

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/24/2013 01:10 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D130003)

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	23
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Management & Personnel	15	15
Sub Total	40	38
Selection Criteria		
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	20	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	18
Sub Total	40	38
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	99

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel 4 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D130003)

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 proposed project has the potential to foster community of practice that will give teachers the opportunity to learn anywhere and anytime with writing strategies that are significant in improving writing achievement for all students. The applicant clearly establishes the potential contribution of the proposed project in the improvement of infrastructure that supports student writing and student writing achievement based on prior experience as well as a strong evidence of growth in the writing achievement of students of teachers based on three state studies. The applicant clearly articulates the outcomes from the proposed project in terms of multiple levels of professional development targeting middle grade teachers. The applicant clearly establishes a detailed description of how the proposed project will lead to increased writing achievement of students from high need schools and in the science content areas. The description of student writing success based on the research results from other projects similar to the proposed project is comprehensive.

Weaknesses:

The applicant fails to clearly identify the number of science teachers that will be trained and developed in this proposed project. The chart provided on page 32 of the narrative on project objectives and milestone is confusing in terms of the number of science teachers that will be added per year. There is a need to clearly identify the number of science teachers that will be trained.

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 applicant outlines specified and measurable goals with expected outcomes. The three goals are aligned with outcomes that are feasible with the overall objective of improving the writing achievement of students from high need school across the nation. The applicant relied on their established comprehensive professional and leadership development model for this proposed project. The proposed project is significant as it is part of a national initiative to improve writing and literacy across content areas. The applicant in this proposed project clearly provides a detailed description of data showing the quality and the intensity of the Invitational Summer Institute (ISI) that supports the professional development of teacher-leaders (P.21).

Weaknesses:

The applicant in this proposed project failed to provide information on how the local sites will manage their resources. The timeline provided is vague and more clarification is necessary. There is a need to clearly define high need schools.

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:

The management team and key project personnel are highly qualified to carry out the proposed project. The proposed project will be managed by senior leadership team with expertise in directing and managing projects. These individuals are highly skilled in managing ongoing program evaluation. The applicants clearly delineated a strong and adequate management plan with project objectives and milestones designed to achieve the goals with the proposed budget. The applicant establishes adequate time commitment to meet the objective of the project and the resources proposed for the two years of the project are sufficient. The established management plan and timeline seem adequate.

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 the broader impact of the proposed project beyond the project years on teacher retention and the development of additional resources to improve the literacy and writing achievement of students. Detailed description of multiple materials, training modules, assessment threads, and other instructional tools (P.30) that will be shared across the local, state, and national audiences as a result of the proposed project is discussed. The proposed multiple level professional development programs with online modules for teaching of writing across content areas can be replicated across state, and national level. The applicant establishes a variety of mediums for sharing the products from the proposed project to reach a wider audience which includes twenty online learning experiences (OLE) that will be disseminated through other partners and platforms. The dissemination effort proposed is comprehensive and exemplary with adequate staffing to implement the proposed project.

Weaknesses:

None.

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 establishes an evaluation plan that is appropriate to the goals and outcomes in the project and uses both internal and external independent evaluators to ensure quality. The applicant clearly establishes a comprehensive evaluation plan with a framework that delineates the research questions and data sources with measurable performance indicators. The research based evaluation plan with the use of two pronged approach using an established independent research and evaluation team (SRI) as proposed is suitable for the project. There is evidence that adequate number of personnel needed to accomplish the proposed plan is allocated.

Weaknesses:

The evaluation plan proposed in this project includes just one teacher and student measures which is not adequate for data triangulation. There is a need for a robust data collection strategies that will yield stronger results. The use of focus group may not represent the best measure for teacher effectiveness. There is a need to include some elements of qualitative observations.

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 applicant demonstrates the development of digital literacy that will give teachers access to professional development in writing and literacy across content area. The development of twenty online experiences that will be disseminated as Open Education Resources (OERs) that gives teachers across the nation access to the materials anytime. This innovative approaches will result in cost effectiveness through the creation of online professional learning communities for teachers.

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:

The applicant in this proposed project establishes the need to offer ten invitational Science and Literacy institutes to develop science literacy teacher leaders. These newly trained science teachers leaders will transform the instructional practices that will lead to the capacities of students to engage in scientific engagement and writing achievement.

Reader's Score: 3

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Last Updated: 05/24/2013 04:24 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D130003)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	16
Sub Total	20	16
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Design and Services		
1. Project Design & Service	25	20
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Management & Personnel	15	11
Sub Total	40	31
Selection Criteria		
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	20	16
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	16
Sub Total	40	32
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	82

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel 4 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D130003)

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 proposed service model addresses and leverages many different evidence-based components, including disciplinary literacy practices, the development of teacher leadership, practitioner-centered/-led professional development, use of blended learning environments for both teaching and teacher learning, and alignment to the Common Core. In providing sustained, multi-year support to several thousand teachers in the area of argumentative writing in the content areas—including a program model specific to science—the applicant has identified a specific instructional need that can have significant impact on student achievement as well as on content literacy instructional practices. The professional development provided is significant in intensity (26) and depth (providing opportunities to both learn, practice, and lead instruction), increasing the likelihood that learned practices will be implemented and sustained; the broad distribution of participants across school levels also suggests that the applicant could have impact across the K-12 spectrum nationally. The applicant provides evidence of effectiveness of at the local, large urban, state-wide, and multi-state levels (12-17), suggesting that scaling to the national level is likely to yield similar results; indeed, they set a targeted achievement outcome (24) that is significantly significant.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant's plans include several thousand participants, the program component designed to address the literacy instructional practices of middle school science teachers, a clear and significant need, represents a very small fraction of that total (32) and the total number of sites. Furthermore, while the applicant promises its selected teacher leaders will be "available to provide local leadership" by the end of the second year, it is unclear precisely what that leadership will be—particularly in site-based communities of practice—because the applicant only details the programming it directly facilitates; the learning communities led by the trained teacher leaders will, however, be a crucial component in the dissemination and sustainability of the program model so a lack of a clear design for such work will challenge implementation. Finally, while the applicant appears to have a broad local and global purpose for the online resources it intends to offer (30), it does not make clear how those resources will be integrated into implementation, calling into question the "value-add" of these tools.

Reader's Score: 16

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 aims to provide a multi-tiered professional development model that is of sufficient intensity and duration—and in certain cases well beyond even what the research recommends—to have a lasting impact on participants; the proposed model is also differentiated for various roles, responsibilities, and expertise of participants increasing the likelihood of participant buy-in. The proposed model is also evidence-based in design—indeed, they reference some of the oft-cited pieces of scholarship on professional development—in particular its focus on the ongoing instructional practices of participants (24), embedding content learning into its teacher learning curriculum, and its use of various within- and between-school collaboration groups (25-26) to build support for teacher learning. The goals stated are, individually, logical and measurable; the applicant also has provided targeted stakeholder participation goals (22) and a specific effect size (24) it seeks to obtain as an outcome measure.

Weaknesses:

The applicant's goals are very programmatic—i.e., develop materials, deliver training—without specifying or highlighting the intended outcomes; they are also quite general, which may explain why the objectives articulated each are logical individually but seem connected only in the fact that they represent additional ways to increase the number of teachers who receive training. The lack of a clear connection between the components of the program model creates ambiguity with the scope of the proposal, as no rationale is provided for why it makes the most sense to train, say, only 80 middle school science teachers when compared to the 3000 teacher leaders the applicant will train overall. The lack of justification makes it difficult to understand why this is the most impactful approach.

Reader's Score: 20

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's project team is constituted with key personnel from existing applicant workstreams; most have been with the organization for many years and have contributed to the scaling of its service model (32-33). The applicant proposes devoting significant personnel resources to implementation, with other 20 existing employees assigned to the proposed project in at least partial capacity; a significant amount of financial resources are also dedicated to ensuring participating

teachers are given the time to participate in the proposed program model. An included timeline delegates responsibilities across staff and project time-frame (36). The contractor for the program evaluation is a nationally known group with experience evaluating professional development programs.

Weaknesses:

While the included timeline ties program activities to both the program goals and staff responsibilities, descriptions are vague (i.e., "provide opportunities to disseminate new knowledge...") and lack articulation of how they are to be administered; while a general timeline is provided, specific milestones are not identified. Given the applicant's existing reach and responsibilities, it is of some concern as to whether 20+ employees can each provide at least 40% of their work time to the proposed project.

Reader's Score: 11

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 intends for significant tool and artifact generation, including video exemplars (38) and the online resources that are part of its program; it is providing open access, and is linked to several digital media partners in various ventures to ensure these resources get disseminated (40). The applicant's numerous regional sites and university-based partnerships increase the likelihood that ideas and programs will continue to be utilized following the funding period.

Weaknesses:

The applicant speaks generally about yielding "important working tools, processes, and insights" for enacting the new national standards and of developing future professional development materials based on what was learned, but no clear process or system for the development of those products, the dissemination of what is learned, and/or further inquiry is provided. Perhaps most importantly, the applicant provides little detail on how the participants of the study will sustain their roles/efforts as a teacher leaders following the end of the grant period.

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/idocviewer/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 robust program evaluation design, including use of multiple measures, hierarchical linear modeling, and collecting and triangulating data from multiple stakeholders; measures are aligned to research questions and program goals (43-44, 46). The conceptual framework articulated reflects the standard theory of change model associated with much research on the impact of professional development; the data collection instruments and statistical modeling are also expected to be derived from evidence-based models (43, 50). The applicant has constructed a timeline for ongoing interim assessment and progress monitoring of the proposed model (49); a significant portion of its total fund request is intended for the program evaluation.

Weaknesses:

The program evaluation design promises to “triangulate implementation and outcome data” (48) but intends to rely on only one measurement device to assess impact on student achievement and teacher leadership; the use of surveys for the latter especially seems insufficient to capture change over time. The administration of measures timeline (49) seems designed mainly to capture pre- and post-outcomes, which seems unlikely to fully capture descriptive data on the role of professional development design and participant engagement in it. The proposal notes that it will collect “qualitative reports” of professional development (44)—and subsequent classroom—work, though provides no description as to how such systematic inquiry will unfold and be used as a source of triangulating data.

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's proposal includes an online platform to house both stakeholder content and to serve as a method of communication and collaboration. While these tools may help enhance participant engagement, the applicant never makes clear how they will be leveraged to improve the organization and implementation of professional development in participating schools; in fact, there is no detail as to how they are to be used, only that they will be available to schools. Because it's not clear how they will be embedded in the model, it cannot be said for sure that it is likely to result in improved efficiency.

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 intends to provide professional development in the area of content literacy instruction for a significant duration and with a significant intensity, thereby increasing the opportunities for high-quality professional development for participating teachers. The outcome measure is based significantly on student growth; multiple measures of effectiveness are also incorporated.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/23/2013 01:11 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D130003)

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	25
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Management & Personnel	15	12
Sub Total	40	37
Selection Criteria		
Sustainability		
1. Sustainability	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	18
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	97

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel 4 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D130003)

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 gives compelling information detailing the significance of this project on p. 3 and cites improving writing across the content areas as an essential skill to meet the CCSS. Projects are cited that show the NWP has been involved in expanding the notion of discipline-specific writing and reading prior to the introduction of the CCSS.

Research is shared about the importance of writing in the STEM subjects and the importance of helping students master discipline-specific literacy demands in science and engineering acknowledging the lack of time devoted to the STEM subjects due to increased emphasis on reading and math at the elementary level. P. 6

Data is shared that shows that emphasis on digital tools in writing is critical. They cite the NAEP 2011 Writing assessment was done on computers for the first time, and anchor standards in the CCSS call for student to develop skills in with new writing technologies pointing to an additional need for professional development in using digital tools. This project focuses on an area of needed professional development: teaching writing with digital tools. P.7

The project focuses on developing teacher leaders in the field of writing instruction, a powerful component to assure outcomes will be met. Examples are cited on p. 16-17 indicating that teachers have worked with NWP in multiple states and their efforts have an enduring impact on their instruction and student results.

The applicant is well-known for their work detailed across all 50 states and gave examples of their projects and networks that are established and focused on the process of writing. This project builds on past success while expanding the digital literacy component to their work. Their projects typically involve high numbers of teachers, and they have the infrastructure to support such ambitious goals. p.17

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:

This project sets goals and objectives to increase the number of teacher-leaders prepared to improve writing across the content areas, increase professional development focused on students meeting standards for college and career readiness, and develop and pilot new online professional development modules that have high success probability and have clear measures detailed. P.18

The applicant has developed a project that will have a significant impact through the targeting of 3,000 teachers impacting 120,000 students during funding period. The model develops teacher capacity to lead local initiatives and thus foster sustainability of the results. (p. 16-17)

The project continues its Summer Institute as part of this application. On p. 21, results of prior institutes show high numbers of teachers participating and subject areas and levels of schools are broadly covered with the participants enrolled. The institute operates with an annual peer review process to ensure quality design, intent and goals of the program. The institute brings in a science literacy emphasis that will require participants to demonstrate successful approaches to integrating writing demonstrating there is an accountability factor in their proposed project where teachers are required to analyze their own science teaching and articulate what their approach to science literacy is. p. 24

Focusing on three complementary and interwoven strands of work – preparing teacher leaders, providing high quality professional development, and developing rich online experiences – the NWP will contribute to the knowledge base of teaching writing across STEM area subjects and develop college and career ready students through this project. The model is strong and comprehensive. P. 31

Development of 20 learning modules and access through a social learning infrastructure will create additional resources to support not only the teachers in the project, but teachers across the country that draw on the NWP free materials. P.29

A chart detailing project objectives and milestones shows the scope of the project across the years of the funding. Broad objectives are listed with details on what will support the objective and when treatments will occur. This chart shows another view of the project goals and objectives to communicate their vision. P. 32

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 proposal identifies highly qualified staff to lead the project. They have a proven record of success in previous writing initiatives as shown in the data provided and the curriculum vitae of the lead personnel. There is thorough detail about the qualifications of lead personnel for the project and the budget details the amount of time each manager will allocate to this project. . The management plan is clear and delineates a thorough explanation and timeline of what and by when for the project. (p. 36)

Adequate staffing is shown to deliver the outcomes of this proposal. Their track record demonstrates an effective infrastructure to manage large numbers of sites and trainings.

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not indicate who is responsible for the various components of the plan. While project managers are identified in a general sense, the proposal would be strengthened in showing how they see the sites managing the training, who will be responsible, and who owns the completion of each activity. P. 36

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 has developed a project with a high likelihood of sustainability. Through creating teacher-leaders able to develop and deliver training in effective writing instruction while simultaneously continuing to enhance their instructional strategies, the project is an example of a continuous improvement process destined for success.

The applicant provides information from the Legacy Study that demonstrates the sustainability of Writing Project teacher-leaders: 77% stay in the classroom and 97% remain in the field. With an average teaching career of 23 years, this project follows the path of some powerful results. p. 37

Use of the digital learning tools and online communities of learners with access to 20 learning modules will provide materials of use to other agencies and organizations. The applicant cites several partners on that will support their efforts to expand access to new resources developed. P.38-40

Dissemination efforts by NWP are exemplary in that teachers generate teaching tools, processes and assignments that are shared with others across the country. The model also supports development of training materials and seminars that can further the knowledge base of the local sites and be shared within the online network to all interested. P.40

With a network of 190 university-based sites located within reach of 75% of the teaching force, access to high quality writing professional development in digital literacy is available on an ongoing basis that can lead to improvement in student achievement. The work of this project will be ongoing and available on a permanent basis to strengthen the teaching skills of all subject area teachers in integrating writing into their curriculum. P. 41

Weaknesses:

The detail about the plan to replicate this project across several states is not present that this reviewer could see. The replication is a serious contribution and this application would be strengthened with more detail about how the applicant sees this happening.

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:

NWP will take a two pronged approach to evaluating this project. Their independent Research and Evaluation Unit will college data and provide analysis to ensure the established goals are met. Additionally SRI International will study development of teacher leadership capacity for science literacy to assess the impact of this type of treatment on teachers' knowledge and practices related to writing in science and teachers' leadership. P. 42

A plan is included in this proposal detailing the research questions for evaluation and the processes used to assess the results. NWP shows strong ability to conduct such research and provides examples of studies underway that will contribute to this knowledge development. P. 45

Ample detail and funds are evident in the project evaluation and include submission of regular reports around project implementation and evaluation as the grant work ensues. P. 52, 52.

Weaknesses:

There is no research question addressing the use of technology which is a program goal and is an important part of the project. The selection criteria clearly states that the evaluation should include objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data. Inclusion of this information would strengthen this application.

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 applicant proposes to use face to face training and develop online technology with learning modules will allow teachers to access training as needed. This strategy is a cost-saving strategy as it eliminates the need for substitute costs and pulling teachers from classrooms. Examples are provided that show the applicant's experience in using this platform effectively as well as how they can be adapted to the local context of the trainings. P. 30

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:

The applicant demonstrates an approach that will provide 10 Invitation Science and Literacy institutes in 5 diverse locations over a 2 year period. This approach has the potential to develop a new cadre of science literacy leaders who can further provide leadership around STEM subjects and integration of effective writing practice. P.22

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
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