

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130024)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	18
Sub Total	20	18
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Design and Services		
1. Project Design & Service	25	23
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Management & Personnel	15	12
Sub Total	40	35
Selection Criteria		
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	20	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	16
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	1
Sub Total	3	1
Total	104	91

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel 7 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130024)

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 defines the proposed project as a Pilot across the state of Texas but indicates that the benefit of the model is suited to implementations in settings across the urban and rural spectrum. It appears that this project with its focus on staff development could be replicated in most schools and in most areas that have access to high institutions of learning to provide for the partnership that is proposed. (Paged e20-e21)

The applicant clearly defines the contributions that will be made by the project to promote the advancement of teacher theory, knowledge and practices. This contributions include both the articulation of a technology-enabled, competency-based approach to educator preparation and researched-based refinement and technology-enabled expansion of the TAP model. (Pages e21-e25) These efforts are focused on taking both teacher training and traditional learning approaches into the 21st Century School movement. The applicant proposes a unique approach to both training that is provided at the institutes of higher learning as well as a refinement of a teaching model.

The applicant indicates that the pilot program will include a partnership with students of high need. This is supported by the chart on page e17 as well as the letters of support from the school administrators in the partnership.

The applicant uses research to support the need to address the improvement of the TAP model. This research indicates that schools that implemented the TAP system with higher fidelity more significantly outperformed comparison. One of the major components of this project is to improve the fidelity of implementation through the use of technology-enabled competency-based reforms. (Page e28-e30)

Weaknesses:

The significance of this project may be somewhat limited as it is heavily involved with the TAP model program. The applicant does not define clearly how schools not involved in the model program will benefit from the full impact of the project.

Reader's Score: 18

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 applicant includes in Table 3 three clearly specified goals. Those include addressing a teacher preparation model, advanced certification training, and full-fidelity implementation of the TAP Comprehensive School Reform. (Pages e32-e35)

The objectives that are listed in Table 3 are specific and aligned and measurable. For example, one objective is, "To earn initial certification, teacher candidates meet all course and program requirements, most importantly the demonstration of strong beginning instructional proficiency". This object is then measured by an instructional rubric and a state certification exam. (Page e32)

The applicant defines the role of the TAP system in positively impacting teacher effectiveness and student achievement growth. The applicant supports this success with research that has been collected. This effort supports the extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning.

The applicant's project design includes a comprehensive approach to providing professional development services that are sufficient to lead to improvements. The three goals for the project provide for training for novice and experienced teachers as well as for those in leadership roles. (Pages e41-e43)

The applicant's project design includes the professional development services that appear to be sufficient quality, intensity and duration to lead to improvements in practice. For example, the applicant indicates that use of the Teachscape mini rigs which are used almost daily will provide imbedded professional development for the teacher candidates and teachers in the targeted classrooms. (Pages e46-e47)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide as part of the project design and services an element that directly, clearly addresses the support for rigorous academic standards for students.

Although the applicant does outline the goals and objectives clearly, the outcomes are not clearly identified. For example the items in Table 3, the goals and objectives are listed, but the outcomes are not identified. (Pages e32-e35)

Reader's Score: 23

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:

In the narrative and the resume in the appendix the applicant provides support for the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. The training and experience of the Executive Project Director for TAP School Partnerships in the TAP Connect National Pilot, has extensive experience in the TAP system and supportive research experience as well. The other key personnel also have excellent experiences and training is supported by the resumes. (Resumes and Pages e48-e49).

The applicant includes in the Work Plan the activities, milestones, timeline and persons responsible. This work plan addresses each of the goals of the project. These time lines appear to be realistic in the approach to accomplish the project tasks. For example the activity outlined as "Meet with TAP School Leaders to collaboratively determine the outcome goals for the advanced certification programs" will be addressed by key personnel during the first semester of the project. (Page e52)

The applicant includes in the Budget Narrative and the Management Plan, support for sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project. For example, the travel budget appears to be both sufficient and reasonable and is clearly defined in the Budget Narrative. This Plan and Budget includes funding for an internal evaluation team. (Budget Narrative and Page e55)

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant includes in Table 6 the commitments of Project Directors and Key Personnel and includes the number of days in the week that the key personnel will be working on this project, there is not adequate support for the rationale for that allotment of time and how that time will be separated from other TAP duties. (Pages e48-e49 and e54)

Reader's Score: 12

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 defines the current trend of schools that have implemented the TAP system continue to do so when funding is no longer available. The applicant indicates that this may be true for the Pilot program as well. (Page e55) The applicant also indicates that the technology purchased through the TAP Connect National Pilot will remain in the schools. (Page e56) These capacity building efforts indicate that the proposed project should have some sustainability after the grant period ends.

The applicant includes in the support for providing sustainability the extensive research results that will be available. Since the applicant's plan includes several research options such as Pay-for-Performance plus technology-enabled competency-based shaping or technology-enabled competency-based without Pay-for-Performance, the outcomes of the research data would be available for many other school districts and college and universities to explore. (pages e56-e57)

The applicant provides a clear and comprehensive plan for disseminating information about the results and outcomes. These include media outlets as well as conferences. (Pages e57-e58)

Weaknesses:

There were no identified weaknesses in this area.

Reader's Score: 20

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 applicant includes methods of evaluation that are thorough, feasible and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. For example, Research question four, "How have TTU-Partnering TAP schools affected the academic performance of students" is directly related to the goals and objective and outcomes relating to

student performance. The data collected to respond to that question includes test data and TAP rubric scores which are compared to previous data for a cohort group of students. (Pages e58 and e60-e62)

The applicant clearly defines that the evaluation methods 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. Each of the three goals are addressed by a series of clearly defined impacts questions. For example to evaluate Goal number 1 the research question is "What is the impact of the TTU grow-your-own teacher preparation model on creating a pipeline of TAP-ready teachers?" The sub questions in the area support the general research question. The data gathered when answering these question directly relate to the intended outcomes of the project. (pages e58-e59)

The applicant demonstrates the use of both quantitative and qualitative data as test data, attendance rates, and completion rates as well as Attitudinal Surveys and observational data. The evaluation methods used clearly support the variety of approaches used. (page e62)

The applicant clearly outlines the Program Evaluation in Table 3. This table includes the methods of measurements that will be used and when they will be used. This helps to support the extent to which the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress. An example of performance feedback includes participant instructional performance based on walkthrough and performance assessment Data that is collected to address teacher effectiveness. (Pages e32- e35)

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant provides a general timeline for feedback such as during first semester, the timelines given are not very specific. This makes it difficult to determine the frequency of all of the evaluation methods. For example, the applicant indicates that the TAP school leader's survey will be completed in Year 2 but no specific time is given and it is not clear if that is a one-time evaluation or an annual evaluation process. (Pages e35)

Although the applicant indicates that sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation are included, it is not clearly supported with financial resources. It appears that only one individual is assigned and paid for that work and that is only 1 of that persons time. The applicant does not clearly define why the resources are sufficient to carry out the project evaluation. (Pages e65 and e272).

Reader's Score: 16

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:

The applicant does plan to implement Teachscape as a tool to provide feedback and shape teachers to performance mastery. This model could provide for a cost-effective approach to improvement of teacher effectiveness and be cost-effective in the sites that have that training and access to that tool. (Page e33)

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant indicates that this priority is being addressed; however, does not clearly identify more than one strategy for providing cost-effective, high quality services at the State regional or local level by making better use of available resources.

(Page e 18)

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:

The applicant does indicate that the project will provide teachers with advanced certification training in effective literacy and/or STEM instruction.

(Page e18)

WEAKNESSES:

The applicant does not provide a clear plan to the increase of the number of individuals underrepresented in STEM.

Reader's Score: 1

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130024)

Reader #3: *****

	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	23
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Management & Personnel	15	12
Sub Total	40	35
Selection Criteria		
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	20	19
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
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	2
Sub Total	3	2
Total	104	94

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel 7 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130024)

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:

(1) The applicant has had fourteen years' experience implementing TAP System of Teacher and Student Advancement in over 600 schools and in 19 states which are comprised of urban and rural areas and a wide variety of demographic backgrounds (page 6). The proposed project builds upon the current TAP model. TAP Connect National Pilot blends the successful components of TAP with a technology-enabled, competency-based approach. By collaborating with Texas Tech University and 18 TAP schools across five high-need Texas school districts, the proposed project will impact approximately 750 teachers and instructional leaders and place an additional 90 new teachers through offering initial and advanced certifications. Successful implementation of the proposed project will provide districts with two viable programs to facilitate educator effectiveness. The applicant has a likelihood to scaling the proposed model to a national level if the proposed approach yields similar results as the current model if the costs are more advantageous for districts who are struggling financially.

(2) The applicant clearly addresses the strategies it is currently using for the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership knowledge and practices. Teachers are still being trained in the traditional teaching models and are not advancing the level of student performance. The applicant's competency-based training has yielded positive results on student achievement and teacher performance and retention. The proposed project seeks to advance theory and practice of teacher and leadership by modifying its current TAP system which is based on four areas: enhancement of teacher performance, teacher job satisfaction, recruitment, and retention and student achievement. The TAP Connect project will use Teachscape video sharing technology to enable constant observation and the development of performance competencies. If this plan is successful, it can serve as a model for the reform efforts in education.

(3) The proposed project has the likelihood to have produce outcomes that could have a substantial impact on improvements in teaching. The applicant has provided summaries of research completed by various groups over the past ten years which attest to the program's effectiveness in educator development and student performance if implemented with fidelity. The applicant seeks to build upon its success by determining to what degree the use of technology-enabled competency-based reforms affect teacher practice and its connection to student achievement. In addition, the applicant seeks to provide information on the impact of its professional development and program without using the performance pay bonuses. By determining that the program is effective without the performance pay, the applicant will further prove that the competency based preparation given to pre-service and current teachers is the most important factor in increasing student growth.

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses noted.
- (2) No weaknesses noted.
- (3) No weaknesses noted.

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:

- (1) The applicant has determined three clear goals to be achieved by the end of the grant period. The project's three clearly articulated goals include: creating a pipeline of effective "TAP ready" new teachers; providing advanced certifications for existing TAP school teachers; and ensuring the fidelity of the program by infusing the use of technology-enabled, ongoing competency-based feedback. The objectives and evaluation measures are aligned with the goals.
- (2) The proposed project is clearly a part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support of rigorous academic standards for students. The current TAP program uses competency-based training to yield positive results on student achievement and teacher performance. The TAP Connection National Pilot incorporates the video sharing technology with the TAP model to provide feedback on instruction by master teachers and mentors. The applicant will investigate the issues of program fidelity and the effect of the presence or absence of pay-for-performance compensation on TAP Schools in order to increase teacher performance and student achievement (page 22). The results from these investigations can provide insight into education reform strategies.
- (3) The applicant clearly outlines the training and professional development services to be provided to teacher candidates and current teachers. Teacher candidate participants will be chosen based on their performance on content-area exams, Haberman dispositional assessment and interviews by TAP school teachers and leaders (page 25). Teacher candidates will have clinical placements in partner TAP schools and participate in a year-long residency using the Teachscape video capture rigs. Teachers and school leaders will participate in a rigorous process to earn the advanced certification. Participating TAP school teachers, teacher leaders and principals must demonstrate observation based, rubric-scored proficiency and student impact in the certification discipline using Teachscape and school outcome data. The applicant will be able to earn advanced certification in: Language/Literacy, STEM, Teacher Leadership, or Principal Leadership (page 26). Teachers and principals must participate in five competency-based courses to earn advanced certification. The Teacher Leadership Certification and Principal Leadership Certification will consist of masters-level courses and doctoral level courses respectively (page 28).

Weaknesses:

- (1) The applicant does not explicitly state the objectives or outcomes for each goal in measurable terms. For example, Goal #3 includes giving TAP school leaders the option of advanced certification. The applicant does not address how many educators will go through the process to earn advanced certification or what percentage earning the advanced

certification constitutes success (page 20).

(2) No weaknesses noted.

(3) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 23

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:

(1) The applicant clearly provides a description of appropriate staff assigned to the project. Key personnel identified to work on the project will include two Principal Investigators, Project Manager, Program Evaluator, Co- Evaluator Executive Project Director for TAP School Partnerships, and Director of Teacher Education (pages 34-35). Personnel identified for this project are highly qualified and experienced in the areas related to the project design as evidenced on pages 36-40 and their resumes in Appendix F.

(2) The applicant provides a chart which outlines a management plan including the project goals objectives, milestones, persons responsible for accomplishing project tasks and guiding the project and the timeframe for completion (page 37-39). The applicant and its university partner share vital management roles which illustrates strong collaboration.

(3) The applicant provides a partial listing of appropriate roles, responsibilities, and time commitments for staff working on the project (pages 34-35 and 37-39). For example, the project manager will commit 50% of her time to the project and is responsible for establishing the four implementation conditions for TAP Schools in the TAP Connect National Pilot.

(4) The resources for the proposed management plan are adequately outlined. The applicant has justified spending related to personnel, travel, supplies, contractual licensing, and project management.

Weaknesses:

(1) No weaknesses noted.

(2) The milestones listed consist of mostly assurances and very few deliverables are listed. The proposal does not clearly illustrate the duties of all key personnel listed in the management plan. Upon further reading, there are more duties listed in the time commitments and the budget.

(3) The applicant does not provide mention the need for the following personnel in the management plan: SEED Project Director, Grant Manager, Senior Program Specialist, Senior Research Associate, and Support Services Specialist. A brief explanation of their responsibilities is written in the budget but the qualifications necessary for these positions are not provided.

(4) Personnel cost account for 50% of the total budget. The costs associated with personnel needs clarification. The applicant lists the qualifications and time commitments of the Principal Investigators, Project Manager, Program Evaluator, Co- Evaluator Executive Project Director for TAP School Partnerships, and Director of Teacher Education in the management plan. However the personnel listed in the budget are different and are not mentioned in the management plan.

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:

(1) The applicant has demonstrated that some of the TAP schools that have been trained and implement the TAP program are able to do so with fidelity even without providing performance base pay which reduces the cost to stakeholders. The TAP schools will continue to use trained master and mentor teachers to provide on-going coaching and professional development to yield results. The technology provided by the TAP Connect National Pilot will remain in the schools and TTU will continue to provide pre-service teacher candidates with video "rigs" (page 42). At the end of the pilot, the subject-area professional development and TAP school leadership training will become a fee-for service model. The costs associated with equipment needed for each teacher is under \$1200. It is likely that the schools may be able to absorb the costs of equipment needed for teachers who may be hired at a later date.

(2) The proposed project's effectiveness could possibly provide meaningful findings that could be used by other agencies. The analysis of data could indicate whether the use of the technology-enabled, competency-based model or pay-for-performance model will provide more significant improvements to the TAP System. If the TAP Connect model demonstrates to be just as effective as the pay-for-performance model, the applicant will be able to provide two possible methods to assist schools and districts with improving educator performance and student achievement. Therefore, a more cost effective model will be available to districts that cannot offer or are not in favor of a pay-for-performance method. TAP School Leadership Resource Library will provide best practice video and materials to TAP Schools.

(3) The applicant has clearly outlined how it plans to disseminate information about results and outcomes regarding the proposed project in various avenues. The outcomes will be presented at the National TAP Conference and the American Association of Colleges of Education Day on the Hill in Washington, DC. In addition, the applicant will present at information and ideas to groups such as American Educational Research Association. The partnering university will also disseminate information regarding grant's implementation and data through public presentations. In addition to presentations, findings will be made available on the applicant's and university's web-site and in professional journals.

Weaknesses:

(1) Title II is listed as a possible funding stream to assist with the costs of the professional development. It is uncertain that schools will have the authority to reallocate these funds.

(2) No weaknesses noted.

(3) No weaknesses noted.

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:

(1) The applicant's evaluation methods are thorough, feasible and appropriate to the goals, objectives and outcomes of the project. The applicant's Research and Evaluation team and Texas Tech University's Office of Program Evaluation and Research Support will oversee the project evaluation. The table included in the Program Design section outlines the data used to measure the progress of each goal and objective, the frequency of the collection and group responsible for the process (page 18-21).

(2) The evaluation uses objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce qualitative and quantitative data. The research questions listed for each goal will drive the evaluation. Performance indicators use both qualitative and quantitative data. The applicant will rely heavily of the Texas Education Agency to provide most of the quantitative data such as results of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), exit-level TAKS Cumulative Passing Rates; attendance rates, and annual dropout rates. Qualitative data collected by the applicant will be garnered through the TAP Teacher and Principal Attitudinal Survey, observations from site visits and interviews. Qualitative data will provide the applicant with information regarding participants' perceptions of the program and experiences. The quantitative data will document the changes in the participants' content knowledge and practices as well as student impact.

(3) The evaluation plan outlines how the evaluation will be used to monitor progress toward achieving outcomes, provide performance feedback, and provide accountability information. For example, the co-principal investigators will require quarterly formative data reports to determine the fidelity of implementation and annual summative reports on teaching effectiveness and student achievement (page 40). The applicant will collect performance feedback to determine the needs of the participants. Master Teacher walk-through scores will be collected and the data will be summarized and examined to identify where targeted professional development is most needed.

(4) The applicant has devoted human capital to the carryout the evaluation plan. The program evaluation will be conducted by the applicant, Texas Tech University and partnering schools. The Director of Research will devote 10% of his time to carrying out our internal research activities for NIET and TAP including oversight of data collection for the SEED grant and systems. In addition, he will provide oversight of the evaluation and serve as a liaison with TTU faculty and research staff (page e272-Budget Narrative).

Weaknesses:

- (1) No weaknesses noted.
- (2) No weaknesses noted.
- (3) No weaknesses noted.
- (4) The Director of Research is given the responsibilities of overseeing the entire evaluation process and serving as liaison between the university and research staff. It is uncertain whether the 10% time allocated to the project will be sufficient. Resources may not be sufficient for the scope of the evaluation.

Reader's Score: 17

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:

The applicant provides strategies to provide cost-effective services by implementing a technology-based model of the current TAP program. The proposed model will allow a continuous, virtual presence in the classroom using Teachscape video sharing. The applicant hypothesizes that the TAP Connection will be as effective as the current TAP model. In addition the technology will possibly provide more support of both rural and urban TAP schools by removing the travel barrier for professional development thus increasing the fidelity of the program. The proposed model may provide a cost-effective element by not having to compensate teachers for their performance.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

The applicant will seek to recruit teacher candidates from local community colleges, Hispanic serving institutions and Historically Black institutions geographically close to the partner TAP school to participate in the TAP Connection Pilot. The teacher candidates and current TAP teachers will have the opportunity to earn a STEM Advanced Certificate

Program focuses on inquiry-based learning, specific innovative approaches to maximizing student growth

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant will offer advanced certification in STEM, the participants do not have to choose this option. There are three other certifications participants may choose. As little as twenty participants may earn a STEM advanced certification and less than half of these participants may be from the traditionally underrepresented groups thus limiting the impact of the program.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/26/2013 02:32 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/24/2013 10:42 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130024)

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	23
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Management & Personnel	15	12
Sub Total	40	35
Selection Criteria		
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	20	19
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	18
Sub Total	40	37
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	0
Sub Total	3	0
Total	104	93

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel 7 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (U367D130024)

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 TAP system has been implemented in over 600 schools in 19 states and a variety of research studies are identified to demonstrate its positive effect on student achievement. A competency-based teaching and professional development model that is technology enabled has the potential of national significance as well as advancing teacher and leadership theory, knowledge, and practices. Results appear consistent across all types of schools, rural and urban. The importance and magnitude of the results could be attained if this model, effective in the P-12 arena, is shown to be effective in higher education teacher preparation programs.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

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:

Table 3 on pp. 18-21 provides clear and achievable goals and objectives. The video sharing technology using Teachscape allows Master teachers and Texas Tech faculty the ability to view student teacher activities in the classroom without actually being there. This will allow for regular feedback to the student teacher as well as the leadership team. This technology adaptation to the preparation programs supports high standards for the students. In addition to the teacher preparation aspect of the project, there is evidence to suggest that existing TAP teachers will also encounter

sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services. Four advanced certificates will be offered (Language/Literacy, STEM, Teacher Leadership, and Principal Leadership). Each certificate will consist of 5 competency based courses. All courses are to be delivered live through interactive web interfaces such as Second Life, and include performance based modules.

Weaknesses:

Outcomes are not provided. Without these it is not possible to determine whether the project was a success. For example, student standardized test scores of TAP teachers will be 10% higher than those students of non-TAP teachers, or 100 % of TAP teachers will score a "3" or better on the TAP instruction rubric. Outcomes such as these will allow the evaluator to determine whether the project is reaching the established goals.

Reader's Score: 23

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:

All key project personnel are experienced in the areas for which they are responsible. The PI, Jason Culbertson, has been with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching for many years and has directed large professional development and training activities. The Project Manager, Anissa Rodriguez, is a master teacher and has been a Director, Assistant Director, Program Specialist, and TAP Coordinator for NIET. Table 3, pp. 18-2, and Table 5, pp. 37-39, show responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing all project tasks. Key personnel have appropriate time commitments for project success. The Project Director at 1.0 FTE and Project Manager at .5 FTE seems adequate. The budget contains sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project.

Weaknesses:

There is no mention of an external evaluator. Hiring one would be a strength for the project since they would bring an independent analysis to the results. It is not clear what deliverables will result from the project and therefore their usefulness to other teachers.

Reader's Score: 12

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:

Most schools that have been introduced to the TAP System continue to use it. This was stated by the authors and seems clear by the number of schools using the system. This will help build capacity following Federal assistance. Subject area professional development and TAP school leadership training will become a fee for service model following the grant. Pay-for-performance is a model that being widely considered. Findings from this project may be very beneficial to other districts in making decisions in this regard. Dissemination of results are planned to occur through multiple means including conferences (AERA, AACTE), publications (research in professional journals), and web resources (NIET and TTU websites).

Weaknesses:

It is stated on p. 42 that school districts will redirect Title II funds to efforts such as TAP Connect. However, this is not guaranteed and should not be counted upon for support following Federal assistance.

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:

The evaluation plan is presented on Table 3, pp. 18-21. Each data collection point is aligned with the appropriate goal and objective. The data collection methods include quantitative (student test scores, pre/post assessments, rubric scores) and qualitative (surveys, focus groups) measures. Resources and all budgetary items appear sufficient and necessary for completion of the project evaluation. There is adequate compensation for project staff, travel allocations are appropriate and material and supply amounts are necessary and not overstated.

Weaknesses:

An external evaluator would strengthen this proposal as noted previously. The current evaluator is only at .1FTE which is not enough time on the project. It is unclear how interim progress reports will be communicated to the team in order to make programmatic changes within an evaluation cycle.

Reader's Score: 18

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:

The use of Teachscape video technologies to allow ongoing and continuous monitoring of teachers can reduce time and expenses necessary for school experts or coaches to improve instruction.

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:

Nothing was provided in the proposal that specifically identified professional development in content and pedagogy. Further, no plan was described to specifically target populations underrepresented in STEM.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 05/24/2013 10:42 AM