

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/24/2013 10:54 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Teach For America (U367D130025)

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	20	20
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Services</b>		
1. Project Design & Service	25	25
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management & Personnel	15	14
<b>Sub Total</b>	40	39
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Sustainability</b>		
1. Sustainability	20	20
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
<b>Sub Total</b>	40	39
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority 2</b>		
<b>Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)</b>		
1. Improving Efficiency	1	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	1	0
<b>Competitive Priority 3</b>		
<b>Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, &amp; Math</b>		
1. Promoting STEM	3	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	3	0
<b>Total</b>	104	98

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel 3 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Teach For America (U367D130025)

## 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 clearly establishes the need for this projecting which is a highly significant one based on the need for highly qualified teachers in rural and urban schools with high need students. The applicant clearly establishes the potential contribution of the proposed project based on the strong evidence of the effectiveness of other projects. The applicant clearly articulates the need to bridge the diversity gap in the teaching force by intentionally selecting and recruiting racially and socioeconomically diverse leaders to teach (P.2). The applicant also establishes a strong evidence for the effectiveness of the proposed project based on the findings from North Carolina, Tennessee, and Louisiana (P5-6).

#### Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 20

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Services

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

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant in this proposed project clearly establishes a strong design in preparing a large number of diverse teachers engrained in the newly established Common Core standards for high need schools and classrooms. The proposed project has the potential to increase the number of preservice teachers with the goal of improving the achievement of diverse students. The objectives of the proposed project are clearly aligned measures and outcomes of the project.

**Weaknesses:**

None.

**Reader's Score:** 25

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel**

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

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

**Strengths:**

The project personnel are highly qualified and capable of achieving the goals of the project based on strong evidence of their effectiveness over the years and the collaborative effort and commitment of the National team. The proposed project teams are experts in the preparation and distribution of highly effective teachers to high need schools. The management plan and time commitment is adequate to accomplish the project goals. The project resources are sufficient.

**Weaknesses:**

There is a need for a detailed description of the criteria used for their regionalization partner model.

**Reader's Score:** 14

**Selection Criteria - Sustainability**

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

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly establishes how the proposed project will have a broader impact in increasing the number of highly effective teachers for high need schools across the country with regional training and development. The proposed project gives charter faculty and districts access to online math modules that is aligned with the new Common Core standards. The applicant details how the products from proposed projects will be shared with others through internal and external venues.

**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/](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/).

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly establishes an evaluation plan that is thorough and efficient. The applicant describes the use of rigorous input, output, and process measures that is appropriate for the proposed project. In this proposed project, there is a strong description of an evaluation plan that is efficient and is aligned with the project goals and outcomes. The resources for the project are adequate and the time commitment is sufficient.

**Weaknesses:**

There is a need to provide information on the rubrics and evaluation of the state Common Core Standards.

**Reader's Score: 19**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Priority 2 - Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)**

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

**General:**

The goal of this proposed project is to increase the number of effective teachers in high need classroom, however, the applicants did not address how the proposed project will improve efficiency at the state or regional level.

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 goal is to increase the number of highly effective teachers in high need schools with the potential to bridge the diversity gap in the teaching profession but not in the STEM field.

Reader's Score: 0

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 05/24/2013 10:54 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/23/2013 12:10 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Teach For America (U367D130025)

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	20	20
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Services</b>		
1. Project Design & Service	25	25
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management & Personnel	15	14
<b>Sub Total</b>	40	39
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Sustainability</b>		
1. Sustainability	20	20
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
<b>Sub Total</b>	40	39
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority 2</b>		
<b>Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)</b>		
1. Improving Efficiency	1	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	1	0
<b>Competitive Priority 3</b>		
<b>Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, &amp; Math</b>		
1. Promoting STEM	3	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	3	0
<b>Total</b>	104	98

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel 3 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Teach For America (U367D130025)

## 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:

Teach for America (TFA) provides data which clearly establishes its effectiveness in teacher recruitment, selection and preparation. They provide data which shows they clearly exceed all teaching preparation programs in attracting a diverse clientele. They place teachers in schools where more than 90% of students are African American or Latino and free reduced lunch percentages are at 80%. P.3

The applicant shows a rigorous selection process for candidates emphasizing predictive characteristics of successful teaching in low-income communities. They show that over 57,000 applicants applied to be in the corps and only 17% were accepted. P. 3

Studies are cited which show that TFA's selection model successfully identifies teachers who will have a positive impact on student achievement. In North Carolina, Tennessee and Louisiana TFA was named the most positive impact on student achievement in comparison to university trained teachers. P. 5

The proposed project will test emerging hypotheses around how best to equip corps members to build strong classroom cultures and motivate students to achieve their goals. They will develop and test a range of Common Core aligned trainings and resources.

### 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:**

The project designs 11 summer training in 2014 preparing approximately 12,500 incoming corps members to enter high-need classrooms. They also propose to initiate two new regional training institutes to develop and pilot aligning their institutes around training curriculum and resources with Common Core standards. P. 10

A chart details the activities and objectives of the TFA project with complete and thorough explanation about the concepts in the following pages. Activities such as pre-institutes, induction, institute and orientation are detailed which identify how corps members leave with the mindsets, skills and knowledge to be successful in corps are likely to lead in corps are likely to lead in the classroom. P. 11 – 19

Regional training institutes are designed to meet the context of the areas corps members will serve. There is no “cookie-cutter” model which increases the likelihood of success. The institutes also provide an early experience in the area to allow students to be better prepared for their experience. P. 17

Partnerships are a core component of the regional institutes with universities and local schools. P. 17 The TFA institutes provide a proven approach to developing effective novice teachers. Using a research based framework (Teaching as Leadership) and with support from the Gates Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project, the TFA project will continue to have potential to increase the quality, intensity, and duration of their already successful approach to pre-service training. P.24

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses not 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:**

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- (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:**

TFA has three management team tasked with effective implementation of the SEED project. The applicant details the various roles of the three teams and the personnel serving on each team. The project shows a strong management group equipped to take on the goals of this project. P. 27

The applicant provides a chart detailing the experience of the management team and the amount of time allocated to this project. P. 30

The management plan is detailed clearly delineating the owner of the objectives, the timeline, milestones and the responsibilities under each goal. The plan shows an implementation that is likely to achieve the objectives of the proposal on time and within budget. P. 32

The applicant shares information where TFA was cited as a cost-effective non-profit, placing them in the 99% among non-profits evaluated. p. 34

**Weaknesses:**

There is no information provided about the criteria that will be used for the regional institutes and how they will be designed. A project owner is identified; but, this reviewer does not see information about the process used to formulate these pilot institutes. This information would strengthen the proposal. P. 29

**Reader's Score: 14**

**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:**

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- (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 TFA program has a solid record of achievement and sustainability that this SEED grant will support as it looks to strengthen and improve its program. Support to develop their institutes will provide them a means of expanding their work and contextualizing their regional emphasis. P. 35

The SEED grant allows them to leverage other private funding as they show themselves to be an innovative program that is doing recognized research on an acknowledged successful program. P. 35

Materials developed in the TFA institutes and Common Core trainings will be shared and support the work of partnering districts as well as the university partners. P. 37

TFA identifies two paths for disseminating information – one for the TFA network to spread best practice and encourage further innovation. They will also share information externally through their magazine, community outreach and marketing efforts. P. 39

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses seen.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

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#### **Strengths:**

This project identifies multiple methods they will use in monitoring and evaluating their SEED proposal. They will be tracking progress on their planning, designing and delivering institutes; piloting regional training institutes; and aligning institute curriculum and resources with the Common Core. p.41-44

Their student achievement management systems (SAMS) will provide a means of cross-contextual comparisons to provide information to TFA Staff. The corps members are measured against a benchmark that reflects a high-performing classroom based on "percent of benchmark achieved." P. 41

Regional institute pilots using TFA's corps strength index (CSI) a set of 12 questions that measure aspects of the culture and support achieving the mission of achievement, retention, and engagement. Comparisons will be made between national institutes and regional institutes to gain information about growth. P. 44

#### **Weaknesses:**

The project identifies that work will be piloted on the Common Core standards. The applicant states the design or target indicators for the pilot and it will be developed and evaluated in the fall of 2014. While the Common Core is still in a state of flux nationally, the proposal would be strengthened if the applicant could provide clearer information about how they envision a rubric to designed for guiding observations. It is unclear how this process will develop and what it will look like. P. 44-45

**Reader's Score:** 19

#### **Priority Questions**

##### **Competitive Priority 2 - Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)**

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#### **General:**

Did not participate

**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.

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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:**

Did not participate.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 05/23/2013 12:10 AM

Status: Submitted

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

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Teach For America (U367D130025)

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	20	20
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Services</b>		
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<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
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<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
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1. Sustainability	20	20
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
<b>Sub Total</b>	40	39
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority 2</b>		
<b>Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)</b>		
1. Improving Efficiency	1	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	1	0
<b>Competitive Priority 3</b>		
<b>Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, &amp; Math</b>		
1. Promoting STEM	3	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	3	0
<b>Total</b>	104	97

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel 3 - 1: 84.367D

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Teach For America (U367D130025)

## 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 has a demonstrated track record, which it plans to leverage, of selecting highly qualified diverse candidates and placing them in high need schools, at scale. Their ability to recruit large numbers of applicants and be highly selective in choosing which ones to engage and support is well established. If funded and successful, the project would contribute to producing a significant number of well qualified new educators for high need schools.

The applicant proposes to generate and validate new knowledge regarding effective strategies for preparing new teachers to develop "strong classroom cultures and invest their students in ways that inspire and motivate them to work hard and achieve their goals". The applicant also proposes to more fully integrate implications of Common Core competencies and assessments into their teacher training.

#### Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 20

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Services

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

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

**Strengths:**

The project's goals are to develop regional training institutes and align the institutes' curriculum with Common Core standards and assessments. The project's metrics and target outcomes are clear, aligned and measurable (narrative pp. 11-12). The applicant has expanded its model to incorporate additional dimensions of teacher training that research suggests would make their model more comprehensively effective in improving student achievement in high need schools – e.g., by adding attention to “cultures of achievement” and “engagement with rigorous content”.

The summer institutes are of sufficient duration and intensity to amply align with best practice in intensive professional development. The teacher training design includes pre-institute work, orientation to their new community where they will be placed, engagement at the intensive five-week institute, and follow-up orientation and professional development. TFA candidates teach in summer school classrooms, providing both opportunities for them to apply concepts they are learning about in their training as well as support for school systems seeking to augment their capacity to provide summer school education for at-risk students.

Generally speaking, the training curriculum, logistics and procedures for supervision and observation are well detailed and organized. The training curriculum is designed to produce observable competencies – e.g., “able to craft plans based on student diagnostic data”.

The project design calls for adapting the established national institute curriculum to provide regional institutes customized by a regional design team and tailored, to some extent, to reflect local partnerships and priorities for improving student learning. In addition, the plan envisions several steps to infuse Common Core standards, assessments and resources into the teacher training curriculum.

Taken together, these project elements are integrated into a comprehensive approach that aspires to improve access for high needs students and high need schools to highly effective teachers. Perhaps the strongest argument in favor of regionalized institutes is the goal of increasing the “authenticity” or relevance of the institute training to the community where the candidate will be teaching – “the fact that corps members will be teaching summer school in the same community where they will become full-time teachers in the fall should increase the chances of more authentic institute teaching experiences”.

**Weaknesses:**

The initiation of regionalized institutes that explicitly call for some measure of creative adaptation of the national training curriculum, introduces a degree of risk that the quality of institute curricular content, design and support services could become more variable and uneven. This will introduce the need for a quality assurance system capable of noting and rapidly addressing discrepancies in regional institutes' design and impacts while, equally, noting especially effective regional variants in approach and materials for replication in the other regions.

**Reader's Score: 24**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel**

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

**(1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, key project personnel, and project consultants or subcontractors.**

**(2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

**(3) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**

**(4) The extent to which the proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

**Strengths:**

The management plan is highly detailed. Roles responsibilities are laid out for every project activity. Organizational structures and processes for quality assurance are thoroughly laid out. Key project personnel have significant, relevant experience in the areas for which they will be responsible. The steps needed to undertake each objective are clearly detailed and sequenced, with clearly specified performance evaluation measures and milestones, making it possible for formative evaluation to more easily note variances to proposed plans and recommend enhancements based on lessons learned and unanticipated opportunities.

The time allocations of all key personnel are thoroughly detailed in the appendices, aligned with proposed goals, activities, timeframes, and role responsibilities. They also are reasonable in light of the magnitude of service and potential national impact of the proposed project. Resource allocations for the institutes is based on equaled detailed cost allocation data drawn from the applicants' recent national institutes. There is no reason to expect proposed resource allocations to be insufficient.

**Weaknesses:**

The reviewer would have liked to see more fully articulated criteria that TFA will apply to select partners to design and administer the regional institutes.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**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 asserts that the sustainability of its projected efforts is based on building long term capacity and results, yielding findings and products useful to others, and disseminating information about results and outcomes that also are useful to others (p. 34). The applicant has a track record of cultivating a diversified array of funding sources. The applicant posits that intensive collection of qualitative data, intriguingly, will yield especially useful insights into successful design and delivery of summer institutes and enable continuous improvement in its model. This may be especially important in assessing its new regionalization strategy which, if funded, would introduce a new element of complexity, variability and uncertainty.

As noted below with regard to the proposed evaluation plan, the project evaluation is likely to yield sufficiently robust findings that, if the project is successful in attaining its desired outcomes, should assure the applicant of yielding finds and products of use to LEAs, state agencies, institutions of higher education and policy makers at every level.

If approved, the grant would enable the applicant to improve the responsiveness of its model to the challenges faced by educators, school systems and students nationwide due to implementation of the Common Core which, in turn, would

improve its marketability when seeking revenues to sustain and grow its services.

The applicant has nationally recognized capacity to disseminate to policy makers at the local, state, federal and postsecondary institutional levels. As the applicant itself notes, "TFA is one of the most studied teacher preparation program(s) in the country."

**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/iddocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1>; and (2) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech\\_methods/](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/).**

**Strengths:**

The formative and summative internal and external evaluation plan is highly detailed, multidimensional and rigorous, reflective of a fluent understanding of and comprehensive organizational commitment to data-driven decision making. The applicant has put in place data collection, analyses, reporting and decision processes to support continuous improvement, transparency and quality assurance.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant has not yet established target indicators for the Common Core portion of its proposed project. While understandable because the Common Core is itself a highly experimental and rapidly evolving new national paradigm for P-12 education, more detail would have been helpful to fully assess whether and how well the applicant can design and conduct pilot evaluations that are fully responsive, rigorous and relevant. The applicant's track record suggests that it possesses this capacity, but more detail on how it plans to assess "Common Core Pilot Impact" (pp. 44-45) would be advisable.

**Reader's Score: 19**

**Priority Questions**

## Competitive Priority 2 - Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)

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

**General:**

N.A.

**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:**

N.A.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted

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