available resources. Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in the notice), or other strategies.**

General:

STRENGTHS: None

WEAKNESSES: The project proposes to use technology to enhance efficiency, but it is not evident how the project would substantially increase the use of technology over either what is currently being deployed at the university or what is being used elsewhere for open educational resources, data driven decision making systems and portals to share effective

practices and digital resources (e.g., classroom practice videos and unit plans).

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Priority 3 - Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math

1. This priority funds projects that address one or both of the following priority areas:

(a) Increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

(b) Increasing the number of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM, including minorities, individuals with disabilities, and women, who are teachers of STEM subjects and have increased opportunities for high-quality preparation or professional development.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to measure the impact the proposed project activities have on teacher effectiveness. Applicants must determine teacher effectiveness through a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation in which performance is differentiated using multiple measures of effectiveness and based in significant part on student growth (as defined in this notice).

General:

The applicant's details concerning recruitment, selection, development, clinical experience and supervision, and induction support hold significant promise for producing, placing and retaining highly effective STEM teachers. In addition, the plan to employ rigorous assessment of candidate's classroom effectiveness prior to either recommending the candidate for certification, or remediating and, if necessary, dismissing the candidate is a potentially important contribution to our understanding about ways to ensure highly effective teachers fill critical shortage teaching positions in STEM.

WEAKNESSES: None

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

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