

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/01/2015 12:13 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D150004)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design & Services	35	33
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	18
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Sustainability	15	15
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	18
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	94
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness</b>		
<b>CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness</b>		
1. CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	1	1
<b>CPP3: Promoting STEM Education</b>		
<b>CPP3: Promoting STEM Education</b>		
1. CPP3: Promoting STEM ED	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	0
<b>CPP4: High-Need Students</b>		
<b>CPP4: High-Need Students</b>		
1. CPP4: High-Need Students	4	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	4	2
<b>Total</b>	107	97

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2015 SEED Peer Review - 7: 84.367D

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

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D150004)

## 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.
- (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 makes the case for the need for students to improve their writing in order to be college and career ready based upon national scores. The applicant uses previous studies to demonstrate success in improving these writing skills. The number of teachers and leaders to be trained across 50 states should yield a significant impact.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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.
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides four clear goals, each with measurable and aligned objectives. The basis of the project is in increased rigorous writing standards for middle and high school students. The applicant specifically targets high need and disadvantaged individuals. The project itself is based on research in best-practice. The use of teacher leaders is a strength. The intensity and duration of the project is adequate.

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant makes a case for issues in student writing, they do not make a case for the shortage of writing or English Language Arts teachers.

**Reader's Score: 33**

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

**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 proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

**Strengths:**

The personnel identified have relevant training and experience and appear qualified to run this project. A clear and detailed management plan and timeline (by objective) is provided. This lends confidence that project tasks will occur on time and within budget.

**Weaknesses:**

The costs in the budget raise concern. It is not clear if enough money is budgeted for online start up and resources. Personnel costs appear to be high in general, but perhaps not enough for evaluation.

**Reader's Score: 18**

**Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

**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 an established history of sustaining and disseminating work. The teacher leaders who will be a product of this project will also be a way to expand the work beyond this grant. The use of MOOCS will support widespread dissemination.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**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:

- (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 methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

**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/iodocviewer/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/).

In addition, we encourage applicants to participate in an optional Webinar hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences on March 6, 2015. This Webinar will discuss strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-experimental Design Studies. Applicants interested in participating in this Webinar may find more information at the following Web site: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/event.aspx?sid=37>.

**Strengths:**

An independent evaluation from a well known evaluator has been described. The five research questions to guide this evaluation are sound and complete with measures that should adequately produce qualitative and quantitative data. The applicant has addressed WWC standards without reservations through the use of randomized control trials. The teacher surveys will be used as formative feedback to inform the project ongoingly.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant should consider directly tying the evaluation to the goals and objectives of the project to have a more streamlined measure of project success.

**Reader's Score:** 18

**Priority Questions****CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness - CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness**

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)

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.

**Strengths:**

The applicant adequately addresses cost effectiveness measures but using web based, open educational resources to reach a wide audience at a limited cost.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 1**

**CPP3: Promoting STEM Education - CPP3: Promoting STEM Education**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education**

(Please only assign a score of either 0 or 2 for this question.)

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).

**Note:** The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 3 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

**Strengths:**

This was not met. No strengths noted.

**Weaknesses:**

STEM was not addressed.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**CPP4: High-Need Students - CPP4: High-Need Students**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Supporting High-Need Students**

This priority funds projects that are designed to improve:

- (a) Academic outcomes;
- (b) Learning environments; or
- (c) Both,

For one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Students in Lowest-performing Schools.
- (v) Students who are living in poverty and are served by schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty.
- (vi) Disconnected Youth or migrant youth.
- (vii) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

**Note:** The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 4 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

**Strengths:**

The application was geared towards high need students.

**Weaknesses:**

While the application focused on high need students, a strong case was not made to show how this population would be affected by the specific project.

**Reader's Score:**     **2**

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**Status:**           Submitted  
**Last Updated:**   06/01/2015 12:13 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/31/2015 10:52 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D150004)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design & Services	35	33
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	18
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Sustainability	15	10
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	91
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness</b>		
<b>CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness</b>		
1. CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	1	1
<b>CPP3: Promoting STEM Education</b>		
<b>CPP3: Promoting STEM Education</b>		
1. CPP3: Promoting STEM ED	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	0
<b>CPP4: High-Need Students</b>		
<b>CPP4: High-Need Students</b>		
1. CPP4: High-Need Students	4	4
<b>Sub Total</b>	4	4
<b>Total</b>	107	96

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2015 SEED Peer Review - 7: 84.367D

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

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D150004)

## 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.
- (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 established its ability to provide professional development on a national scale as evidenced by its National Writing Project (NWP) Invitational and Advanced Institutes. The applicant proposes to develop its teacher leadership model with an emphasis on professional development in support of college-ready writing.(page 2) The College-Ready Writers Program (CRWP) will expand to 90 Writing Project sites in the United States thus demonstrating its ability to make an impact on a national scale.

The proposed project's potential contribution to the development and advancement of teacher and school leadership theory, knowledge, and practices could be substantial if considering the data cited in the proposal. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, only 27% of all students scored at the Proficient or Advanced Level in both eighth and twelfth grades on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2011 Writing Assessment that demonstrates the need for continued emphasis on academic writing. In addition, a sample survey reported only 58 minutes per week is spent on teaching writing. The proposed project is designed to help teachers gain the understanding of the knowledge, and practices needed to teach writing in middle and high students.

The applicant outlines the potential for a substantial outcome based on the five studies that were completed in different states with varied demographics. The students participating in the NWP demonstrated more growth in writing skills than their counterparts whose teachers were not participants in the NWP professional development. The proposed plan that expands on the current NWP to include college-ready standards anticipates increasing student achievement with the effect size of .25. Improvement in student writing will be an important task that will likely increase the students' potential for high school completion and possibly college enrollment.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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.
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

**Strengths:**

The applicant has determined four clear goals to be achieved by the end of the grant period. The objectives and outcomes are clearly aligned and measurable.

The applicant clearly demonstrates that the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning while supporting rigorous academic standards for students. The project proposes two strategies to improve teaching and learning. Participants will attend the Writing Project sites, an intensive institute, where they will gain new approaches to teaching writing, writing and reading, or discipline-specific writing in a content area to prepare new teacher-leaders. Secondly, the applicant will second strategy will expand NWP's College-Ready Writers Program through Advanced Leadership Institutes for 1,350 teacher-leaders and teacher- led professional development in 50 high-need middle and high schools. In addition, the applicant outlines a pilot your summer institute to address summer loss for high school students. This pilot program will allow the applicant to reduce the summer loss while learning more about effective strategies to be used to address this problem.

The training and professional development services being provided in the proposed plan are sufficient in quality, intensity and duration which will likely lead to improvement in practices of the participants. The proposed project supports teachers in developing their knowledge and skill set by providing professional development with clear and specific content focus on teaching students to write source-based arguments. Middle and high schools teachers participating in the CRWP will engage in an average 80 or more hours professional development programs. The time provided increases the likelihood that meaningful learning takes place and the participants will implement permanent changes in instruction.

The proposed project clearly focuses on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals. The applicant will "recruit 1,100 teachers (66.7%) who work in schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty" for the Invitational Institute and "will recruit 1,012 (75%) of participants from schools serving concentrations of students living in poverty in the CRWP Advanced Institutes". (Page 29) The applicant has demonstrated a history with working with teachers who serve high needs populations.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant acknowledges that the proposed project does not target personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated. Instead, the applicant addresses the need to support teachers in becoming prepared to teach writing which will influence student success in secondary and postsecondary settings.

**Reader's Score: 33**

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

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 proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly provides a description of appropriate staff assigned to the project. Personnel identified for this project are highly qualified and experienced in the areas related to the project design as evidenced on pages 31-33 and their resumes in the appendix.

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 34)

The team plans to work collaboratively and meets bi-weekly to review and monitor overall progress and effectiveness, discuss critical needs or challenges which is beneficial to ensure the plan is implemented with fidelity. (page 30)

The resources for the proposed management plan are adequately outlined. The applicant has justified spending related to personnel, travel, supplies, contractual agreements, and evaluation.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant outlines the personnel costs and fringe benefits for key personnel who are currently employed at the entity. In addition, the budget details additional personnel in the indirect costs who may also be employed by the entity. A fraction over [REDACTED] of the total budget is spent on personnel.

It appears that the applicant budgeted insufficient fund for online resources. The applicant only allocates funding for the first two years.

**Reader's Score: 18**

**Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

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 proposed project will build capacity and yield results beyond the grant life. If the professional development is successful and teacher retention remains consistent with the applicant's Legacy Study, the proposed program will have impact on learning for over 280,000 students every two years.

The applicant will also develop an eight-week online course with the Teaching Channel. This collaboration will allow access to over 670,000 registered users.

The applicant has devised a solid plan to disseminate information about results and outcomes of the proposed project. Internal dissemination will occur in at the NWP Annual Meeting and the NWP's bi-weekly radio program. External partners and other interested groups will be able receive information regarding the results and outcomes of the proposed project by attending the NWP Annual Meeting.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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:**

- (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 methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project s effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.**

**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/).**

**In addition, we encourage applicants to participate in an optional Webinar hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences on March 6, 2015. This Webinar will discuss strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-experimental Design Studies. Applicants interested in participating in this Webinar may find more information at the following Web site: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/event.aspx?sid=37>.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant has established an evaluation method that is feasible and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. The proposed project will be evaluated by SRI International, an external evaluator. The applicant demonstrates the use of the objective performance measures that are related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce qualitative and quantitative data. The evaluator will collect student and school level standardized test scores in ELA, teacher interview responses and teacher surveys as some of the measures. The applicant adequately demonstrates how the evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. The applicant will review and monitor program data and site budgets and provide feedback each year. SRI International is scheduled to provide interim briefings on the evaluation for the applicant to assess if the project on target to achieve its goals.

The applicant demonstrates that methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations. The proposed evaluation will address research questions on program implementation, CRWP influences on teacher effectiveness, and

changes in ELA achievement across all 50 high-need schools participating in CRWP. The proposed evaluation will apply an RCT (randomized controlled trial) design to assess the impact of the NWP study. (Page 46)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Priority Questions**

**CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness - CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)**

**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.**

**Strengths:**

The proposed project attempts to identify strategies for providing cost-effective, high quality services by making better use of available resources. The proposed project potential contributions would include the development of Open Educational Resources focused on college- and career-ready standards for source-based Arguments. Teachers will be able to participate in intensive professional development(100 hours) or an eight-week web-based CRWP course .

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 1**

**CPP3: Promoting STEM Education - CPP3: Promoting STEM Education**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education**

**(Please only assign a score of either 0 or 2 for this question.)**

**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).**

**Note:** The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 3 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

**Strengths:**

The applicant did not address the CPP.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address the CPP.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**CPP4: High-Need Students - CPP4: High-Need Students**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Supporting High-Need Students**

This priority funds projects that are designed to improve:

- (a) Academic outcomes;
- (b) Learning environments; or
- (c) Both,

For one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Students in Lowest-performing Schools.
- (v) Students who are living in poverty and are served by schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty.
- (vi) Disconnected Youth or migrant youth.
- (vii) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

**Note:** The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 4 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

**Strengths:**

The applicant will work with K-12 teachers in across the nation. The CRWP professional development is targeted for teachers working in high need schools. The ultimate goal is to increase the writing skills of students in the identified high-need population.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 4**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 05/31/2015 10:52 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/27/2015 07:54 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D150004)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design & Services	35	33
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	18
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Sustainability	15	15
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	95
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness</b>		
<b>CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness</b>		
1. CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	1	1
<b>CPP3: Promoting STEM Education</b>		
<b>CPP3: Promoting STEM Education</b>		
1. CPP3: Promoting STEM ED	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	0
<b>CPP4: High-Need Students</b>		
<b>CPP4: High-Need Students</b>		
1. CPP4: High-Need Students	4	4
<b>Sub Total</b>	4	4
<b>Total</b>	107	100

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2015 SEED Peer Review - 7: 84.367D

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

Applicant: National Writing Project (U367D150004)

## 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.
- (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:

NWP is already established nationally as a premier group/process for developing writing-teachers-as-leaders; the College Ready Writers Program is already significantly developed and ready for deployment through this project.

The CRWP is directly connected to CCSS; the NWP leadership model is both well established and being expanded through a focus on high-need schools, and a summer program to serve kids in those schools (p. 6).

Examples of current sites and evaluations of those sites (CA, MS, and others) indicate that the CRWP will continue to have an important impact on students in further sites supported by this project.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 10

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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.
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

**Strengths:**

The objectives, measures, and expected outcomes are clearly described and defined for expanding teacher leadership.

Program Goal #3 indicates expected impact on writing (developing arguments) across the curriculum; the project's expectation is that teacher-leaders will work with schools, not only writing teachers, for broader impact.

The dual model of continuing Invitational Institutes (a proven strategy) and the advanced institutes (a logical extension) should be effective with the target population. The work of doing an additional expansion to high-needs schools (p. 21) is clearly articulated (page 22) with expectations for participation defined.

The proposal specifically discusses how the project will serve disadvantaged individuals (p. 29) and explains how the CRWP work is particularly relevant to serving students in high-needs schools.

**Weaknesses:**

On p. 29 the applicant acknowledges that the shortage of writing teachers is not in number but in quality.

**Reader's Score: 33**

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

- 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 proposed management plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed project, including the project evaluation.**

**Strengths:**

The NWP management team described on p. 31 is experienced with running a sophisticated train-the-trainer national network.

The management plan is detailed and offers a clear picture of how goals will be met over time (p. 34)

**Weaknesses:**

The budget does include substantial funds for evaluation, as the proposal points out on p. 35. I am concerned that there is only one new hire indicated to support the program (a Senior Program Associate – budget page e130); there is also what may be insufficient funds for the development of online resources (and this is only budgeted in the first two years) [see budget narrative p. e131].

**Reader's Score:** 18

**Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

**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:**

There is strong evidence of the likelihood that the NWP proposal will build on its existing partnerships with universities (and school-systems) across the country. The leadership capacity of teachers does not “wear off” and, as the proposal points out on p. 36, leadership roles are a predictor of teacher retention.

The intent to work with the Teaching Channel p. 38 and continue to deploy MOOCs (although MOOCs are proving to have difficulty sustaining participation) offers evidence of a strategy to share findings and especially products beyond the immediate proposal for work.

The internal network described (p. 39-40) and the external strategies for dissemination are smart and innovative for delivering information and expanding networks of influence.

**Weaknesses:**

None.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**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:**

**(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 methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

**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/iodocviewer/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/).

In addition, we encourage applicants to participate in an optional Webinar hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences on March 6, 2015. This Webinar will discuss strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-experimental Design Studies. Applicants interested in participating in this Webinar may find more information at the following Web site: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/event.aspx?sid=37>.

#### **Strengths:**

Internal evaluation methods are tested, and these demonstrate that the NWP network is already a learning organization. The partnership with SRI for external evaluation is focused on both the CRWP deployment (model fidelity) and the impact on high-need schools (p. 44). The evaluation's quasi-experimental design should allow the project to generate evidence that meets WWC standards without reservations.

There is a lot of qualitative data to be gathered (interviews and surveys of teachers on teacher effectiveness); the quantitative work makes sense in terms of collecting student work and scoring it using the language and rubric that is part of the CRWP.

Plans for program evaluation processes will provide feedback on the CRWP practices and surveys and other instruments will allow the program to make corrections and otherwise adapt to particular site needs (P. 49).

#### **Weaknesses:**

There is a concerning footnote on p. 46 where the proposal indicates that treatment and control groups are to be taught by the same teachers who are "motivated to prevent contamination" and who will thus withhold treatment to some students.

**Reader's Score:** 19

#### **Priority Questions**

##### **CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness - CPP2: Cost-Effectiveness**

##### **1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Improving Efficiency (Cost-Effectiveness)**

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.

**Strengths:**

The proposed management plan includes strategies for cost-effective delivery (using a sophisticated and well-established train-the-trainer model) of high-quality services.

**Weaknesses:**

None

**Reader's Score:** 1

**CPP3: Promoting STEM Education - CPP3: Promoting STEM Education**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education**

(Please only assign a score of either 0 or 2 for this question.)

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).

**Note:** The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 3 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

**Strengths:**

Not sufficiently addressed.

**Weaknesses:**

On p.13., The competitive priority is not for “teachers of academic subjects” but for STEM, specifically. The applicant does not intend to specifically address STEM subjects or support STEM teachers.

**Reader's Score:** 0

**CPP4: High-Need Students - CPP4: High-Need Students**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Supporting High-Need Students**

This priority funds projects that are designed to improve:

- (a) Academic outcomes;
- (b) Learning environments; or

(c) Both,

For one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Students in Lowest-performing Schools.
- (v) Students who are living in poverty and are served by schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty.
- (vi) Disconnected Youth or migrant youth.
- (vii) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

**Note:** The Department encourages applicants to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) under Competitive Preference Priority 4 to which they are well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

**Strengths:**

Very smart design to serve a wide range of high-need students, directly and through their teachers.

**Weaknesses:**

none

**Reader's Score:** 4

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