

Success as the Norm: Scaling-Up KIPP's Effective Leadership Development Model

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Competitive Priorities: The proposed project addresses each of the competitive priorities defined by the grant. Broadly, the key uses of funds in this proposal include: (1) developing a pipeline of effective principals; (2) refining and using KIPP’s leadership development training programs and local pipeline development practices; (3) refining and using the performance evaluation system that includes tools such as KIPP’s Leadership Competency Model and KIPP’s Healthy Schools and Regions Framework to measure principal effectiveness and school quality; and (4) disseminating best practices to school districts and charter schools. These activities align with each of the competitive priorities, as shown below:

How the Proposed Project Addresses the Competitive Preference Priorities (CPP)
<p>CPP 5 - Improve Early Learning Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIPP currently operates 16 primary (early childhood and/or elementary) schools and grant funds will support principal development for an additional 35-50 primary schools • Student achievement results in KIPP’s first primary school in Houston outpaced the district and the state, and are approaching those of one of the state’s most affluent districts (Section C) • Grant funds will be directed toward developing a pipeline of effective principals for primary schools as well as toward differentiating programs, practices and tools based on the unique needs of primary school principals (including the identification of effective assessments for primary schools to be incorporated into the suite of performance management tools)
<p>CPP 6 - Support College Access and Success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All KIPP schools are aligned with the mission of preparing students for success in college and the competitive world beyond; to date, more than 85 percent of KIPP eighth grade completers have matriculated to college • Grant funds will be directed toward developing a pipeline of effective principals who view college success as the ultimate measure of their effectiveness • Grant funds will support expansion of the Healthy Schools and Regions Framework, which identifies college completion as the ultimate measure of a school’s quality and a principal’s effectiveness
<p>CPP 7 - Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence (Section B) indicates that KIPP generates statistically significant and substantial student achievement gains for Limited English Proficiency students • Grant funds will be directed toward developing a pipeline of effective principals for schools with large populations of Limited English Proficient (up to 50 percent of the population in some KIPP schools), as well as toward differentiating programs, practices and tools based on the unique needs of principals leading schools serving such students
<p>CPP 8 - Serve Schools in Rural LEAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIPP has a growing rural presence, particularly in North Carolina and the Arkansas Delta, where school expansion is planned during the grant period • Grant funds will be directed toward developing a pipeline of effective principals for rural communities, as well as toward differentiating programs, practices and tools based on those principals’ unique needs

Project Narrative

A – Need for the Project and Project Design

Meeting the educational needs of all children in our country – particularly those who are poor, minority, or of limited English proficiency – is the most important challenge facing our country over the next decade. The core of this challenge is bringing effective school reform models to scale, led by effective principals who can help chart a path to ensure that all of America’s students have the skills and knowledge to succeed in today’s world.

Consider the following national statistics. In a nation that aspires to be the land of opportunity: (1) only about half of the nation’s African-American and Latino students graduate on time from high school;¹ (2) only one in ten students from low-income families will graduate from college by their mid-twenties;² and (3) students from high-income families in the bottom quartile of achievement graduate from college at higher rates than students from low-income families in the top quartile of achievement.³ This is happening in an age when a college graduate will earn \$1 million more in lifetime earnings than a high school graduate.⁴

Contrast the national picture with that of KIPP – free, open-enrollment, college-preparatory public schools that operate in underserved urban and rural communities across the country, serving poor, largely minority students in pre-K through high school. Since KIPP began in 1994, it has been extraordinarily successful at carrying out its core mission to help students from educationally underserved communities develop the knowledge, skills, character and habits

¹ Education Week. (2007, June 12). *Diplomas Count 2007: Ready for What? Preparing Students for College, Careers, and Life after High School*. Bethesda, MD: Editorial Projects in Education Research Center.

² Mortenson, T. (2009). *Bachelor's Degree Attainment by Age 24 by Family Income Quartiles, 1970 to 2008*. Retrieved from: <http://www.postsecondary.org>.

³ Fox, M.A., Connolly, B.A., and Snyder, T.D. (2005). *Youth Indicators 2005: Trends in the Well-Being of American Youth*, (NCES 2005–050). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

⁴ Day, G.C. and Newburger, E.C. (2002). *The Big Payoff: Educational Attainment and Synthetic Estimates of Work-Life Earnings*, (P23-210). Current Population Reports. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p23-210.pdf>.

needed to succeed in college and the competitive world beyond. Throughout its growth from two to 82 schools, KIPP has maintained its focus on students with the greatest needs. Over 80 percent of the more than 21,000 students currently in KIPP schools qualify for the federal nutrition program, with 69.9 percent qualifying for free meals and 13.5 percent qualifying for reduced price meals. More than 95 percent of KIPP students are African-American or Latino. Students who enter KIPP schools are typically one or two grade levels behind the national average, yet KIPP schools continually help these students outpace their peers across the country in reaching standards and preparing for college. For example, 92 percent of KIPP's eighth grade classes outperform their districts in math, as do 92 percent in English Language Arts (ELA).⁵ KIPP's college matriculation rate stands at more than 85 percent, and over 95 percent of KIPP's eighth-grade completers have graduated from high school.

Despite its exceptional approach to serving high-need students, KIPP's model has not been widely adopted. Although KIPP has learned how to create a group of high-performing schools that are producing radically better results for high-need children, it has not replicated these high-performing models on a scale necessary to prove that success can be the norm for all students.

The work described in this proposal grows out of KIPP's answer to the following question: what investments will enable the KIPP network to grow at a much faster rate – to double the number of students it serves while simultaneously improving its practices and results? For KIPP, the answer has always been to invest in the development of effective principals. KIPP's founders believed that a school is only as strong as its leader. Therefore, ensuring KIPP schools were founded and led by the most talented, best prepared and best trained educators in the country was key to scaling nationally with excellence. KIPP's deliberate investment in talent

⁵ See school-by-school data in Appendix H.4

to date – including its leadership development programs and performance evaluation systems – has been the engine that has fueled the growth and sustainability of KIPP schools.

Toward this end, the proposed project, described in detail below, focuses on investing in the development of effective principals to scale KIPP’s school model with fidelity. The principal pipeline development practices that the KIPP network has created, and here proposes to broaden and deepen, are eminently replicable and will fill a critical void in the efforts to expand dramatically the number of school principals prepared to create and sustain high-performing schools – both KIPP schools and others – that successfully serve high-need students.

The Proposed Project: Scaling-Up KIPP’s Effective Leadership Development Model by Developing, Expanding and Sharing Practices to Grow the Pipeline of Effective Principals

The non-profit KIPP Foundation (founded to manage the replication of KIPP schools), in partnership with KIPP schools and regional organizations, seeks Investing in Innovation (i3) funds under **Absolute Priority 1 – Innovations that Support Effective Teachers and Principals** to increase dramatically the number of effective principals prepared to lead high-performing schools serving high-need students. (A KIPP region refers to a cluster of KIPP schools that are in the same geographic area, are managed by a local Executive Director and governing board and share a service center that provides operational and instructional support.)

To understand the strategies and goals of the proposed project, as well as KIPP’s track record of impressive student achievement gains, one must first understand KIPP’s beginnings – for much of what was put in place by KIPP’s founders remains at the core today. KIPP began in 1994 when two teachers, Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin launched a fifth-grade school program in inner-city Houston. With 48 students and an unwavering emphasis on hard work and high expectations, Feinberg and Levin delivered results that drew national attention. Although half of

their students began the year with failing scores on the Texas state test, by the end of the year 98 percent passed both the reading and math sections. In 1995, building on this initial success, Feinberg remained in Houston to lead KIPP Academy Middle School, while Levin returned home to New York City to establish KIPP Academy in the South Bronx.

These first two schools shared a commitment to a set of operating principles, the Five Pillars, which are listed in Figure A.1, and serve as the core principles of all KIPP schools.

Figure A.1 KIPP’s Five Pillars

High Expectations	KIPP schools have clearly defined and measurable high expectations for academic achievement and conduct.
Choice & Commitment	Students, their parents and the faculty of each KIPP school choose to participate in the program. Everyone must make and uphold a commitment to the school and to each other to put in the time and effort required to achieve success.
More Time	With an extended day, week and year, students have more time in the classroom to acquire the academic knowledge and skills that will prepare them for success in college.
Power to Lead	Principals have control over their school budget and personnel allowing them maximum effectiveness in helping students learn.
Focus on Results	KIPP schools relentlessly focus on student performance and character development.

Project Goals and Overall Strategies

KIPP’s goals for the proposed project are threefold (see Figure A.2) and focus on: increasing the pipeline of effective principals who are prepared to open or sustain successful KIPP schools grounded in the Five Pillars; and, on equipping others to adopt proven practices.

Figure A.2 Summary of KIPP’s Project Goals

Goal #1	Train 1,000 leaders, including approximately 250 principals who will each open a new school or assume the leadership of an existing school during the grant period (includes approximately 60 principals outside of the KIPP network); and 750 future leaders who will start on the path to school leadership.
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Goal #2	Increase annual school openings by at least 50 percent, accelerating from opening an average of 10 schools per year in the last five years to 15-18 schools per year during the grant period. Accelerated growth will allow 50,000 students to be served in urban and rural KIPP schools by the end of the grant period and 66,000 students as those schools reach full enrollment. ⁶
Goal #3	Equip urban and rural school districts in which KIPP schools are located and scaling charter management organizations to learn to adopt proven KIPP leadership practices to deepen and expand their own principal pipelines to benefit 3 million more students.

To meet the goals outlined above, KIPP will advance an exceptional approach to a largely unmet need through a three-part strategy that is summarized in Figure A.3.

Figure A.3 KIPP’s Three-Part Strategy to Reach these Goals

<p>To reach Goals #1 & #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy #1: Deepen and expand the pipeline of effective principals able to start and lead KIPP schools successfully serving high-need students. • Strategy #2: Support, develop and evaluate current and aspiring principals by enhancing KIPP’s performance evaluation system.
<p>To reach Goal #3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy #3: Disseminate proven KIPP leadership development practices to school districts and scaling charter management organizations to enable them to deepen and expand their own principal pipelines and support, evaluate and retain principals.

Strategies to Reach Goals

Strategy #1: Deepen and expand the pipeline of effective principals able to start and lead schools successfully serving high-need students.

Over the past four years, KIPP has deepened its commitment to leadership development and internal pipeline development as the driver of growth, excellence and sustainability. Specifically, KIPP invests in identifying and developing future principals from within the very schools that are already delivering results for high-need students for two reasons: first, teachers and assistant principals within these schools already know what it takes to create a successful school and have been integral to making that success happen; second, an intentional, home-grown principal pipeline has a significant multiplier effect as the schools started by new

⁶ KIPP schools typically open with one grade and add one grade per year until reaching full scale.

principals will, in turn, be incubators for the next generation of effective principals both within and outside the KIPP network.

Currently, KIPP offers distinct school leadership development programs that target participants at different points on the path to becoming principals including: grade level chairs, assistant principals, principals assuming leadership of an existing school (successor principals) and two programs designed for principals opening new schools. These year-long cohort-based programs include one or more of the following: a summer institute (six weeks of intensive training and coursework in a university setting), multiple leadership development workshops (lasting from three days to two weeks), participation in a third-party school review team, individualized leadership coaching, completion of a Master’s degree and credentialing program and residencies in high-performing schools. As demonstrated in Figure A.4 below, the training and preparation becomes more intense at each subsequent stage of the leadership pipeline.

One of the distinct elements that characterize each of the KIPP school leadership development programs below is the training within a national cohort. The geographic reach of KIPP schools across the country gives program participants the opportunity to network with a cohort that extends past their own schools or regions and so ensure that best practices are learned and shared widely. As such, all of the program components listed below are designed, planned and executed at a national level.

Figure A.4 KIPP School Leadership Development Programs

Program	Description	Program Elements
Grade Level Chair	A one-year program that develops skills (e.g., data analysis to improve instruction, leading meetings) in those teachers assuming leadership responsibilities at the grade level.	Leadership Development Workshops
Assistant Principal	A one-year program that trains assistant principals to demonstrate greater leadership and responsibility on a school’s senior leadership team.	Summer Institute; Leadership Development Workshops; Master’s degree and Credential Program

Successor Principal	A one-year program that prepares assistant principals to assume leadership at an existing school within 18 months.	Summer Institute; Leadership Development Workshops; Coaching; School Review; Residencies; Master’s degree and Credential Program
Miles Family Fellowship for School Founders	The first year of a two-year program that provides participants interested in starting a new KIPP school with the requisite leadership experiences to apply to the Fisher Fellowship.	Leadership Development Workshops; Coaching; Customized Placement in a KIPP school based on Individualized Leadership Development Plan
Fisher Fellowship for School Founders	A one-year program that prepares entrepreneurial educators to found and lead new KIPP schools.	Summer Institute; Leadership Development Workshops; Coaching; School Review; Residencies; Master’s degree and Credential Program

The tremendous growth in demand for seats in these programs shows how well they are received not only across the KIPP network, but also by partner organizations (see Appendix H.1). Over the past three years, the KIPP Foundation has trained nearly 400 current and aspiring principals, including more than 60 principals from other non-KIPP charter schools, thereby extending the reach of KIPP’s training programs to more students.

Meeting KIPP’s ambitious principal development and school replication goals described in Goal #1 and Goal #2 now depends on deepening and significantly expanding the reach of these pipeline programs that launch teachers on the path to found new or lead existing KIPP schools. Therefore, KIPP will use a substantial portion of funds to:

Activity 1a: Expand the capacity of KIPP’s principal training to support the creation of additional seats in these programs, particularly the earlier stage programs, providing KIPP with the capacity to train nearly 1,000 future urban and rural principals serving the full pre-K through high school continuum as well as to fund program enhancements to the successor principal program to ensure sustained success in mature schools. Grant funds will be used to refine successor principal training to include “residencies” (a series of two-week apprenticeships in

high-performing schools) and the opportunity to participate, along with a peer and an independent evaluator, in a review of the school for which the participant will be assuming the principal role in order to inform first-year leadership priorities.

Activity 1b: Significantly expand the pool of principals-in-training by staffing the assistant principal role sooner in a school's development. The assistant principal role is a direct training ground for future principals. Because KIPP schools consistently receive less funding per pupil than traditional public schools and take several years to grow to full enrollment, most KIPP schools do not staff an assistant principal role until the fourth year of a school's existence, which impedes KIPP's ability to support positions that give aspiring principals the real world experience they need to open and successfully lead high-need schools. Grant funds will enable KIPP to hire assistant principals earlier in a school's life, thereby accelerating the development of a strong pipeline of future principals.

Activity 1c: Advance effective local practices to support the development of principal pipelines. Members of the KIPP Foundation's national training team will work with local Directors of Leadership Development to create training modules that can be implemented locally so that more aspiring principals have access to rigorous and high-quality leadership training. Grant funds will enable Directors of Leadership Development to enhance KIPP's ability to identify, support, place and evaluate talent.

Activity 1d: Codify and support the exchange of effective local principal pipeline development practices. Fortunately, some principals and regional Directors of Leadership Development have begun to identify and create effective development paths for aspiring principals. With grant funds, Mathematica, KIPP's partner in program evaluation, will identify KIPP regions that have the best track records in: (1) managing through leadership transitions

(i.e., with little or no impact on factors such as student achievement and teacher retention) and (2) utilizing performance evaluation systems to identify – from within existing teacher pools – strong candidates to become effective principals. Mathematica will codify these local practices in case studies to be disseminated throughout the KIPP network and beyond.

Strategy #2: Support, develop and evaluate current and aspiring principals by enhancing KIPP’s performance evaluation system.

To support the principal development and school replication growth described in Goal #1 and Goal #2 and to propel sharing with the education sector as described in Goal #3, KIPP will use a portion of i3 funds to continue building two key tools of KIPP’s performance evaluation system: the Leadership Competency Model and the Healthy Schools and Regions Framework. These tools measure, respectively, the effectiveness of principals and the quality and sustainability of schools, and are used in processes to cultivate and support great principals as well as to measure the success of leadership development investments. As demonstrated below, these tools are fair, rigorous, transparent, and use multiple measures (with student gains as a significant factor) and multiple rating categories to differentiate performance. Therefore, KIPP proposes using a portion of grant funds for the following activities:

Activity 2a: Ensure ongoing refinement and adoption of KIPP’s Leadership

Competency Model. This research-based tool, designed in collaboration with KIPP school principals and national experts, describes the competencies and behaviors that define effective principals (further details provided in Appendix H.2). KIPP uses the Leadership Competency Model in its pedagogy, coaching model and evaluation tools to develop current and future principals. Tools associated with the Leadership Competency Model form a rigorous, transparent and fair evaluation system that includes: mid-year and end-of-year performance evaluations, 360 degree –full circle feedback” reviews, career progression roadmaps (e.g., what

to expect in transition from grade level chair to assistant principal) and proficiency roadmaps (e.g., expectations of a novice versus a master principal). Grant funds will support the following activities: (1) refinement of tools in collaboration with a steering committee of teachers and principals to identify any unique requirements for sub-populations within the KIPP network (e.g., early childhood principals, rural principals and principals serving large populations of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students); (2) validation of those elements that are better predictors of principal effectiveness; (3) extension of the Leadership Competency Model so that it can be used by principals to evaluate teachers; and (4) dissemination of effective practices both within and beyond KIPP.

Activity 2b: Continue to implement and refine KIPP's Healthy Schools and Regions Framework. The KIPP Foundation's Research, Design and Innovation team, in collaboration with KIPP principals, has developed the Healthy Schools and Regions Framework⁷ for defining school quality and sustainability based on multiple measures collected from a myriad of sources (e.g., student assessments, parent and teacher surveys, observations from a comprehensive school review) (further details provided in Appendix H.3). The information collected through the Healthy Schools and Regions Framework allows principals to: critically assess their schools against a robust set of performance outcomes and leading indicators; to identify best-in-class practices by transparently viewing data from across KIPP's national network of schools; and to share strategies for improvement.

Grant funds will support: (1) the refinement of data collection and reporting (e.g., assessments, survey instruments, school reviews and performance dashboards); (2) infrastructure related to data collection, analysis and reporting; and (3) ongoing training and support for principals and other leaders in data-driven decision-making.

⁷ Trademark application has been filed.

Activity 2c: Enable principals to effectively use performance management tools. To truly leverage these tools, principals need to understand not only who is achieving the greatest results in key areas, but also how these outcomes have been attained. Grant funds will allow local leadership to hire Performance Evaluation Managers who will play an essential role in supporting principals to effectively implement performance evaluation systems by handling one or more of the following responsibilities: management of assessments and other data collection; data analysis, reporting and coaching; and performance reviews.

Strategy #3: Disseminate proven KIPP leadership development practices to school districts and scaling charter management organizations to enable them to deepen and expand their own principal pipelines and support, evaluate and retain principals.

In support of Goal #3 to share KIPP's practices with others, the final set of activities will focus on identifying, capturing, leveraging and disseminating KIPP's most successful principal pipeline development practices. These practices can be adopted by others who are engaged in building, growing and/or sustaining systems of schools in service to high-need students. (See Section E - Dissemination Methods for further detail.)

Activity 3a: Codify tools, programs, and practices. KIPP will identify, capture and share information about its pipeline development practices both within and beyond the KIPP network. The first suite of tools to be disseminated will include: (1) KIPP's Healthy Schools and Regions Framework, including detailed indicators, metrics, data collection protocol and survey instruments for measuring and reporting school quality and (2) KIPP's Leadership Competency Model, including evaluation tools, goal-setting tools, proficiency and leadership development roadmaps, realistic job preview tools, interview protocols and selection rubrics.

Activity 3b: Disseminate tools and practices. Further, KIPP will produce and disseminate accessible information about its pipeline development practices through multiple avenues including:

- *National Online Portal.* KIPP will create a national online portal that provides leaders both within the KIPP network and across the country with access to the tools and best practices highlighted above as well as to a library of case studies.
- *National Leadership Development Symposiums for Superintendents and District Leaders.* KIPP will host a national symposium for superintendents and district leaders to share knowledge about how to effectively build internal leadership pipelines within a system of schools and to provide hands-on technical assistance to those interested in creating their own comprehensive model for evaluating essential academic and non-academic student outcomes. These symposiums will be hosted three times throughout the grant period and will target superintendents and school administrators in school districts in which KIPP schools are located (accounting for 17 of the 20 largest cities in the nation).

B – Strength of the Research, Significance of the Effect and Magnitude of Effect

Research Overview

KIPP schools, run by KIPP-trained principals and utilizing the Five Pillars, have consistently demonstrated success in meeting their core mission to: improve, substantially and measurably, student achievement and growth; close achievement gaps; increase high school graduation rates; and improve college attainment. There are increasing numbers of experimental and non-experimental studies examining the potential effects of charter schools and the charter school movement,⁸ but **KIPP is unique in that it has multiple, rigorous studies focused solely**

⁸ Solomon et al. 2001; Hoxby and Rockoff 2005; Witte et al. 2007; Abdulkadiroglu et al. 2009; Hoxby et al. 2009; Dobbie and Fryer 2009; Zimmer et al. 2009.

on its specific model (see Figure B.1 for a complete list). Section B details this KIPP-specific body of research that meets the *Strong Evidence* threshold supporting KIPP’s application for a scale-up grant:

- The KIPP model has been evaluated in multiple well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental studies in diverse states and school districts;
- The entire body of evidence – rigorous, correlational, and descriptive – indicates that the effects of KIPP are positive, such that KIPP improves student achievement and growth; and

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Here, we highlight three rigorous, well-designed and well-implemented research studies authored by the following organizations: (1) Mathematica Policy Research,¹⁰ (2) National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER),¹¹ and (3) SRI International.¹² Individually and collectively, these studies demonstrate that the KIPP model is realizing statistically significant, substantial and important effects in terms of student achievement gains for high-need students in both urban and rural communities.

Individually, each of the three studies has high *internal validity*: the NBER study uses school lottery results to select a randomized control group; and the Mathematica and SRI studies use quasi-experimental designs employing matched comparison groups. In addition, the Mathematica study examines 22 KIPP schools in multiple states and demonstrates the *external*

⁹ Tuttle, C.C., Teh, B., Nichols-Barrer, I., Gill, B., and Gleason, P. (forthcoming June 2010) *Student Characteristics and Achievement in 22 KIPP Middle Schools: A Report of the National Evaluation of KIPP Middle Schools*. Washington, D.C.: Mathematica Policy Research.

¹⁰ Tuttle et al. 2010.

¹¹ Angrist, Dynarski, Kane, Pathak, and Walters. (2010) *Who Benefits from KIPP?* Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

¹² Woodworth, K.R., David, J.L., Guha, R., Wang, H., & Lopez-Torkos, A. (2008). *San Francisco Bay Area KIPP schools: A study of early implementation and achievement. Final report*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

validity of KIPP’s impact (i.e., that KIPP’s impact can be generalized and that the KIPP model is scalable in a national context).

Strong Evidence of KIPP’s Impacts to Support the Proposed Project

Study #1: Mathematica Policy Research

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¹³ Pre-publication version of *Student Characteristics and Achievement in 22 KIPP Middle Schools: A Report of the National Evaluation of KIPP Middle Schools* available upon request.

[Redacted]

¹⁴ Two-tenths of a standard deviation is viewed as substantively important based on a study done on the achievement effects of class-size reduction measured in Tennessee's Project STAR. This is often used for comparative purposes in benchmarking effect size in other educational interventions.

¹⁵ Bloom, H.S., Hill, C.J., Rebeck Black, A., and Lipsey, M.W. (2008). *Performance Trajectories and Performance Gaps as Achievement Effect Size Benchmarks for Educational Interventions*. Working Paper.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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Study #2: National Bureau of Economic Research

Another recent well-designed and well-implemented study, *Who Benefits from KIPP?*, published by the NBER, examined KIPP Academy Lynn, in Lynn, Massachusetts and showed that KIPP Academy Lynn is **generating statistically significant and substantial student achievement gains, particularly for LEP students, special education students and students with the lowest achievement at time of entry**. State test gains for *each year* a student spends at KIPP Academy Lynn were 0.35σ in mathematics and 0.12σ in ELA. The NBER study also found effect sizes of 0.44σ in math and 0.38σ in ELA for SPED students and 0.45σ and 0.38σ , respectively, for LEP students. The NBER study used a rigorous, lottery-based approach to create statistically comparable treatment and control groups. Because of this, the NBER study is able to examine (and control for) observable characteristics, and ensure that the treatment and control groups were equivalent in terms of unobservable characteristics like family motivation.

NBER Design and Implementation. The NBER researchers utilized admissions lotteries for four entering cohorts of students (2005-2008) in order to estimate the causal effect on achievement as a function of time at KIPP Academy Lynn, controlling for selection bias. This design, equivalent to a randomized control trial, is eligible to receive the What Works Clearinghouse's highest rating of meeting standards (without reservations).

As expected in a randomized design, the treatment and control groups were demographically similar. However, the study also found that KIPP Academy Lynn serves students from an equally or more underserved demographic than the population of its surrounding school district and KIPP Academy Lynn actually takes in applicants that “have somewhat lower test scores than the average Lynn [Public Schools] student” (Angrist et al, 2010).

NBER Findings and Effects. Overall, the NBER study key conclusions are statistically significant and substantial. Key findings include:

- **KIPP is generating significant and substantial student achievement gains.** State test score gains for each year a student spends at KIPP Academy Lynn were 0.35σ in math and 0.12σ in ELA. These results are significant at the 1 percent level.
- **Students at KIPP Academy Lynn who historically have faced the biggest learning challenges in other contexts – LEP students, special education students and the lowest achievers – make the most progress.** As noted in the study, “the findings reported here strongly suggest that KIPP Academy Lynn benefits the weakest students most” (Angrist et al, 2010). For example: (1) test score gains for special education and LEP students were larger in Mathematics (0.44σ , 0.45σ respectively) and ELA (0.30σ , 0.38σ), and (2) students with baseline scores half a standard deviation below the applicant mean receive an additional achievement boost of 0.05σ and 0.08σ each year they attend KIPP Academy Lynn.
- **Student attrition is comparable for successful and unsuccessful lottery participants.** Thus, the statistically significant and substantial results reported above are not due to high levels of student attrition.

NBER Synopsis. The NBER study is well-designed and well-implemented, the key findings cited above are statistically significant, substantial and important, and the study has high internal validity.

Study #3: SRI International

The SRI study, *San Francisco Bay Area KIPP schools: A Study of Early Implementation and Achievement - Final Report* is well-designed and well-implemented (as evidenced by its What Works Clearinghouse evidence rating),¹⁶ the key findings are statistically significant and substantial, and the study has high internal validity. As part of SRI International's comprehensive examination of KIPP Bay Area, SRI observed that **“Bay Area KIPP schools outperform their local districts and that their students make above-average gains compared with national norms”** (Woodworth et al, 2008). In order to determine whether the observed achievement gains were attributable to KIPP, SRI conducted a quasi-experimental study using a matched comparison group design for two cohorts of fifth grade students in each of three KIPP Bay Area middle schools. The study found positive and statistically significant one-year effect sizes in both math and ELA. In math, each cohort across all three schools studied had positive effect sizes ranging from 0.19σ to 0.86σ . A majority of the effect sizes in ELA were significant and ranged from 0.16σ to 0.54σ across schools and cohorts.

SRI Design and Implementation. The SRI researchers employed a propensity score matching approach and identified ~~the~~ factors (e.g., prior achievement, race/ethnicity and residential location) that predict whether a student will attend KIPP” and then matched KIPP students with similar non-KIPP students. Since all key factors predicting KIPP enrollment and

¹⁶ What Works Clearinghouse. (2008). *WWC Quick Review: San Francisco Bay Area KIPP Schools: A Study Of Early Implementation and Achievement*. Retrieved May 10, 2010 from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc>.

test scores were included in the matching, this approach produced as unbiased an estimate of the impact of KIPP as is possible, short of random assignment (Woodworth et al, 2008).

SRI Findings and Effects. Key findings supporting KIPP’s model include: **Attending KIPP produced 5th grade math achievement effects that are “positive and statistically significant for all three schools across both cohorts, with effect sizes ranging from 0.19 σ to 0.86 σ .** These effect sizes correspond to adjusted differences in estimated percentile rank between KIPP and non-KIPP students ranging from 6.8 to 33.0 percentile points. For fifth-grade ELA achievement, four of the six effect sizes are statistically significant, ranging from 0.16 σ to 0.54 σ , across schools and cohorts,” corresponding to adjusted differences ranging from 5.6 to 21.0 percentile points. In a field where 0.20 σ is generally considered to be a policy-relevant effect, these represent modest to substantial effect sizes” (Woodworth et al, 2008). The effect sizes described above are all one-year impacts.

SRI Synopsis. The SRI study on KIPP Bay Area is well-designed and well-implemented, the key findings are statistically significant, substantial and important and the study has high internal validity.

Supporting Evidence from Additional Research Studies

In addition to the three major studies referenced above, there have been several other descriptive and quasi-experimental studies (including two additional matched comparison group designs in Baltimore and Memphis) conducted on KIPP schools since 2001 that corroborate the evidence provided by the three studies detailed above, and that further demonstrate KIPP’s impact on students across multiple and diverse geographic locations. The policy brief *What Do We Know About the Outcomes of KIPP Schools?* by Jeffrey R. Henig at Columbia University, is an analysis of six of these studies. From his meta-review Henig found the following:

- Students who enter and stay in KIPP schools tend to perform better than comparable students in more traditional public schools;
- Better performance does not appear to be attributable to selective admissions; and,
- KIPP students tend to be minorities and many performed poorly in previous schools.

We have adapted a chart from Henig’s brief to demonstrate the breadth of the research conducted on KIPP’s model (see Figure B.1). These additional studies of KIPP schools prove that KIPP schools are successful at meeting their core mission to improve, substantially and measurably, student achievement and growth, close achievement gaps, increase high school graduation rates, and improve college enrollment and completion rates.

KIPP’s Model is Research Proven

The breadth and rigor of the existing research evidence on KIPP constitutes strong evidence and supports the request for a scale-up grant, so that KIPP may expand its programming to serve significantly more high-need urban and rural students directly and to indirectly serve even more students through the sharing of best practices.

Figure B.1 Overview of KIPP Research Studies

Study (Author)	Year	Study Design	Sites Included (and Cohort #'s)	Number of years of follow-up	Comparison Group	Effects: Significance and Magnitude
Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Gill, Gleason, Nichols-Barrer, Teh, Tuttle)	2010	QED using student-level propensity score-matched comparison group.	22 KIPP schools nationwide, 2 to 6 cohorts each	2 years baseline, 1- 4 years follow-up per cohort	Matched students in local public school districts in which KIPP schools reside	[REDACTED]
NBER (Angrist, Dynarski, Kane, Pathak, Walters)	2010	Student-level, lottery-based	KIPP Lynn, Lynn, Massachusetts (4 cohorts)	1- 4 years follow-up per cohort	Unsuccessful KIPP Academy Lynn lottery participants	State test math gains of 0.35 for each year at KIPP, with larger gains for LEP and SPED students. Reading gains of 0.12 SD for each year, with larger gains for SPED (0.3-0.4 SD) and LEP students. Slightly greater gains in both subjects for students with lower incoming baseline scores.
SRI International (Woodworth, David, Guha, Wang, Lopez-Torkos)	(1) 2008 (2) 2006	(1) QED using student-level propensity score-matched comparison group. (2) Analysis of KIPP NRT data, interviews, surveys, observations.	(1) 3 Bay Area Schools (2 cohorts each); (2) 5 Bay Area schools	3 years follow-up per cohort	Matched students in Bay Area Districts serving KIPP students	After 1 year, KIPP had effects sizes ranging from 0.16 to 0.86 on students who entered in 5 th grade. KIPP also had effect sizes ranging from 0.24 to 0.88 after 1 year with students who entered in 6 th grade.
Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis. (McDonald, Ross, Abney, Zoblotsky)	2008	QED using matched comparison group design:	KIPP Diamond, Memphis, TN (4 cohorts)	Up to 4 years follow-up per cohort	Matched students at nearby and similar schools	–“Noteworthy achievement” in Year 1 and Year 4 revealed fairly positive outcomes, with speculation that leadership instability had disrupted earlier progress.
The Center for Social Organization of Schools. Johns Hopkins University (Mac Iver, Farley-Ripple)	2007	QED using student-level matched comparison group design	KIPP Ujima Village, Baltimore, MD (4 cohorts)	Up to 4 years follow-up per cohort	Own prior achievement and matched students at feeder schools	KIPP advantage was statistically significant even when students who subsequently left the program were retained as part of the experiment group.
Educational Policy Institute	2005	School-level Achievement Analysis w/ State and NRT’s	24 KIPP schools nationwide	1 year	National Norms	–“KIPP schools post substantially greater gains than what is considered normal.”
Musher, K., Musher, D., Graviss, Strudler	2005	School-level Achievement Analysis Using State and NRT’s	KIPP Academy Middle, Houston, TX (2 cohorts)	3 years	National Norms	Woodcock-Johnson scores in reading, math, and writing improved about 1.8 years for each academic year for both cohorts. Only low-income neighborhood school in TX with 100% of eighth-grade students passing all components of TAKS.
New American Schools. (Doran, H.C., and Drury, D.W.)	2002	Student-level Analysis of Achievement Gains	KIPP DC: KEY, KIPP Gaston College Prep, KIPP 3D	1 year	District Aggregate; National Norms	KIPP students’ scores overall and for subgroups –improved at impressive rates,” greater than those same students achieved before entering KIPP, and greater than respective districts. Largest gains in DC (12.13 NCE’s in reading and 23.54 in math).

C – Experience of the Eligible Applicant

The eligible applicant includes the KIPP Foundation, a nonprofit organization, and the consortium of KIPP schools and regional organizations. KIPP delivers a transformational educational experience to both rural and urban students throughout the pre-K through high school continuum. The KIPP model has resulted in both positive student achievement and student attainment outcomes. Section B provided strong evidence of KIPP’s success based on rigorous, well-designed and well-implemented independent studies. This section addresses KIPP’s experience in scaling-up large, complex, and rapidly growing projects, and provides additional evidence of KIPP’s continued impact on student achievement and attainment.

Past Performance Implementing Large, Complex and Rapidly Growing Projects

KIPP has a decade-long track record of successfully implementing and managing large, complex and rapidly growing projects. Demonstrating this, first and foremost, is the successful management of the rapid growth of the KIPP network itself:

- The KIPP network has grown from two schools serving 600 students to 82 schools serving more than 21,000 students in just under a decade.
- During this period of exponential growth, KIPP has maintained a profound commitment to serving our country’s students with the greatest needs – more than 80 percent of students in KIPP schools qualify for free or reduced-price meals through the federal nutrition program.
- KIPP has extended its geographic reach from just two states to 20 states and the District of Columbia, each with its own charter laws and drastically different per pupil funding levels, ranging from \$5,400 per student in Oklahoma to nearly \$16,000 per student in New Jersey.¹⁷
- KIPP has expanded beyond the original middle school model to a pre-K- high school model, establishing 16 primary schools and 11 high schools within KIPP regions.

¹⁷ By summer 2010, when KIPP opens in Jacksonville, Florida.

Most significantly, KIPP has managed this rapid growth while maintaining the dramatic student achievement results that sparked the initial demand for school replication.

This successful growth has been made possible by the KIPP Foundation's careful management and implementation of several large, complex and rapidly growing programs in support of the scale-up of the KIPP network. First among these is the creation and growth of KIPP's leadership development programs. The KIPP Foundation was created in April 2000 to replicate the KIPP model, and in particular to recruit, select and develop educators to plan, open and lead their own KIPP schools in high-need rural and urban communities across the country. Don and Doris Fisher, founders of Gap, Inc. were convinced that the achievements in the flagship KIPP Academies in Houston and the Bronx were not accidental, but rather the expected consequence of fidelity to the Five Pillars. They approached KIPP's founders to replicate the success of the flagship schools, and in 2001 KIPP launched the Fisher Fellowship, an intensive year-long program to prepare educators to open new KIPP schools. Since its inception, the Fisher Fellowship has trained nearly 100 KIPP school founders. Furthermore, KIPP's leadership development programs have expanded from one program serving three principals preparing to open new KIPP schools to a set of differentiated training programs that have developed 400 current and aspiring principals, including 60 principals from other charter school networks.

Other KIPP programs that have grown rapidly and increased in complexity include:

- *Board and Regional Leader Communities of Practice.* The KIPP Foundation established the only national community of practice for charter boards and a national community of practice of regional leaders to support the ongoing professional development and exchange of

effective practices among KIPP's growing network of more than 30 autonomous local executive teams and the hundreds of members of their local governing boards.

- *Annual KIPP School Summit.* The KIPP Foundation continues to host an annual summit which has evolved from a conference for 35 teachers and leaders to a summer symposium offering 2,000 participants the opportunity to learn and share effective practices with their peers from across the country through 250 professional development sessions delivered through more than 20 differentiated strands of content.
- *Performance Evaluation Management Tools.* In less than three years, the KIPP Foundation's Research, Design and Innovation team has: coordinated with representatives from all existing schools and regions to develop a framework for defining school quality and design tools for capturing the appropriate data via the Healthy Schools and Regions Framework; piloted the concept in 26 schools; and implemented the tools across the full network of 82 schools and to others in the field.

KIPP has Significantly Improved Student Achievement and Attainment Results

As described below and illustrated in Figures C.1 and C.2, KIPP schools have a proven track record of increasing student achievement as measured by both: (a) national norm-referenced exams and (b) state criterion-referenced exams.¹⁸

¹⁸ Figure C.1 is accurate as of the end of the 2007-2008 school year. Four-year growth data presented in this form with National Percentile Ranks is not available for the 2008-2009 school year due to KIPP's switch from the use of the Stanford-10 to NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. Figure C.2 is accurate as of Spring 2009.

Figure C.1. Norm-Referenced Test Results¹⁹

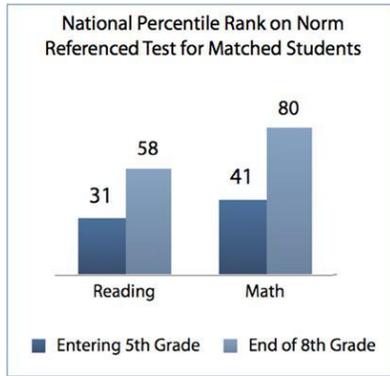
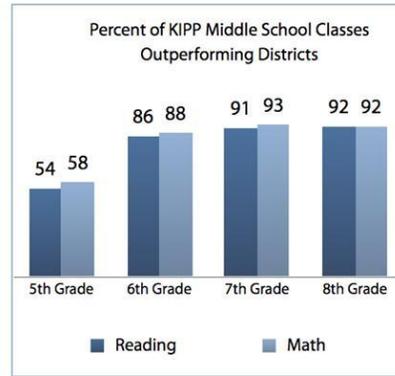


Figure C.2 State Criterion-Referenced Test Results



National norm-referenced exams

The average student who takes a nationally norm-referenced exam will score at the 50th percentile, which is considered on grade level. Many students who start at KIPP in the fifth grade often perform at least one grade level or more behind their peers.²⁰ As demonstrated in Figure C.1., historically, after four years at KIPP, many students made gains of nearly four deciles in math and nearly three deciles in reading as measured on the SAT-10 test.²¹

State criterion-referenced exams

Data from KIPP primary, middle and high schools show that students across the country are achieving at outstanding levels, in most cases far beyond their peers in traditional district schools. The following sections describe KIPP’s results by school type.

- *Primary Schools.* Until second grade, schools utilize a variety of diagnostic and formative assessments to measure the development of literacy skills, mathematical concepts, social and emotional, and fine and gross motor skills. KIPP SHINE Prep in Houston, TX represents

¹⁹ KIPP’s middle schools serve fifth through eighth grade. This chart is based on middle school student performance on the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT-10). National Percentile Rank (NPR) here is determined by averaging the Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores for all matched KIPP students and converting the average NCE to an NPR.

²⁰ All second through eighth grade KIPP students take a norm-referenced achievement exam (NRT). Until 2008-2009, the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT-10) was the primary norm-referenced test used at KIPP. We then began transitioning to a nationally-normed, computer-adaptive assessment called Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). NRT’s allow us to track the performance of students while enrolled in KIPP as compared to their grade-level peers nationally. This provides KIPP with a way to monitor student achievement longitudinally and to see the progress students are making on the road to college.

²¹ Due to the gradual transition to the new NRT (Measure of Academic Progress), KIPP does not have national information about decile gains on MAP yet.

KIPP’s most mature primary school (founded in 2004), and includes KIPP’s first third grade cohort of students.²² As Figure C.3 illustrates, at KIPP SHINE, student achievement results on Texas’s State Criterion Reference Exam not only far outpaced both the Houston Independent School District and the state; they also are approaching the most affluent communities in Texas, including Highland Park, in suburban Dallas, even though KIPP SHINE enrolls larger numbers of low-income students and LEP students.

Figure C.3 KIPP SHINE 3rd Graders vs. District and State Counterparts

School/ District	3 rd Grade Reading TAKS Passing Rate	Reading TAKS Commended Performance*	3 rd Grade Math TAKS Passing Rate	Math TAKS Commended Performance*	Low-income Students	Limited English Proficiency Students
KIPP SHINE Prep	100%	60%	99%	66%	96%	58%
Houston ISD	90%	41%	82%	34%	81%	31%
Highland Park ISD	100%	88%	100%	80%	0%	< 1%
State of Texas	89%	46%	84%	37%	57%	17%

Source: Texas Education Agency’s Academic Excellence Indicator System (<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/>)

*A Commended Performance (CP) score indicates that a student has answered 96% or more questions correctly.

- *Middle Schools.* The vast majority of KIPP eighth-graders outperform their local district counterparts on state criterion-referenced exams in ELA, math and science. For example, the eighth graders in:

- **92 percent of KIPP schools outperform the local district in math**
- **92 percent of KIPP schools outperform the local district in ELA**
- **88 percent of KIPP schools outperform the local district in science**

Furthermore, the research body cited in Section B provides strong evidence that KIPP is realizing these student achievement gains while serving **higher proportions of low-income**

²² Most KIPP elementary schools start with pre-K or kindergarten classes. The majority of KIPP schools are currently in their first or second year. Most state criterion-referenced testing begins in the third grade, and KIPP schools administer nationally norm-referenced tests (such as the SAT-10 or MAP assessment) beginning in the second grade. As a result, in 2007-2008, only two elementary schools, KIPP SHINE and KIPP McDonogh 15 Elementary, a creative arts transformation school in New Orleans, have students who took state or norm-referenced assessments. KIPP SHINE’s results are detailed above. KIPP McDonogh 15 Elementary’s historical results have been encouraging, with all students making gains in each subject.

and minority students than the districts where its schools are located, and enrolling students who perform at the same baseline level, or lower.

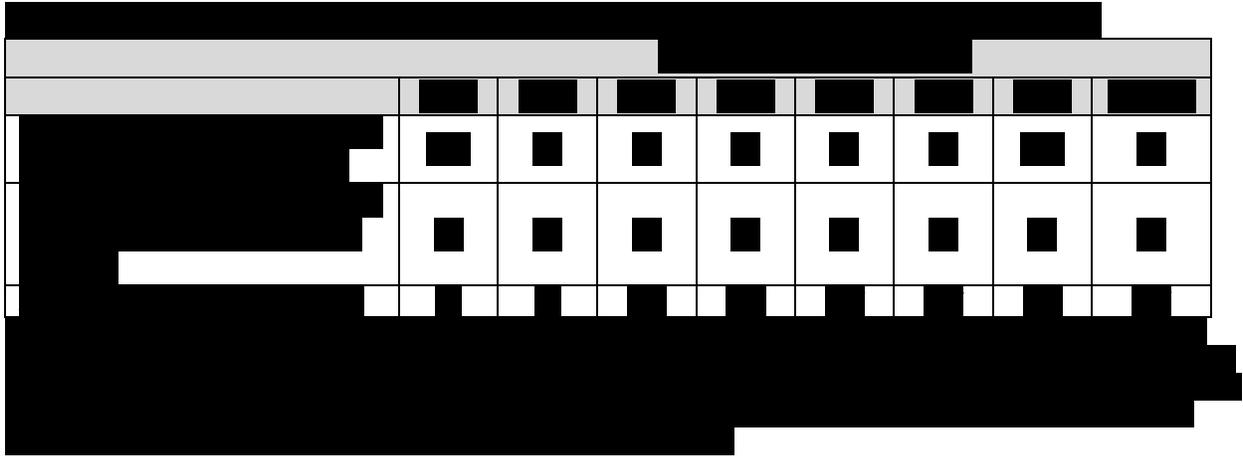
For a closer look at proficient and advanced levels of KIPP eighth graders on their state assessments in comparison to their local district counterparts, please see Appendix H.4.

- *High Schools.* KIPP currently operates 11 high schools, seven of which were in operation during the spring 2009 testing season. Impressively, **100 percent of KIPP high school classes outperformed their local districts on state criterion referenced exams** in ELA, general math, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, general science and history/social science.

Student Attainment Results

While a significant percentage of schools across the country report their college matriculation rate as the percentage of high school seniors who matriculate, KIPP tracks and reports the percent of students who complete the *eighth grade* at KIPP and then go on to graduate from high school and matriculate to college. In a nation where typically only 40 percent of low-income students go onto college,²³ of those students who attended and completed a KIPP middle school in or before 2004: **88 percent of KIPP alumni have matriculated to college. Furthermore, 95 percent of KIPP eighth grade completers have graduated from high school.** [REDACTED]

²³ This represents the percentage of students from low-income families nationally that enter college, based on original data from the Census Bureau and National Center for Education Statistics. Mortenson, T. (2009, November). *Family Income and Educational Attainment, 1970 to 2008*. Postsecondary Education Opportunity, No. 209.



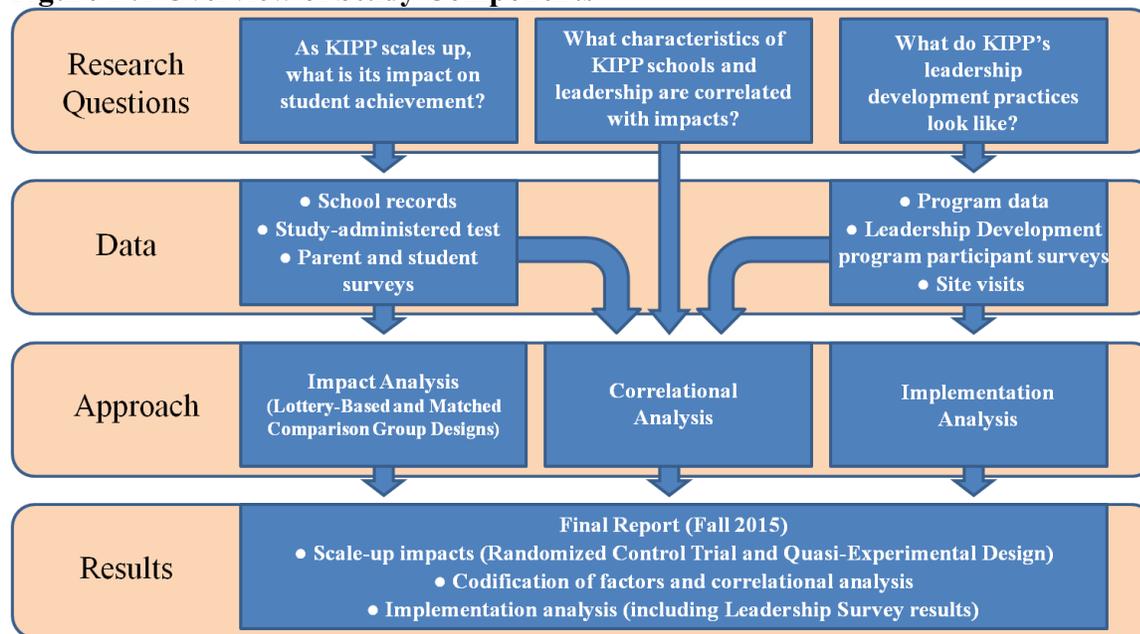
In summary, KIPP’s decade-long track record of success in growing KIPP; careful management and implementation of several large, complex and rapidly growing programs to support the scale up of the KIPP network; and KIPP’s significant success in improving student achievement and student attainment demonstrate the experience needed to effectively implement this proposed project.

Section D – Project Evaluation

KIPP schools have a documented track record of increasing disadvantaged students’ academic outcomes. As the KIPP network continues to grow into new communities and grades, it faces a dual challenge of effectively serving more students while building a solid pipeline of principals to sustain its success. The independent evaluation of KIPP, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, will address research questions, described below, that align closely with the specific goals of i3 scale-up grants.²⁴ Mathematica’s comprehensive, integrated approach is based on a rigorous study design and proven data collection techniques that can be applied broadly. Figure D.1 shows the relationships between the main study components.

²⁴ Mathematica will comply with the rules and requirements of the federal evaluation of the i3 grant program and all technical assistance provided by the federal evaluation contractor.

Figure D.1 Overview of Study Components



Research Questions

The evaluation will focus on the following questions:

1. **As KIPP scales up, in numbers of schools and grades served, what is its impact on student achievement?** Is achievement maintained in existing schools and how does it compare to achievement in new schools? Is there variation across schools?
2. In order to scale up, KIPP will invest in the identification, development and support of highly effective school leaders. **What do KIPP's leadership structure, training and pipeline development practices look like at the school, regional and national level?** Is there currently variation between levels or within each level? To what extent are KIPP's leadership development practices having their intended effects?
3. Finally, how are impacts correlated with implementation of the KIPP model? **To what extent are variations in leadership competencies, pathways or practices linked to variation in objective measures of school performance?** What lessons can be drawn from these patterns for future replication efforts, both within KIPP and in other systems?

Methods for Addressing Research Questions

Below we describe the research design and how it addresses the desired evaluation elements.

1. Impact Evaluation of KIPP Effectiveness at Scale

The impact evaluation will assess whether KIPP can sustain its effectiveness for students as its network grows. Mathematica proposes to evaluate KIPP's impacts on student achievement by capitalizing on the advantages of both experimental and quasi-experimental designs (QEDs). An experimental approach can provide the most rigorous assessment, but can only be applied in schools where admission is determined by lottery. The QED may be somewhat less rigorous, but can be applied to all schools. The following subsections describe Mathematica's empirical strategy to employ both in concert to address different sub-questions, including:

- What is the impact of KIPP elementary, middle and high schools for students who are admitted by lottery compared to students who apply but are not admitted?
- How does student achievement by KIPP middle and high school students compare to achievement for other middle and high school students in the same school district?
- What is the additional benefit of having a KIPP high school option in school districts with KIPP middle schools?

a. Experimental Impacts of KIPP on Student Outcomes

The first part of the impact evaluation will use admissions lottery data from oversubscribed KIPP schools to conduct a well-designed randomized control trial (RCT) of KIPP's effect on student outcomes. Mathematica draws on a wealth of experience conducting RCTs that enables them to: (1) implement quickly and efficiently; (2) place minimal burden on the school and applicants; (3) interfere minimally with application and admissions procedures; and (4) readily obtain informed consent from applicants. Figure D.2 summarizes the proposed RCT analysis.

Figure D.2 Estimated Samples for the RCT

Est. number of schools	School level	Entry grade in fall 2011	Estimated sample size		Type of outcome data
			Treatment group (Lottery winners)	Comparison group (Lottery losers)	
10	Elementary (gr. K to 4)	Kindergarten	500	500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent survey • School records • Study-administered test (gr. 2)
15	Middle (gr. 5 to 8)	5 th	675	675	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/student survey • School records • Study-administered test (gr. 7)
5	High (gr. 9 to 12)	9 th	500	500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student survey • School records • Study-administered test (gr. 11)

Mathematica will follow students for three years beginning in Year two of the grant and assess them on multiple outcomes.²⁵ Given that the KIPP network spans multiple states, Mathematica plans to administer a nationally-normed standardized assessment as a common measure of student performance.²⁶ The benchmark estimation model will be a regression that compares the mean outcomes of lottery winners to those of lottery losers, allowing the impact estimates to vary for each school. The basic form of the model is:

$$(1) y_{ij} = \alpha_j + X_{ij}\beta + \delta_j T_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij} ,$$

where y_{ij} is the outcome of interest for student i in school j ; α_j is a school-specific intercept, X_{ij} is a vector of characteristics of student i in site j ; T_{ij} is a binary variable for treatment status (i.e., indicating whether student i won the admission lottery in site j), and ε_{ij} is a random error term. β and δ_j are parameters or vectors of parameters to be estimated. As the estimated coefficient on treatment status in site j , δ_j , represents the impact of admission to a charter school in site j . To obtain an overall estimate of the impact of KIPP schools,²⁷ Mathematica will average the school-specific impact estimates $\hat{\delta}$ over the J schools as follows:

²⁵Figure D.4 provides more detail on outcomes.

²⁶ Mathematica is aware of testing issues for young children and will select a valid and reliable assessment.

²⁷ They will standardize test scores so that scores can be combined across grade level. Specifications will include both “intent to treat” (ITT) and “treatment on the treated” (TOT) estimates.

$$(2) \hat{\delta} = \frac{1}{J} \sum_{j=1}^J \hat{\delta}_j$$

Mathematica implemented a RCT design in 16 KIPP middle schools in 2008 and 2009 and will be able to directly compare those extant findings (expected Summer 2012) to the effects as KIPP scales up during the grant period. The study’s minimum detectable effect (MDE) with high probability is 0.10 of a standard deviation across all schools.²⁸ A 0.10 standard deviation effect converts to a 4-percentile test score gain for students scoring at the 30th percentile.

b. Quasi-Experimental Impacts of KIPP on Student Outcomes

The proposed study includes two sets of well-designed QED analyses that broaden the evaluation’s scope to KIPP schools with shorter waiting lists, as described in Figure D.3.

Figure D.3 Sample Designs for the Quasi-Experimental Analyses

Analysis	Type of school	Who is included?	What is being compared?	What type of outcome data?
School-level impacts	Middle schools (MS)	MS students in KIPP districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar students in KIPP and not in KIPP at the same grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School records
	High schools (HS)	HS students in KIPP districts		
Added benefit of KIPP HS to region	High schools	Students who attended a KIPP MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIPP students with a HS option and KIPP students without a HS option <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Across regions within a cohort ○ Across cohorts within regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School records • Student survey • Study-administered test

The first set of QED analyses matches KIPP middle and high school students with observationally similar non-KIPP students—based on variables such as prior test scores—and compares their subsequent academic performance.²⁹ The second set of QED analyses focus specifically on students who attended KIPP middle schools to increase our understanding about the added benefit of a KIPP high school option. This will be done by taking advantage of (1) variation in KIPP high school availability across regions at a single point in time and (2)

²⁸ The MDE for elementary, middle and high schools is 0.20, 0.13, and 0.22 SD, respectively, and 0.10 combined. This assumes 80 percent of KIPP lottery winners attend KIPP. Proposed sample sizes account for factors including availability of open slots, exemption rates, take up rates, consent rates, and response rates.

²⁹ Mathematica cannot study elementary schools using a QED because there is no valid and reliable pretest available for establishing baseline equivalence.

variation in availability across cohorts, by year, in a given region. The MDEs for the QED analyses are 0.08 of a standard deviation for middle schools and up to 0.11 for high schools.³⁰

2. Implementation Study of KIPP's Leadership Development Model

Mathematica proposes to study the implementation of KIPP's leadership structure, training, and pipeline development practices at the school, regional, and national levels to achieve two primary purposes: (1) describe what KIPP's leadership structure looks like, both before and after scale-up; and (2) identify factors capturing specific dimensions of how the KIPP model is implemented. Questions include the following:

- How do schools and regions identify candidates within KIPP possessing the competencies to become future principals?
- What does the leadership pipeline look like at each school and region, and how does that change as schools age and regions expand?
- What leadership preparation or training, formal or informal, is in place at the local level: before, after, or in place of the national KIPP School Leadership Development Programs?
- How have the KIPP School Leadership Development Programs training influenced graduates' job experiences?

Mathematica will address these questions by: (1) conducting case studies and site visits in each region or school, interviewing regional staff, principals, and other school leaders, and codifying the information; and (2) administering a web-based Survey in Year 1 and 4 to learn about the experiences of program participants, allowing a comparison of early responses with those obtained once KIPP leadership programs have been expanded for several years.

3. Relating Variations in Leadership Pathways to Variation in School Performance

The final component of the research design will study variation in leadership across schools as it relates to impacts on school outcomes. Mathematica will examine variation across

³⁰ The 0.11 number is for a cohort comparison focused only on KIPP high schools slated to open between 2009-10 and 2011-12. Samples that include 7 other pre-existing KIPP high schools have an MDE of 0.09.

KIPP schools and regions in three main ways: (1) the characteristics of individual leaders, focusing on leadership competencies as measured by KIPP; (2) how schools or regions differ in the ways they prepare or select staff for leadership pathways; and (3) key dimensions of the pathways themselves, such as the positions considered to be important and the length of time individuals typically serve at each position. Mathematica will use appropriate statistical techniques to relate these features of KIPP leadership programs to: (1) school outcomes such as teacher retention or student attrition, and (2) estimated impacts on achievement; for which Mathematica will incorporate leadership characteristics into the student impact analysis to examine whether schools or regions that utilize different leadership pathways options have significantly different impacts on students. This analysis will provide a linkage between leadership structure and school performance to inform replication of the KIPP model.

Data Collection

Data for all components of the study will come from the sources described in Figure D.4.

Figure D.4 Data Sources and Measures

Source	Planned Collection Dates	Sample	Measures
Site visits and interviews	Year 1	• Staff in schools/regions and leadership development programs (LDP)	Characteristics of KIPP leadership structure and development programs
Web-based Leadership Surveys	Year 1	• Pre-grant LDP participants	KIPP leadership development program experiences
	Year 4	• Post-grant LDP participants	
Student telephone interviews	Years 2-4	• HS QED samples	Motivation, engagement, educational expectations and plans, KIPP satisfaction, self concept
	Year 3	• MS/HS RCT sample	
Parent telephone interviews	Year 3	• ES/MS RCT sample	Involvement in child's education, educational expectations for child, KIPP satisfaction, reason for leaving KIPP
Student-level school records	Years 1-5	• MS/HS QED samples	State assessment scores, proficiency levels in math and reading, attendance, HS graduation and college enrollment
	Years 2-5	• ES/MS/HS RCT samples	
Study-administered test	Years 1-4	• HS QED samples	Standardized test scores
	Year 4	• ES/MS/HS RCT samples	

Mathematica has a long history of protecting confidentiality and privacy of records and considers such practice a critical aspect of the scientific and legal integrity of any data collection effort. In Year 5 of the grant period, Mathematica will make available a restricted-use file of the data as a tool for authorized users.

Mathematica’s proposed workplan will provide timely, useful information throughout the study period. The final report at the end of the grant period will address scale-up impacts (RCT and QED), the scale-up correlational analysis, and the implementation analyses of KIPP leadership programs. In the intervening years, Mathematica will submit interim annual reports to KIPP on findings and progress.

Finally, the \$5.6 million budget allocated to program evaluation ensures that Mathematica will have adequate resources to execute the evaluation as described above.

E – Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale

Students Reached by Proposed Project and Applicant’s Capacity to Reach Them

Leveraging the collective leadership and management capacity of the KIPP Foundation, of KIPP’s local leadership teams and local boards, and of KIPP-trained principals leading other charter schools, the infusion of grant funds to support the proposed project will dramatically accelerate the number of high-need students who are exceptionally well-served and on the road to college during the grant period and in the years ahead. Specifically, by 2015, grant funding will allow KIPP schools to directly serve more than 50,000 high-need students from traditionally underserved rural and urban communities across the nation. When these schools reach full enrollment in 2018-19, they will serve 66,000 students. Grant funding impact will be felt well beyond the grant period, as the increased pool of developing leaders will allow KIPP to continue to scale at an average rate of 18 new schools per year, adding nearly 8,000 students per year and growing to serve nearly 90,000 students by 2020.

In addition to students attending a KIPP school, at least 20,000 students will benefit from having a principal trained through the KIPP national leadership development programs (and more than 30,000 students as those principals' schools grow to full enrollment). To date, this program has trained 60 leaders from other high-performing charter management organizations across the country. Grant funding will allow KIPP to continue to train leaders from other organizations even as we are building our capacity to train a far larger number of our own leaders. Finally, by broadly disseminating best practices to the school districts in which KIPP schools are located and to other charter schools, KIPP will influence local leadership practices to reach an estimated three million students across the country.

Capacity to Bring Proposed Project to National Scale

The KIPP Foundation and the consortium of KIPP schools and regional organizations have talented and highly-qualified personnel, financial resources, and the management capacity to bring the proposed project to scale on a national level.

Once a network of dozens of standalone schools, today KIPP is growing into a network of pre-K-high school clusters of schools (regions) in communities across the country, as shown in Figure E.1.

Figure E.1 KIPP School Locations



With schools in 17 of the 20 largest cities across the country and in the most rural areas of the eastern Arkansas Delta and North Carolina, KIPP is a network of public charter schools that is truly national in scale. This scale ensures that the proposed project reaches students in nearly every corner of the nation.

Each KIPP regional organization is led by a highly-capable Executive Director and a local board of directors that possess the skills necessary to manage a growing charter school management organization. From the start, this project will involve these local teams, take advantage of their management and operational skills, and provide them with the latest tools and systems to build their capacity to develop effective principals. Together with the organizational capacity of the KIPP Foundation (described above in Section C), KIPP’s regional structure and significant local talent ensure that the activities proposed in this application will be implemented fully and with fidelity nationwide.

Feasibility of Proposed Project to be Replicated Successfully in a Variety of Settings and with Diverse Student Populations

KIPP already has demonstrated that its Five Pillars can be replicated successfully in a variety of the most challenging rural and urban settings across the nation. Figure E.2. on the following page illustrates the portability of the KIPP model across widely varying regions, student demographics, per pupil funding levels, and state charter school laws.

Figure E.2 Sample Demographics/Features of KIPP School Regions

	Austin	Arkansas Delta	Washington, D.C.	Houston	Los Angeles
African-American (%)	5	97	100	33	35
Hispanic/Latino (%)	94	1	0	62	63
Limited English Proficiency (%)	18	0	0	32	28
Special Needs (%)	6	4	9	4	8
Average Per Pupil Funding	\$8,930	\$7,000	\$14,000	\$8,390	\$6,650
State Charter Law Letter Grade*	D	D	A	D	A

*As rated by the Center for Education Reform. The report’s A-F grade rating reflects the strength of charter authorizers when it comes to factors such as per-pupil funding and whether charter school administration and staff are free of educational red tape.

Not only is the KIPP model replicable in a variety of settings, the leadership pipeline development strategies proposed within this application are also highly transferable to school districts and to other successfully scaling charter management organizations in a variety of operating environments. KIPP's leadership training and curriculum emphasize the talents and skills that all highly effective principals need, and the leadership pipeline development model offers lessons for best-in-class systems of schools.

In addition, the performance evaluation system described in Section A has grown out of input from principals operating in diverse environments serving a variety of student populations, and, therefore, is equally applicable to principals in rural and urban settings, from pre-K through high school. For example, performance management and stakeholder management skills, included in the KIPP Leadership Competency Model and valued among all KIPP principals, are just as important to principals in traditional district public schools. Likewise, measures such as teacher satisfaction and parent satisfaction, captured in the Healthy Schools and Regions Framework, are as applicable to a district school as they are to a KIPP school. The strategies proposed here will also work in a range of policy environments; most districts and schools could put KIPP's competency-based pipeline development and performance evaluation systems into practice without significant changes in law, regulation, or contractual agreements.

Cost Estimates

The KIPP Foundation and the KIPP schools and regions request \$50 million over five years for the grant activities described in this application and further detailed in the budget and budget narrative. Roughly half (\$22.9 million) of these stimulus funds will be used at the school and regional level to accelerate the number of principals in training and effectively support them. \$21.5 million will support program costs to add seats to national training programs (including

participant travel and fees for consultants who serve as faculty), positions at the KIPP Foundation to appropriately staff program expansion and to further enhance program evaluation systems, and costs of dissemination and grant management. Finally, \$5.6 million will fund program evaluation by Mathematica.

Federal funds will be matched by \$10 million in private funding that also supports expansion of national training programs and ongoing development of KIPP’s performance evaluation systems. The proposed project to expand KIPP’s capacity to develop future principals builds upon the current infrastructure already in place to train leaders. Figure E.3 below highlights the estimated cost of the proposed project per student per year, factoring in the \$50 million costs described in this proposal (and presented in Form ED 524), the \$10 million private sector match, as well as the full costs of running all of KIPP’s national leadership development programs.

Figure E.3 Program Cost Per Year & Per Student

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Cost per student*	\$541	\$502	\$448	\$365	\$271

*Students served is based on projected students in KIPP schools during each year of the grant. Actual cost per student served will be lower as the estimates above include only students served directly by KIPP schools. Several thousand additional students are already being served by the 60 principals KIPP has trained who lead schools in other organizations and thousands more will be served by the 60-70 principals trained during the grant period.

The KIPP Foundation suggests the following estimate of costs to reach additional students by staffing schools with a KIPP-trained effective principal. KIPP invests \$150 thousand in each founding principal to cover the year-long training and residency required to prepare an aspiring principal to open a new school. As highlighted below in Figure E.4, assuming an average school enrollment size of 500 students, to train sufficient principals to reach 100,000, 500,000 and one million students, respectively, would cost \$30 million, \$150 million, and \$300 million.

Figure E.4. Cost Estimate for Training Effective Principals to Reach Additional Students

Total students to Reach	Total Schools/Principals Required (500 students per school)	Total Principal Training Costs (\$150,000 per principal)
100,000	200	\$30M
500,000	1,000	\$150M
1,000,000	2,000	\$300M

In addition to the cost of preparing the founding principals as laid out in Figure E.4, the other key cost for opening new schools is the school start-up costs so that the school culture can be built from scratch and rooted in the Five Pillars. The KIPP Foundation estimates that the average school start-up cost is \$350 thousand. This means the total cost for preparing the leaders *and* opening 200 schools to serve 100,000 students will be \$100 million; for 500,000 students, it would be \$500 million (to fund leaders and start-up for an additional 1,000 schools); and for one million students, it would be approximately \$1 billion dollars (leaders and start-up for another 2,000 schools).

While it would be a considerable undertaking to open 2,000 schools in one year, it is not unreasonable to assume that each of the 20 largest schools districts could open 10 new schools per year over the course of ten years. Such investments would cost a total of \$100 million per year (15 percent of the funds the Secretary has at his disposal through this grant program) and would position one million children to achieve to high standards and succeed in college.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Although scaling this work to one million or even 500,000 children requires significant investment, it is also important to recognize the potential cost savings were school districts to commit to growing high-performing schools; for example, school districts are in a position to reduce the costs of school start-up in ways that a charter school often cannot, although we have not discounted the cost in our projection. In addition, there are significant resources inside larger school districts that could be reallocated if districts were to make this approach a top priority, particularly since our shared service centers are funded at no more than 10 percent of the total per pupil revenue, or less than half of what most districts spend outside of school expenses.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dissemination Mechanisms

With grant funds, the KIPP Foundation will bolster efforts to disseminate strategies, innovations, and promising practices by sharing its model with the broader education community. The KIPP Foundation will develop and implement solutions to surface effective practices and share them nationally to help educators across the country achieve and sustain results with high-need children in both rural and urban settings. Specifically, the KIPP Foundation will engage in a bold, visionary process to enable knowledge sharing at a national scale by:

- *Hosting a National Leadership Development Symposium for Superintendents.* Key to KIPP’s dissemination strategy will be targeted sharing of best practices with superintendents

across the country. Toward this end, KIPP will host an invitation-only symposium three times throughout the grant period during which KIPP will seek to work the district leadership teams from the school districts where KIPP schools are located (involving 17 of the 20 largest cities in the nation) to engage in dialogue about KIPP's leadership development programs and practices. The goals of this symposium will be twofold: (1) to share knowledge about how to effectively build internal leadership pipelines within a system of schools; and (2) to provide hands-on technical assistance to those interested in creating their own comprehensive model for evaluating essential academic and non-academic student outcomes, as well as identifying which school elements make these types of results possible.

- *Capturing Best Practices and Creating Tools to Share with the Field.* Mathematica will produce case studies of model leadership competencies in action; document strategies and systems that emerge from KIPP's pipeline development projects; and KIPP will refine its performance management tools, including the Healthy Schools and Regions Framework and the Leadership Competency Model, to share with the field (See Appendix H.2 and H.3).
- *Creating a National Effective Leadership Portal.* This unique online portal will provide access to the above tools as well as to a library of case studies of KIPP principals in action. This portal will serve as a comprehensive and accessible resource for educators, researchers and policymakers nationwide to learn more about KIPP's leadership development practices.
- *Speaking at National Forums.* KIPP's co-founders, Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin, and CEO Richard Barth frequently speak at national forums for practitioners, business leaders, and entrepreneurs. These dynamic leaders will continue to use national speaking engagements to broadly share information about the KIPP model, as well as KIPP's successes and lessons learned in developing pipelines of highly effective principals. KIPP

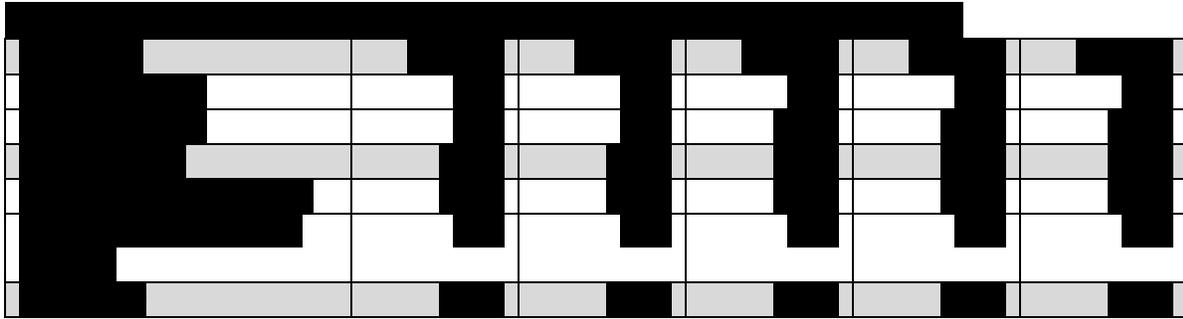
will seek out future speaking engagements at annual meetings of groups such as the Council of Great City Schools, Council of Chief State School Officers, and the Hunt Institute for Educational Leadership.

- *Sharing with Policymakers.* Due to Secretary Duncan’s interest in creating state-wide or district-wide school climate needs assessments, there is already high demand to share information related to KIPP’s Healthy Schools and Regions Framework. Throughout the grant period, KIPP will create policy specific briefing materials to provide more information about this framework, the context regarding implementing the Five Pillars with fidelity, research on their impact, and materials about comprehensively evaluating school quality.
- *Operating as an Open Book.* Each year, thousands of dignitaries, education practitioners and researchers from across the globe tour KIPP schools to learn about practices in serving high-need urban and rural students. KIPP will continue its commitment to such visits and information-sharing through the portal described above and an open-door policy for visitors.

F – Sustainability

Resources to Operate the Project Beyond the Length of the Scale-Up Grant

Through a combination of public and private funding, KIPP will have the resources to operate the project beyond the grant period. The operating model will persist with local and national partners assuming the practices in the leadership development model described in this proposal. As described in the budget narrative, sub-grants for local level roles will support the accelerated hiring of positions that can be covered by per pupil public funding by the end of the grant period (once schools have reached full enrollment). The multi-year financial model in Figure F.1 below presents *projected* uses and sources of funds related to continued operation of national training programs and investment in evaluation systems by the KIPP Foundation.



Over the last three years, KIPP has trained 380 leaders and rising leaders, funded by \$10.5 million in philanthropy and \$1.8 million in fees. Absent grant funding, the KIPP Foundation would continue to train principals and aspiring principals at the current program enrollment rate with the same participant and philanthropic funding levels. Grant funding will enable KIPP to dramatically increase the rate of growth.

Beyond the scale-up grant, KIPP’s national training programs will be funded by traditional sources: participant fees and private funding. Some programs have been fully funded through annually-renewed philanthropic grants while others have been funded by a mix of sources. We expect this support to continue throughout and beyond the grant period.

KIPP has been fortunate to receive the support of major philanthropic partners who have made, and continue to make, a significant contribution to the success and sustainability of the KIPP network. Our largest philanthropic partners with distinguished histories of giving include: **The Don and Doris Fisher Fund, The Walton Family Foundation, The Robertson Foundation, The Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Miles Family Foundation, and Rainwater Charitable Foundation.** Since 2001, the KIPP Foundation has raised approximately \$150 million in private philanthropic funding. Furthermore, the KIPP Foundation is in the midst of a five-year effort to diversify its funding base as the network grows. The ongoing funding

plan includes continued partnership with many of the philanthropists whose letters of support appear in Appendix D.

Finally, the leaders of the consortium of KIPP schools, critical to the project's long-term success, are collectively committed the successful implementation of activities in this proposal during and beyond the grant period as demonstrated by their letter of support in Appendix D.

Incorporation of the Project Activities into the Ongoing Work of KIPP

Thoughtful planning that includes: (1) an emphasis on local capacity building and “train-the-trainer” approaches; and (2) KIPP’s historical and unwavering focus on developing effective principals to support quality, growth and sustainability, ensure the incorporation of project activities well beyond the grant period. As highlighted above, grant funding will support accelerated hiring of positions that, by the end of the grant period, can be supported on the additional public funding that results from a school growing to full enrollment.

By the end of the grant period, the most effective pipeline development practices (i.e., identifying, recruiting, developing, placing, rewarding and retaining highly effective principals) will have been shared throughout the network of KIPP schools and implemented by principals, Executive Directors, and a growing community of local Directors of Leadership Development who will continue to advance and exchange practices well beyond the grant period. Those same Directors of Leadership Development will have been trained to implement locally modules of KIPP’s national training programs to complement the training programs that are the core service offered by the KIPP Foundation. Through the work of local Performance Evaluation Managers in concert with local leadership, the performance evaluation processes associated with the Leadership Competency Model and the Healthy Schools and Regions Framework will become common operating procedures.

Furthermore, grant funding will support broad dissemination of training modules, principal pipeline development processes, and the tools of KIPP’s performance evaluation system using multiple methods to benefit school districts and charter schools nationwide.

G - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

Management Plan

KIPP will achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget through experienced management, collaboration with the leadership of KIPP schools and regional organizations throughout the country, partnership with other leading charter management organizations that participate in KIPP’s leadership development programs, partnership with our independent evaluator, Mathematica, and through support from our philanthropic partners. Each partner’s roles as well as major activities and milestones related to the proposed project appear in Figure G.1.

Figure G.1 Responsibilities, Timelines and Milestones for Accomplishing Project Tasks

Major Milestone	Responsible parties	Year 1	Years 2-4	Year 5
<i>Deepen and expand pipeline of effective principals</i>				
Recruit and select additional national training staff	KIPP Foundation (KF)	Sep-Oct	May-Jun	May-Jun
Recruit and select Assistant Principals	Principals	Sep-Oct	Mar-Jun	Mar-Jun
Recruit and select Directors of Leadership Development	Executive Directors (EDs)	Will vary by region		
Conduct orientation for national training programs	KF	N/A	May	May
Execute Summer Institute	KF	N/A	Jun-Jul	Jun-Jul
Execute national training programs	KF	Sep-Mar	Jun-Mar	Jun-Mar
Evaluate program year and plan for program refinements in following year	KF	Nov-Apr	Nov-Apr	Nov-Apr
Nominate participants to following year’s national training programs	Principals, EDs, CMOs	Mar-Apr	Mar-Apr	Mar-Apr
<i>Local pipeline development practices</i>				
Hire Directors of Leadership Development (DLDs)	Executive Directors	Will vary by region		
Create case studies of local practices	Mathematica	Ongoing		
Host/attend professional development/effective practice exchange for principals and Executive Directors	KF, Principals, EDs	Feb Aug	Feb Aug	Feb Aug
Host/attend professional development/effective practice exchange for Directors of Leadership Development	KF, DLDs	Aug	Aug	Aug

<i>Expansion of KIPP Schools</i>				
Submit letters of intent for growth	EDs, Principals	N/A	July	July
Approve growth	KF	Apr	Apr	Apr
Open schools	EDs, Principals	June	June	June
<i>Dissemination outside KIPP</i>				
Design online portal	KF, Consultant	By June	N/A	N/A
Post tools and case studies to portal	KF	Ongoing		
Host guests at Annual KIPP School Summit	KF	Aug	Aug	Aug
Host national symposium	KF	TBD	TBD	TBD
<i>Program Evaluation</i>				
Data collection, analysis and reporting	Mathematica	Ongoing		
Release of final impact and evaluation report	Mathematica	N/A	N/A	Sept
<i>Grant reporting</i>				
Recruit and select staff	KF	Sept	N/A	N/A
Submit reports	KF	Each qtr	Each qtr	Each qtr

Relevant Training and Experience of Key Project Personnel

Several KIPP Foundation senior leaders will be among the project’s key personnel and all have training and experience relevant to managing large, complex and rapidly growing projects.

Mr. **Jonathan Cowan, Chief Research, Design & Innovation (RDI) Officer** will serve as Project Director for KIPP’s grant activities, if funded. Mr. Cowan is responsible for leading the RDI team’s efforts to support the KIPP network by: (1) leading and scaling network-wide innovation efforts in support of KIPP’s regions and schools; (2) enabling local, grassroots innovation to have a broader impact by identifying effective practices and helping to catalyze and disseminate them; and (3) driving ongoing insight via research and analysis that feeds KIPP’s innovation pipeline and supports KIPP regional organizations. Prior to joining KIPP, Mr. Cowan spent over 10 years at The Boston Consulting Group where he assisted senior executives of large, complex organizations in addressing strategic, operational and organizational issues and in managing large-scale change. As a principal and partner at BCG, Mr. Cowan spent several years helping to create and lead BCG’s public education practice.

Ms. **Kelly Wright, Senior Learning Officer** oversees all of KIPP’s national leadership development programs and will oversee all grant activities related to the expansion and

enhancement of these programs. Prior to joining the KIPP Foundation, Ms. Wright founded KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy in San Diego. Under her leadership, in 2007, KIPP Adelante was awarded the National Title I Distinguished School Award for being the one school in California (out of over 6,000 Title I schools) that most narrowed the achievement gap. Furthermore, Ms. Wright's entire national training team staff (whose biographies can be found in Appendix C) is comprised of former principals with experience serving high-need students, most of whom previously founded or lead a KIPP school prior to joining the KIPP Foundation staff.

Mr. Richard Barth, Chief Executive Officer will play an active role in the dissemination strategy due to the close alignment between the proposed project (to expand KIPP's direct reach as well as KIPP's contribution to broader education reform) and KIPP's 2015 Strategic Plan. As CEO of the KIPP Foundation, Barth has overseen the growth of the network from 45 to 82 schools, and has the network on track to meet its five year goal to double in size to 97 schools.

KIPP's regional **Executive Directors** will also play a critical role in the advancement and exchange of local practices, and in assuring that grant funds are implemented with fidelity to meet the goals and objectives outlined in this application. Finally, the **KIPP Foundation Board of Directors**, whose members collectively have extensive experience in education and managing rapidly scaling organizations will have ultimate oversight of the project (biographies and CVs for full KIPP team can be found in Appendix C).

Relevant Training and Experience of Independent Evaluator

Mathematica Policy Research, a recognized expert in study design, has conducted independent, objective evaluations for over 40 years, with unparalleled experience executing randomized control trials (RCTs) in educational contexts. As the operator of the What Works

Clearinghouse (WWC), Mathematica is well versed in study design and the components of high-quality research. In particular, the experience of the proposed study team along three key dimensions make them uniquely qualified to conduct the independent evaluation for the proposed project:

- ***Pioneering the implementation of RCT studies in charter schools*** in several studies, including the *Evaluation of KIPP Middle Schools*, the *Evaluation of the Equity Project (TEP) Charter School*, the *Evaluation of Charter Management Organization (CMO) Effectiveness*, and the *Evaluation of the Impact of Charter School Strategies*. Mathematica’s approach brings rigor to lottery-based studies of charter schools by incorporating close monitoring of the lottery and waitlist admissions process.
- ***Expertise designing the most rigorous non-experimental approaches to estimate impacts when RCTs are not feasible***, as in the *Evaluation of KIPP*, the *Multi-State Charter School Study* and the study of the *Achievement Impacts of New Leaders Charter School Principals*.
- ***Experience conducting non-experimental analyses to examine school factors that may be related to more positive or more negative impacts on student outcomes***. Both the *Evaluation of the Impact of Charter School Strategies* and the *Multi-State Charter School Study* examined the characteristics that distinguish effective charters from ineffective ones in terms of standardized academic outcomes, and the *CMO* study has a qualitative component geared towards identifying strategies and programmatic elements associated with more positive outcomes.

The leadership team for the evaluation includes **Dr. Philip Gleason** as principal investigator, **Ms. Christina Clark Tuttle** as project director, and **Ms. Emily Dwoyer** as survey

director, each of whom has performed a similar role on rigorous studies of charter school impacts and has detailed knowledge of KIPP through his or her work on the current *Evaluation of KIPP*.

Dr. Kevin Booker and **Dr. Josh Furgeson** will round out the study team (full CVs in Appendix C). The studies cited above and described in more detail in Appendix H.5 showcase the team's expansive knowledge of the issues related to the study of charter schools, and KIPP in particular.

Conclusion

KIPP has proven that success can and should be the norm for all students and that demography does not have to define one's destiny. An infusion of \$3 grant funds to support KIPP's proposed project will serve millions of students by helping KIPP share success, replicate it further and make it the norm for all students. The existing 82 KIPP schools across the country have achieved excellent results serving the nation's highest need, low-income and minority students. The key to this unparalleled national success has been an unrelenting focus on training and developing effective principals.

The principal pipeline development practices that the KIPP network has developed, and proposes to broaden and deepen with grant funds, are eminently replicable and will fill a critical void in efforts to dramatically expand the number of effective school principals prepared to create and sustain high-performing schools that successfully serve high-need students. With grant funds, KIPP will scale to serve more rural and urban students by accelerating the development of future principals and by further codifying best-in-class practices to share with others looking to identify, select, develop, place and retain transformational principals. Altogether, these funds will ramp up KIPP's ability to demonstrate on a national scale that, with the right school leadership in place, all children can be on a path to college even under the most challenging conditions.

Status: Submitted
 Last Updated: 07/06/2010 9:29 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Reader #1:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	12
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	14
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	_____

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
TOTAL	105	26

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #1:

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

The application provides strong evidence, with multiple studies using either experimental design or quasi-experimental research designs using matched comparison groups in conformity to the criteria defined in the Notice Inviting Application. The studies demonstrate statistically significant effects of KIPP middle schools in comparison with control middle schools. Although most of the studies are on a small number of schools, the most recent study included 22 KIPP middle schools nationwide -- thus enhancing the external validity of the studies included with respect to middle schools.

The effect sizes in mathematics and reading were generally moderate to large across studies, providing evidence that the KIPP program significantly increases student achievement at the middle school level.

Weaknesses

The studies included did not address student dropout or graduation/completion rates in KIPP programs, which is an important consideration in assessing the overall effectiveness of the KIPP program.

The three research studies discussed in detail and virtually all of the other experimental and quasi-experimental studies listed in the table on p. 23 focus only on middle schools. The proposed scale-up is intended for elementary, middle, and high schools, however. This threatens the external validity of the studies cited as evidence.

Most importantly, however, is the fact that the proposed project focuses on the expansion of KIPP's leadership development model, and although it might be supposed that KIPP's school leaders contribute importantly to the success of KIPP's program, there is no specific research cited on the superiority or impact of KIPP's school leaders in comparison with others. This is all the more important given the applicant's statement (p. 5) that its leadership development model should prepare principals to succeed both in KIPP schools and others -- implying that the leadership development model should demonstrate positive results independent of the results of the KIPP schools themselves. And it becomes more of a concern in light of the absence of research on the success of the KIPP model at the elementary and high school levels, where the responsibilities of the principal -- especially at the elementary level -- may be substantially different than those at the middle school level.

Reader's Score: 12

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.**
- (2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that**
 - (a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -**
 - (i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and**

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

The evaluation is to be undertaken by a credible, independent organization with a national reputation for solid work. The research questions are appropriate to the proposed project, and they are concerned with KIPP as implemented at scale and with specific features of the school leadership model being scaled up in the proposal. The evaluation includes both

experimental and quasi-experimental studies of the program's impact on students' academic performance employing longitudinal data. The sample is representative of the population of schools in the scale-up study. And it asks the right kinds of questions about the indirect impact of KIPP's school leaders on student achievement. Finally, the evaluation seeks to identify key factors in the model that seem important to its success and scale-up (such as seamless leadership transition in individual KIPP schools).

The \$5.6 million allocated for the evaluation is almost 10% of the total project budget and seems adequate for the evaluation described.

This is the right kind of evaluation to provide strong evidence for the effectiveness of the leadership model -- precisely the kind of study that one would have wished already to exist in order to justify the further expansion of the leadership program.

Weaknesses

One opportunity it is not clear that the evaluation study design takes advantage of is to compare the differential impact of KIPP-trained principals not only in different KIPP schools but in non-KIPP schools (in comparison with both KIPP schools and non-KIPP trained principals in non-KIPP schools).

Reader's Score: 14

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of

resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

Weaknesses

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Weaknesses

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and

rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;**
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and**
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2010 9:29 AM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 0:55 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Reader #2:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	14
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	13
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	10
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	10
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	7
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	1
TOTAL	105	56

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #2:

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

KIPP demonstrates that it has a model of success for educationally underserved populations but has not had the funding necessary to take the next step to a larger scale(p.2).
Research that less than 10% of low income students graduate from college is a staggering number that supports a need for this project.
The students KIPP currently serves are primarily African- American or Latino performing below grade level by one or two years.
KIPP addresses the training of principals as well as providing additional seats for students in new KIPP schools to be adopted if the project is funded.
The project design is based on the premise that quality leaders are the key to successful schools. This premise was what prompted KIPP to apply for this grant so that it could bring the training and development to a larger scale.
The goals and strategies to accomplish the 3 goals are specific and align to the proposed project. The training of principals outside of the KIPP network strengthens the application as it is more than an internal growth model.
KIPP is addressing a key issue in school improvement;quality principal training that is concentrated and follows a prescribed skill set. This training has proved to be successful where other programs do not have a consistent framework and do not require an intensive internship in a high performing school.
The focus on high need students is evident from the past work of KIPP where the students are primarily minority and from urban or rural settings that are low income.
KIPP utilizes a national cohort that provides dialogue among a diverse group of professionals addressing the same issues in different locations.

Weaknesses

The application is unclear as to how the rural schools will be selected and supported when the primary focus of the KIPP projects has been in urban settings. The number of schools in rural areas is limited to North Carolina and the Arkansas Delta. These areas may not be similar to rural areas across the U.S.

Reader's Score: 14

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate

success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment,

or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

The KIPP Foundation has been involved in large scale development of the KIPP schools throughout the past ten years. Its ability to expand from two schools to 82 schools is evidence of its ability to be successful in the scale-up project. While doing the expansion of the schools, KIPP expanded to 20 states and the District of Columbia. In addition, KIPP moved from a middle school model to a preK-12 model and continued the quality of the principal development.

Student achievement in the LEAs has shown consistent increase in KIPP schools as compared to the local district in mathematics, ELA, and science. Middle School data show that 92% of KIPP middle schools outperformed the districts' schools in mathematics and ELA; 88% outperformed the districts' schools in science.

One of the primary schools started in 2004 scored as well as a wealthy district in Texas when the school has 96% low income students compared to 0% in the comparison school.

It is not just primary and middle schools that show strong performance against the LEAs; 100% of KIPP high school classes showed higher performance on the state assessment in ELA, general mathematics, Algebra I, algebra II, Geometry, general science and history/social science(p.29).

Weaknesses

Listing of science courses beyond general science would strengthen the case that the comparison is to higher level courses versus lower level science courses.

The inclusion of how KIPP students who matriculate to college compares to the LEA would add another layer of support if the data are strong.

Reader's Score: 13

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

KIPP has a history of support by major philanthropic partners and has raised \$150 million. The charging of fees for principal training as well as monies from philanthropic partners has also supported the expansion of the program. The KIPP schools in 20 states plus the District of Columbia are partners in this endeavor. They will serve as supports for the training and implementation of this proposal.

The ability to continue the project beyond the grant funding is evidenced by the training of the principals and the school expansions. Students will continue to be involved in the KIPP model as they matriculate through the grades. The skills the principals gain will be utilized throughout their careers to impact the achievement of students.

The current locations of KIPP clusters allow for expansions to other areas of the large cities (schools in 17 of the 20 largest cities in the US). Expansion to a larger scale is easily accomplished with support sites throughout U.S. urban areas and two rural areas in the South.

There are three distinct areas that will support the replication of this model successfully. The first area includes the "Five Pillars"; leadership development pipeline; the performance evaluation system; and the Healthy Schools and Regions Framework (p. 39-40). The next two areas involve the ability of schools/regions to capitalize on the currently developed documents and programs to increase the success of replicating this model.

The cost per student declines from year 1 to year 5; the cost is almost 50% less during the final year of the grant. This amount would be lower but KIPP is training principals outside of the KIPP authorized schools.

The dissemination mechanisms include sharing lessons learned through a principal portal available to principals and teachers at no cost to the users. Superintendents from across the country will be invited to three symposiums over the life of the grant utilizing current KIPP district leaders in the process. Allowing individuals to visit the KIPP sites and sharing the "school climate surveys" with state level officials will provide additional information for replication.

The KIPP Foundation will not be requesting any indirect costs in an effort to place the funding at the site development level.

Weaknesses

The cost to reach the various levels of students was not clear as the amounts listed were for principal training and it was difficult to relate this to the cost estimates listed for students over the life of the grant.

There was no direct evidence of the project's relative ease of use or satisfaction. Although one could derive this information from the

documents, it was not explicit.
The cost for leadership training is high and for this reason the leadership training would be difficult to replicate in most districts with funding issues.

Reader's Score: 10

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

The KIPP Foundation has committed resources from philanthropic groups to continue the project beyond the three years of the grant. The only change will be that the acceleration of growth will not be as great as that afforded by the I3 funding.

The letters from the consortium of KIPP schools indicate a commitment to continue to implement the items in the proposal beyond the grant timeline(p. 47).

KIPP will have completed a trainer of trainers model for the Directors of Leadership Development in the consortium of KIPP schools that will continue to offer these trainings as a supplement to those offered by KIPP.

Weaknesses

None Found.

Reader's Score: 10

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

The quality of the management plan is evident in the specificity of the milestones with years and months specified. The plan includes dissemination timelines and milestones and builds project sustainability into the implementation plan.

The CEO will serve as the dissemination point person which will cause this action step to have top priority. The rationale given is that the dissemination plan aligns with the strategic plan for 2015.

A full time Project Director on this grant will provide the needed support and focus that only someone dedicated to this project can provide. His expertise in leading change in business ventures as well as leading large scale reform in school districts provides the experience needed in this grant.

The KIPP Foundation Board will provide oversight at a different level to ensure success of this project.

Mathematica is the organization that will conduct the evaluation for this project. It has experience in educational research.

The team from Mathematica that will be responsible for the independent evaluation includes a Principal Investigator (PI); a project director, and a survey director. The PI has extensive experience in evaluation and educational research studies.

The Survey Researcher has extensive background in this area and is currently only involved in two other studies where she serves in this role.

Weaknesses

The PI for this project is currently the PI on six ongoing studies and it would be helpful to explain how he will be able to devote the necessary time to this project. The Project Director is also involved in four ongoing studies and the same issue comes to light for her work.

Reader's Score: 7

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

KIPP provides principal development for 35-50 primary schools that directly relate to the needs of primary school students.

Weaknesses

The applicant did not mention transitions in the proposal to deal with movement from developmental stages of students. Specifics on how school readiness will be addressed is lacking and needs to be addressed to meet this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and

college application processes; and
(c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

The project plan addresses preparing students to be successful in college and tracks student completion of college.

Weaknesses

The proposal does not address providing support or access to college other than providing the skills necessary to be successful in college. A statement regarding how the proposal would support students applying for college and finding funding would have strengthened the proposal in this area.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Current KIPP schools have a substantial number of limited English proficient students who perform well in this model.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the

unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

The proposal for this KIPP initiative is to expand the number of rural schools in North Carolina and the Arkansas Delta.

Weaknesses

The narrow areas of rural America being targeted may not provide replication of this model in rural regions in the Southwest, etc. A plan to move beyond these two areas would strengthen the proposal.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 0:55 AM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/02/2010 8:56 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Reader #3:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	15
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	10
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	8
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	8
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	2
TOTAL	105	59

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #3:

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

(1): A principal leadership training process for free open-enrollment college preparatory public charter schools that serve urban and rural communities in preK-12 to help students develop knowledge skills, character, and habits to succeed in college and beyond.

(2): There is a clear focus on developing principal leadership skills to ensure the school is lead by someone who has demonstrated leadership ability. The program is built upon five core principles: high expectations, choice & commitment, more time, power to lead, and a focus on results. The KIPP schools serve 69.9% of students qualifying for free meals and 95% of students are African-American or Latino performing at least two grades below level but graduate students performing at higher rates than the communities in which they live.

Weaknesses

None Found

Reader's Score: 15

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase

college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

(1): There are 82 KIPP Schools serving over 21,000 underserved students in less than ten years.

(2b): The schools' data indicates significant increases in student achievement. There is a defined framework for defining school quality and design tools for collecting data. 100% of KIPP schools outperformed their local districts.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses identified

Reader's Score: 15

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.**
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.**
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.**
- (2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.**
- (3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive**

results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

(1): The KIPP Foundation seeks private donations and expects a match of up to 10 million dollars for this proposal. KIPP Schools will serve 50,000 students by 2015.

(2): As a network of public charter schools, KIPP's capacity and organizational structure was evident to bring the project to the proposed Scale-Up level.

(3): KIPP Charter Schools presented evidence on p. e39-40 as to its ability to replicate the model in multiple settings.

Weaknesses

(1): Opening 2,000 schools is very aggressive and would be very difficult to manage in the time identified.

(2): The training cost per principal is \$150,000 (chart page 42) is high. As a charter school initiative, there may be local barriers. States must have charter legislation in place that allows for charter schools.

(3): There does not appear to be a plan to build the understanding of local communities about the KIPP schools so that they will support the concepts.

(4): Looking at the overall costs of the scale-up, even with private donations, it does not seem to be sustainable over time.

(5): The dissemination strategies do not include the grass roots efforts

needed to ensure local support. Also, the approaches listed were limited to national symposiums, case studies, speaking at national forums.

Reader's Score: 10

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

(1): A combination of funding presents an opportunity to sustain the program over time. Private funding comes from significant private foundations such as the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation. The applicant has raised over 150 million dollars in private funds.

(2): Once principals have been trained, their capacity continues without the ongoing training expense. The incorporation of the schools has strong potential with the training identified as well as significant support from partnerships and foundations.

Weaknesses

(1): Building local capacity to sustain the schools over time will be necessary as will the need to build public support so that the schools can be sustained and supported by SEAs and other stakeholders.

Reader's Score: 8

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed

project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

(1): Figure G.1 provides a detailed management plan with timelines, responsibilities for accomplishing project tasks, scalability and sustainability.

(2): The qualifications of the proposed personnel are consistent with the program demands. Key personnel each have training and experience with managing large and complex projects.

(3): Overall, the quality of the plan, the proposed personnel (including the evaluation element) are very good. Mathematica Policy Research is a recognized company that is highly regarded in the field of education.

Weaknesses

(1): The scope of work for the Project Director who is also the Chief Research, Design & Innovation Officer is very extensive (page e49). It calls for enabling local, grassroots innovation to have a broader impact - which is extremely important. The extent of work may not be manageable for one person.

Reader's Score: 8

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement

innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Weaknesses

This priority was addressed but the applicant did not meet requirement(c).

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Students attending KIPP Schools are better prepared and enter college at high rates.

KIPP certainly contributes to the conditions and knowledge necessary for college readiness.

Weaknesses

The narrative did not discuss the elements of college affordability and the financial aid process in detail for its students.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Kipp schools are designed to serve the needs of the identified children and have shown success at high rates. Their efforts show commendable growth.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

KIPP Schools present an exceptional model that applies to urban and rural.

KIPP Schools close the achievement gap, decrease drop out rates, increase graduation rates, and specifically are geared to principal leadership of the highest quality.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/02/2010 8:56 AM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2010 11:57 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Reader #4:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	13
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	15
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
TOTAL	105	28

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #4:

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

This proposal presents extremely strong research about the KIPP program which includes strong effect sizes from experimental and quasi-experimental studies. The effect sizes for the most part are moderate to strong. These studies show strong evidence that the program will improve student academic achievement, close the achievement gap, and increase high school graduation and college enrollment and completion rates. Two of the studies presented have been given a WWC rating. The first study conducted by Mathematica Policy Research was a national longitudinal study using a quasi-experimental design using matched comparison schools. The findings were statistically significant and had effect sizes in mathematics ranging from .16 to .83 for the third year of the study. The reading effect sizes were greater at .19-.99 (page 17). The second study, a quasi-experimental study

conducted by the National Bureau of Economic Research, also found that a KIPP school in Lynn, Massachusetts shows statistically significant and substantial student achievement gains, particularly for LEP students. This study also had effect sizes ranging from .12 to .35 for mathematics and ELA respectively (page 18). The study found greater effects sizes for SPED and LEP students ranging from .38 to .45. This study used a rigorous, lottery-based approach to create statistically comparable treatment and control groups. This study received the WWC highest rating without reservations. The SRI study of San Francisco Bay Area schools also received a rating from the WWC with reservations. It studied fifth grade students in a matched comparison in three schools. The findings and effects sizes in both mathematics and ELA were statistically significant for the one year results. The effect sizes ranges from .19 to .86 for mathematics and .16 to .54 for ELA. Five other studies' findings were also presented in chart form, indicating their statistical or practical significance that supports the three extremely strong research studies.

Weaknesses

Although the research provided has received WWC ratings, the studies fail to address the proposed focus for scaling up the project, The KIPP leadership development model. Two of the three project goals specifically discuss principal leadership and training. There are no findings presented on the impact of the leadership model on student achievement or teacher success. There may be a relationship between the leadership development model and the KIPP schools' successful academic outcomes, but the studies do not discuss that link or reference the leadership development model. In addition, the focus of the majority of the studies is on middle school populations and do not address the elementary and high school levels which are proposed to be included in the scale up project, which is a threat to the external validity of the cited studies.

Reader's Score: 13

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

A strong project evaluation plan is proposed by the applicant. The evaluation will consist of an experimental design and a quasi-experimental design. The study is a longitudinal study, which will evaluate not only the impact of the KIPP schools but of the project scaling up process. The study will investigate the relationship between the KIPP Leadership model and student achievement based on comparisons of the various implementation strategies, recruitment strategies, and regions. The study will be conducted independently by Mathematica Policy Research, a reputable national company that has conducted one of the studies submitted as research evidence in support of the proposed project. The plan identifies the sources of the data and the tools that will be used for the qualitative component of the study (page 35). The quantitative sources are also identified in that table and on page 33. The resources identified for the study are adequate for fully completing the study with adequate staff to provide feedback and results in a timely manner. The statistical methods for analyzing the data and for ensuring external and internal validity are identified in the presentation on page 33. The evaluation will provide timely feedback about the process of scaling up and the impact of scaling up on the teachers, principals and student achievement. This will produce valuable information for schools that would like to replicate the KIPP model, particularly the leadership development model, because of the possible variations in implementing it at different schools.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 15

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student

populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

Weaknesses

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Weaknesses

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;**
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and**

college application processes; and
(c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2010 11:57 AM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 6:11 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Reader #5:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	13
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	9
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	10
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	10
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	1
TOTAL	105	59

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #5:

Applicant: KIPP Foundation -- Research, Design & Innovation, - Research, Design & Innovation, (U396A100031)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

The KIPP Foundation's request is to expand the current principal leadership program to additional sites around the country. KIPP has had successful results with leader preparation and is seeking funds to focus on the principalship, bringing KIPP-developed ideas and training to charter, other public and private schools throughout the nation.

The proposal is a solid one, based in part on successful past performance and the demonstrated ability to manage large, complex projects. The applicant also demonstrates significant capability to raise financial support from a variety of foundations and business leaders.

The key factor that hinders this proposal is the cost per participant in the KIPP program- \$150,000 per participant. This figure makes replication and sustainability a cause for concern, especially for many high needs schools around the country.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

The proposed project represents an exceptional approach to improve the development and delivery of highly qualified principals to meet student needs across the country. The KIPP leadership development program has an outstanding track record as identified in the proposal, in terms of the connection between KIPP- trained principals and the outstanding student performance results cited on page e 3.

The proposal is focused on Absolute Priority 1- Innovations that support effective teachers and principals. The KIPP approach has demonstrate outstanding progress in addressing the needs associated with this priority.

The proposed project has a clear set of goals and specific strategies to achieve those goals, and is aligned with the priorities (both absolute and competitive) to achieve those goals. The exception to this statement is explained in the weakness section below.

Weaknesses

One of the requirements of this category relates to goals, strategies and outcomes expected from these strategies. Activity 3b (pg e13) does not appear to be sufficient to achieve the dissemination of tools and practices to meet the goals/objectives of the proposal. The establishment of an online portal and an annual conference to share success does not appear to be adequate for a national scale-up project of this size.

Reader's Score: 13

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described

in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

The past performance of the applicant in managing large, complex and rapidly growing projects is impressive as noted below;

- * Growth of KIPP schools from two to six hundred.
- * Focus on the needs of subgroups while growing substantially.
- * Expansion geographically across the nation.
- * Fisher Fellowship effort to train KIPP leaders through a leadership development program.

The performance of the applicant related to student achievement trends is impressive as noted below;

- * After four years at a KIPP school (many students of whom are high-needs) gains of statistically significant improvement in student achievement are made.
- * The vast majority of KIPP eighth graders outperform local district counterparts- Figures by subject range from 88% to 92% of students outperforming counterparts.
- * 100% of KIPP high school classes outperform their local districts on state exams in all major content areas.
- * College attendance and high school graduation attainment is significantly higher for KIPP students than the general student population.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 15

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not

possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which

includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

The capacity of the applicant and other partners to reach the proposed number of students is exceptional, especially given the past performance and the number of partners and foundations that support the KIPP concept.

The applicant's financial, personnel and management infrastructure is very positive to bring the proposed project to scale. As pointed out in the proposal, the KIPP management structure and the implementation plan (regional sites, etc.) provide a well defined and successful method of creating capacity.

Weaknesses

The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project totals 50,000. However, it is difficult to ascertain the direct correlation between newly KIPP-trained principals and the connection with KIPP schools and traditional schools. There appears to be an ancillary connection of principals trained and the total number of students eventually reached.

In terms of replication, questions must be raised about how the KIPP curriculum and practices around leadership development would be replicated successfully. There is little discussion of concrete, specific replication of the content other than traditional sharing and disseminating practices. Furthermore, given the current structure of traditional public schools, ample evidence needs to be provided that the replication of this non-traditional approach to leadership can be implemented in traditional K16 structures. The applicant has not provided evidence in its application.

The estimated cost is a real concern- \$150,000 per participant raises question as to whether or not this is an unrealistic figure for replication and capacity issues. The student cost is extremely low, yet the direct connection between the individual leader's training and students is difficult to assess. Sustainability at a cost of \$150,000 per educator has not been adequately addressed in this application.

The dissemination strategies appear to be limited and very traditional

approaches including;

- * Hosting an Leadership Symposium three times during the grant cycle.
- * Capturing best practice and creating tools to share those practices.
- * Speaking at National Forums
- * Sharing with policymakers
- * Operating an Open Book

The strategies outlined for dissemination are inadequate to meet the ambitious goals of the proposed project.

Reader's Score: 9

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

The applicant has clearly articulated a strong set of partners and financial resources to operate the project after grant funding ends. The combination of participant fees and private funding is an impressive set of figures to support the resource item.

The strength of the KIPP effort with state and local education agencies is demonstrated by the fact that they are working in 17 of the 20 largest districts in the nation, as well as numerous other education organizations, such as charter schools and other non-traditional schools.

The evidence of planning to incorporate the project's purposes after grant funds end is clear and substantial. Since this is an effort to grow current leadership programs, the grant's purpose is appears appropriate for inclusion of best practices and lessons learned as the KIPP effort continues to evolve after the grant period has ended.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 10

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

The proposal has a management plan that appears well developed and has a set of milestones responsible parties and timelines to support this conclusion. While dissemination has been raised repeatedly as a concern for this grant proposal, the dissemination part of the management plan is consistent with the grant proposal's plans in this area.

The project director's qualifications appear to be well grounded and more than adequate. The background in KIPP, research and other management related responsibilities appear to clearly qualify him for this role. This is also true of key personnel, based on the information about the respective backgrounds of each in the proposal.

The external evaluator (Mathematica) will receive over \$5 million to conduct extensive, large scale studies of this educational initiative. The organization has credibility for the quality of their work evaluating projects of similar scope.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

This competitive preference was not a focus of the grant proposal.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and

(c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

This competitive preference was not a focus of the proposal.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

The applicant has demonstrated a successful focus on addressing the unique learning needs of special education students and has met this preference.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close

achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

The proposal as presented is transportable to rural areas and is mentioned in the proposal. The requirements of this competitive preference are partially met.

Weaknesses

While there is some degree of transportability and support for rural areas through the application, a depth and broad reach into rural America is not presented.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

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Reading Recovery: Scaling Up What Works

The Ohio State University

Project Narrative

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A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design

Reading Recovery is a targeted approach to school reform focusing on first grade students experiencing the greatest difficulty learning to read and write, typically the lowest 20% of the class. Our project addresses Absolute Priority 4: Innovations that Turn Around Persistently Low-Performing Schools with priorities given to the unique learning needs of students with disabilities and limited English proficient students (Competitive Preference Priority 7) and rural schools (Competitive Preference Priority 8). The overarching goal of this proposal is intensive, long-term professional development for teachers who will provide one-to-one, short-term, 30-minute lessons each day with first graders to accelerate their learning such that they catch up with their peers and close the achievement gap.

The innovation, Reading Recovery, has gone through a 25-year period of development and validation, producing the largest impacts on student reading skills of any intervention reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse, making it one of the most promising reading interventions for scale up. Although Reading Recovery has over 20 years of experience working with struggling readers across the U.S., this proposal offers a unique and innovative opportunity to specifically target high-need schools and provide trained Reading Recovery teachers for students in the lowest-achieving schools. In this section, we discuss the need for Reading Recovery and describe the quality of the project design.

- **Objective 1:** Train 15 new teacher leaders in Year 1 to serve underrepresented areas of the U.S. with a high population of schools meeting the criteria for Absolute Priority 4. The teacher leaders will train new Reading Recovery teachers in Years 2-5.

- **Objective 2:** Train 750 new Reading Recovery teachers each year for a total of 3,750 teachers.
- **Objective 3:** Trained Reading Recovery teachers will work with more than 90,000 Reading Recovery students (.5 FTE) and over 400,000 students in classrooms or Title I small group instruction during the other half of their day for a total of nearly 500,000 students.
- **Objective 4:** Conduct a rigorous outside project evaluation including both experimental and qualitative methodologies.
- **Objective 5:** Provide high-quality oversight for the project orchestrating activities across the 16 universities.

The partnership described in this proposal includes 15 universities with Reading Recovery Training Centers and the districts and schools in 40 states within their current networks. Together, we will train 15 new Teacher Leaders and 3,750 new Reading Recovery teachers across the U.S. who will work with approximately 90,000 first graders struggling to learn to read and write over the course of the five-year grant. In the other half of their day, the trained Reading Recovery teachers will work with over 400,000 students, usually in either classroom or small group settings. This existing partnership between universities and school districts is uniquely positioned to immediately scale-up Reading Recovery quickly and efficiently. University of Pennsylvania is the 16th partner and will be conducting the outside evaluation.

Need for Reading Recovery

Low performing students do not suddenly fall behind their classmates when they reach middle school; they have been struggling since their first day at school (Juel, 1988; Vellutino &

Scanlon 2002). Differences in achievement have been documented as early as kindergarten, and in first (Denton & West, 2002) and fourth grade (U.S. Department of Education 2001). By the time struggling readers reach middle school they have been falling behind for five or six years and they have been growing more and more discouraged.

We also know that high-needs students are over-represented in this group of struggling readers (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). The most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress shows that there have been no significant changes in any achievement gap, including those gaps along race/ethnicity and gender lines, and gaps by type of school (Vanneman, Hamilton, Baldwin, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009).

Reading Recovery presents an innovative approach to tackling the problem of struggling readers in that it targets the problem early on, in first grade, when reading problems first become apparent. The goal of the intervention is to take struggling readers at the onset of difficulty and bring them to average levels of reading performance within a 20-week lesson framework. By addressing the problem early we dramatically increase the odds that young students who are struggling in first grade will be average readers in later grades (see Juel, 1988).

Evaluation data show the impact of intervening early with Reading Recovery. In the 2008-2009 national report (McGee, 2010), data were disaggregated to compare the progress of Reading Recovery students who entered the intervention in the fall to three other groups: a random sample of first grade students, an equivalent comparison group of first grade students who did not receive Reading Recovery but were assessed as equally low readers in the fall, and students who entered Reading Recovery in the middle of the year.

As displayed in Figure 1, students selected for Reading Recovery in the fall initially scored well below the random sample of first grade students on a text reading measure, but at a comparable level to the equivalent comparison group of equally low readers. At midyear, however, the fall Reading Recovery students had caught up to the random sample, while the equivalent comparison group not taught by Reading Recovery had fallen further behind their peers.

Students who started their Reading Recovery intervention mid-year made slow progress during the first half of the year while they waited for their turn in the intervention. By the end of the year, however, those students who started in mid-year caught up to the cohort of Reading Recovery students taught first and with the random sample never taught by Reading Recovery. By contrast, the equivalent comparison group of low performing students who never received Reading Recovery made some progress by the end of the year, but they were still far behind their peers (McGee, 2010).

National Reading Recovery evaluation data were also examined to determine the relationship of economic status, race/ethnicity, and early intervention in predicting end-of-first-grade reading achievement (Rodgers, Gómez-Bellengé, & Wang, 2004; Rodgers, Gómez-Bellengé, Wang, & Schulz, 2005). These studies demonstrated that the Reading Recovery intervention is effective across race/ethnic and socio-economic groups and that access to the Reading Recovery intervention reduces the achievement gap among these groups. Regression procedures indicated that the strongest predictor of literacy success in first grade was access to the Reading Recovery intervention. The regression model included economic status as a predictor variable, but race did not contribute to the prediction of success beyond these two main

factors. These results suggest that effective early intervention is a critical component toward providing educational opportunity for all students.

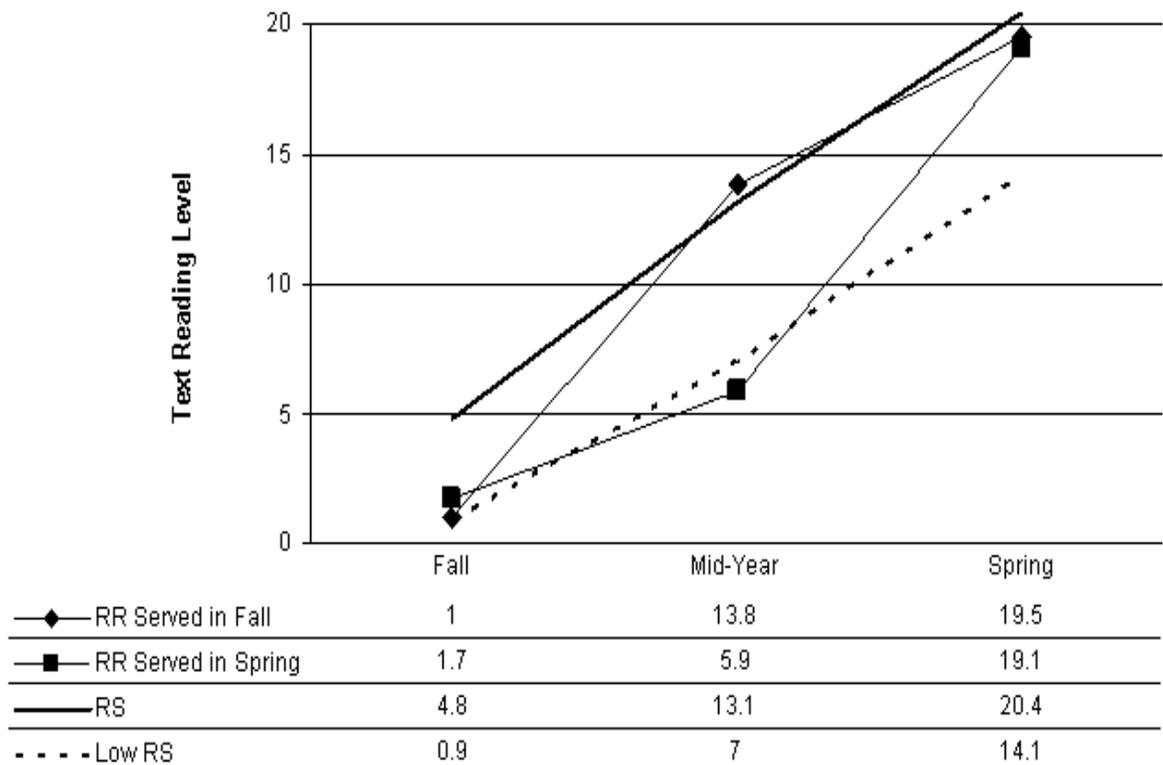


Figure 1. Progress on text level by group and timing of intervention

We cannot draw causal relationships between student progress and the intervention from these examinations of Reading Recovery’s national data set, however, the results from Pinnell, Lyons, Deford, Bryk and Seltzer’s (1994) quasi-experimental study which linked student progress to their involvement in Reading Recovery, leads us to think that Reading Recovery was responsible for the outcomes observed in the national data. These findings underscore the need for intervening early with Reading Recovery to make a difference in students’ reading progress.

What we do know is that we can expect to see an achievement gap opening as early as kindergarten between struggling readers and average performing students. We can also expect to

find that this gap will exist along race/ethnicity, economic, and language lines and that disadvantaged students will be over-represented in the population of struggling readers. It will take more than a superficial fix, such as mandating a phonics program or emphasizing direct teaching, to compensate for the differences that exist between average performing and struggling readers (Bainbridge & Lasley, 2002). An investment in Reading Recovery in which teachers receive specialized preparation and ongoing professional development in order to provide high-quality individual reading instruction to the lowest achieving children, may constitute a comprehensive response to a complex problem.

Even though Reading Recovery has been present in the U.S. educational system for some time, it is not in common use. In 2007-2008, there were 3,755,236 first grade students in the United States (Common Core of Data). If we estimate that 20% of those students were struggling readers we might expect that as many as 751,047 students needed an intensive intervention in 2007-2008 to help them catch up to their peers. By contrast, Reading Recovery reached just 82,165 struggling readers in 2007-2008 (McGee, 2010). The goal of this project is to scale up Reading Recovery so that more students, particularly high-needs students in the lowest-performing schools across the country, will have access to this validated intervention.

Quality of the Design

Four features distinguish the design of Reading Recovery:

1. A network of professional support for teachers and administrators
2. Intensive, daily, one-to-one, 30-minute lessons for children

3. An intensive professional development program through which educators learn to teach children with extreme literacy difficulties
4. A research and evaluation system maintained by the International Data Evaluation Center (IDEC) to continuously monitor results, ensure accountability, and provide information for making implementation decisions

These four features, which have evolved and were refined throughout the course of Reading Recovery's development and validation in the United States, are foundational to Reading Recovery's design. In the remainder of this section we discuss these features in detail and we describe how these features position Reading Recovery extremely well for national scale up.

Reading Recovery is a professional development partnership between universities and school districts. Literacy coaches called "teacher leaders" are prepared at the university to provide training and continuing professional development to teachers. Typically, the teachers are either classroom or Title I teachers who work half time in Reading Recovery and half time in their other role.

Reading Recovery teachers design daily individual 30-minute literacy lessons for children in first grade who are having the greatest difficulty learning to read and write. Children are engaged in writing and reading continuous text, word study, and phonics instruction. There is a standard lesson format but no teacher script. The teacher teaches and prompts the student to use the kinds of strategies that average-achieving students use while reading and writing (Clay, 2005). The goal is to accelerate each student's progress to average levels of reading and writing within 20 weeks. Researchers attribute this faster-than-usual progress to the one-to-one nature of

the instruction, the teacher's professional development, and the instructional components of the Reading Recovery lesson (Pinnell, Lyons, DeFord, Bryk & Seltzer, 1994).

As soon as students meet grade-level expectations and demonstrate that they can continue to learn in the classroom, their lessons are discontinued, and new students begin individual instruction. There are two positive outcomes for students who complete the 20-week intervention:

1. Students meet grade-level expectations in reading and writing and continue to work successfully within their classroom programs. The outcome category for “responders” (about 75% annually) is *discontinued*.
2. The remaining students still having difficulty after a complete intervention are recommended for further evaluation. The outcome category for “non-responders” (about 25% each year) is *recommended*.

Both outcomes are viewed as positive in that diagnostic information on rate of progress and key measures of outcome levels are available to inform decisions about future actions. In this way, Reading Recovery operates as a prescreening tool in schools, identifying students who respond well to early intervention and can catch up to their peers from those who need more long-term support.

Reading Recovery was first implemented in the United States in 1984. Since that time, Reading Recovery has undergone a lengthy period of development and validation in which its design has been tested and retested by various researchers and evidence for its effectiveness established. Every aspect of its design has been subjected to scrutiny including: student outcomes and subsequent performance, impact on retention and referral to special education rates, effect on

home literacy activities, outcomes for English Language Learners, impact on phonemic awareness, impact on the achievement gap, teacher learning and scaffolding within teacher-student interactions (See Schmitt et al. 2005 for a review of the literature).

The lengthy period and extensive record of developing and validating Reading Recovery before scale up is appropriate. Innovations need an extended period of time in use to be tested in order to ensure they meet rigorous feasibility and evidence requirements before scaling up is attempted (Baker, 2007).

The structure and design of Reading Recovery are consistent with a large body of research on how children learn to read and write. The instructional format is based not only on basic research about young children's reading and writing development (Clay, 1966), but also a series of studies conducted in the 1970s and 1980s that included randomized field trials, follow-up studies, replication studies, monitoring studies, and subgroup studies. Numerous other studies have subsequently examined the effectiveness of Reading Recovery for children with literacy difficulties. (See Schmitt, Askew, Fountas, Lyons & Pinnell, 2005 for a review.)

Next, we describe how these design features fit Cohen and Ball's (2007) instructional and implementation strategies for scaling up interventions. Cohen and Ball recommended that innovations offer powerful and ongoing guidance for instruction. The design of Reading Recovery represents an investment in the professional skills of teachers. It builds professional communities and has been widely praised as a model worth emulating (e.g., Herman & Stringfield, 1997). All Reading Recovery professionals—teachers, teacher leaders, and university faculty complete a full academic year of graduate, post-masters or post-doctoral study respectively. Following the initial year of coursework, educators take part in ongoing

professional development sessions which are grounded in the teaching of children, problem-solving issues of practice, and ongoing analysis and reflection on teaching.

Professional development integrates theory and practice. Because Reading Recovery depends on a teacher who can design and deliver individual lessons, the teacher must learn how to observe and record student behaviors and to make moment-by-moment teaching decisions (McEneaney, Lose, & Schwartz, 2006). The teacher must also know how to evaluate teaching decisions to determine subsequent teaching moves. This process takes a high level of skill combined with ongoing study and support from colleagues and a teacher leader.

Each regional teacher-training facility across the country is equipped with a one-way mirror. Live Reading Recovery lessons are taught behind the one-way mirror while the teachers observe, discuss, and analyze the lessons. The teacher leader guides the collaborative inquiry and challenges the teachers to observe closely, provide evidence for developing theories about the student's learning, and to suggest multiple alternative teaching moves in response to their observations of what the student can do independently and what the student needs to learn how to do. Reading Recovery teachers develop effective observational skills and a repertoire of teaching procedures designed to meet the particular needs of individual students. Observing and analyzing live lessons taught behind the one-way mirror provides teachers with a shared example of teaching and learning that they can reflect on and analyze. Teaching lessons behind the one way mirror is an integral part of the training year and continues throughout the teacher's ongoing professional development following the training.

Cohen and Ball (2007) also note that instruction, leadership and school organization may need to be reorganized if changes are to be taken up within a school district. Reading Recovery's design reorganizes the system and introduces new structures. These structures enable the district

to implement the changes and carry them forward more independently without needing continued close involvement of the university (Clay, 1994).

Regional teacher training sites. A regional teacher training site is a new entity within the educational organization; it provides the structure at a district or cross-districts level to provide professional development to the teachers. Several districts may form a consortium to support the costs related to having a teacher leader and a regional training site. The site is usually located at an already-existing professional development space within the school district that acts as the fiscal agent for the site. The training site contains a one-way mirror to observe lessons and space for teachers to have a class meeting. Each regional teacher training site is affiliated with a University Training Center.

University trainers. More than 20 Reading Recovery university training centers (UTCs) provide the organizing structure for states or regions of the country. University trainers are faculty members at the UTC who are responsible for providing initial and ongoing professional development for teacher leaders, supporting a network of Reading Recovery teacher training sites, expanding and strengthening network sites, and ensuring the integrity of Reading Recovery in the region. Two UTCs, The Ohio State University and Texas Woman's University provide the one-year post-doctoral training to prepare university faculty to establish and direct their own UTCs.

Reading Recovery teacher leaders. Teacher leaders are selected by a school district for training. The teacher leader directs the regional teacher training site. Teacher leader candidates must have a master's degree and leadership potential. The candidate attends one of the UTCs for an academic year that includes: (a) teaching four Reading Recovery students daily; (b) actively participating in graduate-level classes; (c) participating in clinical and leadership practica, as

well as seminars in reading, writing, reading difficulties, and adult learning theory; (d) participating in teacher professional development classes and fieldwork at established sites; and (e) preparing their home districts for Reading Recovery implementation. All course work is offered at the post-masters level.

After the initial year of professional development, teacher leaders return to full-time positions in their districts/sites. They continue to teach children daily in Reading Recovery, train Reading Recovery teachers, and provide leadership for site implementation. They oversee data collection on all Reading Recovery children and work with school leadership teams to improve student performance and implementation decisions based on evaluation data. For ongoing learning, teacher leaders participate in regularly scheduled professional development sessions conducted by university trainers. They attend a required national Teacher Leader Institute annually to ensure current knowledge about all aspects of their roles.

Teacher leaders provide Reading Recovery teachers with an academic year of professional development. Teachers receive graduate credit while working with four children individually on a daily basis and actively participating in weekly graduate-level classes at a university. Each teacher-in-training will receive at least four school visits by the teacher leader during the school year.

The teacher leader is a key component in the design because of that person's role in maintaining the fidelity of Reading Recovery (Clay, 1994). According to Clay, the teacher leader is the "agent of redirection" because of her/his pivotal role in redirecting learning across the system; every part of the system has to change, including the child learning, the teacher learning, the system learning, and the community learning. Clay (1994) says that teacher leaders are

redirecting systems because they ~~teach~~ children, train teachers, educate the local educators, negotiate the implementation of the program, act as advocates for whatever cannot be compromised in the interests of effective results, and talk to the public and media, correcting misconceptions” (p. 127). The teacher leader, therefore, is responsible for orchestrating fundamental changes in the system, the kind of reform where things that really matter are changed, which as Fullan (1993) has noted is so critical for reform to occur.

The role of the teacher leader in redirecting the system does not diminish or take on less importance the longer Reading Recovery has been implemented. Teacher leaders play a pivotal role in ensuring that the design is not pared down by local educational stakeholders who want to implement untested changes to the design.

Reading Recovery teachers. Reading Recovery teacher candidates, most often Title I or classroom teachers, are selected by school district administrators. They must be certified teachers with a record of successful teaching experience with young children. Teachers rarely work in Reading Recovery for the entire day. They work about half the day in the Reading Recovery role and the other part of their day in the Title I or classroom teacher role. The most common combined role in 2008-2009 was Reading Recovery/Classroom teacher or Reading Recovery/Title I teacher (McGee, 2010). National data for 2008–2009 show that Reading Recovery teachers taught an average of 8.1 Reading Recovery students, plus 40.6 children in their other teaching roles (McGee, 2010). These teachers also interacted with other teachers in collaborative and leadership roles, building literacy expertise and capacity for working with struggling readers.

Site coordinators. Because Reading Recovery is a system intervention, each Reading Recovery site has a site coordinator, an administrator who is responsible for placing the innovation into an existing educational system. The role of site coordinator is a new one within the education system. Site coordinators generally are not trained in Reading Recovery, but they are familiar with all aspects of implementation. Working closely alongside Reading Recovery teacher leaders, they serve as leaders for communicating and problem solving within the regional training site. Administrators at the school level work with a school leadership team to problem solve and refine the implementation on their campuses.

Standards and guidelines. Consistent with Cohen and Ball's (2007) recommendation that new professional norms be developed to support the implementation of new instructional practices, Reading Recovery's period of development and validation in the United States has included the development of common professional standards: *Standards and Guidelines of Reading Recovery in the United States, 4th edition* (Reading Recovery Council of North America, 2004). The standards describe norms for operating a regional training site, the roles and responsibilities of teachers, teacher leaders and trainers, and site coordinators. A royalty-free license is issued annually to each regional teacher training site on the basis of following the standards. Standards and the issuance of annual site licenses ensure the internal and external fidelity of Reading Recovery implementation.

Teacher leaders and site coordinators can request a one-year exemption to a standard provided they give a rationale for the variance and include a plan for returning to the standards in the following year. This flexibility allows a feedback loop to investigate any necessary changes to the design. When changes are made to the design, it is a result of research, not pressure to pare down the design.

The design of Reading Recovery includes new educational subsystems which provide continuing technical and professional support, another implementation strategy identified by Cohen and Ball (2007). These structures have evolved over the years that Reading Recovery was being developed and validated, in response to the needs articulated by school and district stakeholders. They provide continuing professional and technical assistance to teacher leaders and site coordinators at the regional training sites.

Reading Recovery Council of North America. RRCNA is a not-for-profit association of Reading Recovery professionals, advocates, and partners. The Council provides a network of opportunities for leadership and professional development. It is an advocate for Reading Recovery throughout North America. The Council provides a wide variety of programs and services, including publications, annual conferences, advocacy, technical assistance, and special institutes. These activities strengthen the implementation of Reading Recovery and provide opportunities for Reading Recovery professionals to collaborate with early literacy advocates and other education professionals.

The International Data Evaluation Center. IDEC operates a web site to enable Reading Recovery teachers and teacher leaders to enter data and download reports and datasets that can be customized for individual schools, districts, regional training sites, university centers, or individual states. A national evaluation report is published annually. IDEC supports 22 Reading Recovery University Training Centers by providing them with standard annual reports as well as data needed to prepare custom reports or engage in research. These reports follow a standard evaluation protocol that includes information about teacher and student demographics, students' progress on standard literacy measures and their progress in relation to five national achievement groups. Data as to the length of time in the program, schools' level of implementation, and

teacher and student absenteeism and their relationship to outcomes, are also provided. The IDEC research director advises 40 university trainers and their staff on research and evaluation issues and collaborates with these universities in research efforts.

The design of Reading Recovery has evolved during its development and validation period in ways that address challenges identified by Cohen and Ball (2007). With the introduction of Reading Recovery to an educational system, new structures, new roles and new relationships are created such that each Reading Recovery teacher is connected to a teacher leader who in turn is connected to a faculty member at a university. The three-tiered structure of implementing Reading Recovery through schools, regional training sites and universities with ongoing professional development for every role, allows the intervention to be implemented with fidelity. It also allows for change to the design in that teachers and teacher leaders who are implementing the innovation can provide feedback to the university innovators who can test the changes in well-designed research projects. Teachers can work with independence at the school level because they are responsible for designing and implementing individual lessons but they are also connected to a wider network through the activities of the Reading Recovery Council of North America and the support offered by the International Data Evaluation Center.

B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect

Reading Recovery is perhaps the most widely researched early literacy intervention in the world. The program has received considerable research emphasis primarily because student assessment and evaluation have been integral program components since its inception in the 1970s. Marie Clay, the program developer, also created the Observation Survey (OS), which consists of six tasks (letter identification, word reading, concepts about print, writing vocabulary,

hearing and recording sounds in words, and text reading level) to diagnose a student's strengths and weaknesses, identify students for services, and to monitor student progress during the intervention. This intense focus on data-driven decision-making facilitated ongoing program evaluation. For more than 20 years in the United States, the International Data Evaluation Center (IDEC) in Columbus, OH, has relied on systematic, empirical methods to collect data on all children served by the intervention (about 90,000 first graders in 2008–2009). Data are also collected on a random sample of grade-level peers to provide a comparison group. Information about implementation factors is also collected to inform local decision makers. This web-based data collection system provides a highly sophisticated system for reporting and aggregating program and school measures of student performance. Besides the continuous data collection and analysis conducted by the IDEC, numerous empirically-driven RR impact studies have been performed. In an extensive meta-analysis of the program, D'Agostino and Murphy (2004) identified 36 empirically-driven impact studies of RR in the United States alone that were conducted between 1986 and 1997. Many more studies of RR that focused on producing estimates of its effectiveness have been conducted since the late 1990s.

A study must be based on a randomized design with a control group, have low attrition, and documented group equivalence to meet the highest evidence standard of the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC, 2008). To meet the evidence standard with reservations, a study can either be based on a randomized design with high attrition but documented group equivalence, or a quasi-experiment with documented group equivalence. Among the 106 RR studies reviewed by the WWC, four were identified that met their strict evidence standards, and one study met the evidence standards with reservations. Baenen et al. (1997) performed a randomized controlled trial of RR in Wake County, NC. Literacy outcomes were assessed at the end of first grade

($n=147$), second grade ($n=147$) and third grade ($n=127$) on students who had been assigned randomly to receive RR in first grade or to serve as control students. Another randomized controlled trial was conducted by Pinnell et al. (1988). The authors assigned students at random to receive RR ($n=38$) or to receive an alternate literacy program (the control condition, $n=53$) in 14 Columbus, Ohio schools. The third study that met the WWC's highest evidence standards involved the random assignment of students to RR ($n=31$) or a comparison condition ($n=48$) in eight Ohio schools (Pinnell, et al., 1994). The final study that met these WWC evidence standards was performed by Schwartz (2005), who randomly assigned students in 14 states to receive RR in the first ($n=37$) or latter ($n=37$) part of the school year. Students who received RR in the latter part of the year served as a comparison group, and program effects were estimated from midyear testing. Iverson and Tunmer (1993) implemented a quasi-experimental design involving 30 school districts in Rhode Island that met the WWC standards with reservations. RR students ($n=32$) were matched based on pretest scores with 32 comparison students who received small group support out of their classrooms.

Taken together, about 700 students in 46 schools throughout the nation participated in the five WWC studies that either met the highest evidence standards or met the evidence standards with reservations. Findings of all five studies were statistically significant and were positive for Reading Recovery. Students who participated in the studies had fall first-grade reading achievement levels that were near or below the 20th percentile, which is the targeted performance level for RR eligibility. Study participants in all likelihood adequately represented the targeted population that will take part in this scale up project—early learners in low-performing schools. Though none of the studies yielded disaggregated effects for ELL students, many study participants likely were ELL because those students are more likely to struggle with English

language skills, and thus, test in the bottom quartile of the distribution. Kelly, Gómez-Bellengé, Chen, and Schulz (2008) examined the performance of 17,792 ELL students from the RR national program evaluation data. They found only a slight difference in the outcome status success rate and performance levels between ELL and native English speakers. The length of interventions did not differ between these groups, nor was it related to rating of oral English proficiency prior to the intervention. Because RR is designed to help students with lower English proficiency, it would be highly unlikely that program effects would not generalize to ELL students.

The studies that met the WWC evidence standards with or without reservation also did not produce effect estimates by school location (urban, suburban, rural), and it is not possible to identify the exact location of schools because they remained anonymous in the studies. Because the 46 schools were in various localities throughout the country, some schools likely served large proportions of rural students. Furthermore, it would not seem sensible to conjecture that rural students would be less likely suited for RR treatment than students in other localities. The RR studies that met the WWC evidence standards with or without reservations not only had high internal validity, but had sufficient external validity that allows for the generalization of effects to the targeted participants in this scale up effort.

Ascertaining the extent of evidence for an intervention and examining the magnitude of program effects on important student outcomes are major purposes of the WWC review process. Impact evidence is reviewed in four critical outcome domains of beginning reading, including Alphabeticity, Reading Fluency, Comprehension, and General Reading Achievement. Within each domain, the WWC categorizes the extent of evidence for an intervention into one of two levels, small and medium to large (WWC, 2008). Domain evidence is considered small if it is based on

only one study, or if it comes from one school, or if the findings are from a total sample of less than 350 students from less than 14 classrooms across all studies. Evidence for a domain is classified as medium to large if it is based on more than one study from more than one school, and it is from a total sample size of 350 students or from at least 14 classrooms. The WWC reports magnitude effects as average percentile points, which can range from -50 to +50. An average percentile point indicates ~~the~~ the difference between the percentile rank of the average student in the intervention condition versus the percentile rank of the average student in the comparison condition” (WWC, 2008).

To date, the WWC has identified and reviewed 170 beginning reading interventions (WWC, April 30, 2010) and determined that 145 of those interventions did not have any studies that met their evidence standards. The evidence for the remaining 25 programs is summarized in Table 1, which includes both the average percentile point and the extent of evidence (marked with a single asterisk if small or two asterisks if medium to large), when available, for each intervention.

As is evident from Table 1, Reading Recovery is the only beginning reading intervention that had evidence in all four domain outcomes, including Alphabeticity, Reading Fluency, Comprehension, and General Reading Achievement. The only other program besides Reading Recovery to have medium to large extent of evidence for General Reading Achievement, which commonly is measured with external standardized reading assessments, was Success for All; however, the average effect for Reading Recovery in that domain was three times the magnitude of the Success for All average effect (32 compared to 10). The Reading Recovery average effect in General Reading Achievement was twice as large as the estimate of the program with the

Table 1. Average percentile points by literacy outcome for beginning reading interventions with WWC reports

Intervention Name	Alphabetics	Reading Fluency	Comprehension	General Reading Achievement
Accelerated Reader	Na	+3*	0**	+16*
Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition© (CIRC)	Na	na	+4**	na
Corrective Reading	+9*	+11*	+7*	na
Classwide Peer Tutoring©	Na	na	na	+14*
DaisyQuest	+23**	na	Na	na
Early Intervention in Reading (EIR)®	+36*	na	+18*	na
Earobics®	+25*	+15*	Na	na
Failure Free Reading	+1*	+2*	+10*	na
Fast ForWord®	+8*	na	+1*	na
Fluency Formula™	Na	+10*	-11*	na
Kaplan SpellRead	+18*	+9*	+20*	na
Ladders to Literacy	+25**	+26*	+9**	na
Lexia Reading	+11*	+9*	+11*	+9*
Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing (LiPS)®	+17*	na	+6*	na
Little Books	Na	na	Na	+12*
Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)©	+19**	+13*	+13*	na
Read Naturally®	Na	+8*	+2*	na
Read, Write & Type!™	+8*	na	+3*	na
Reading Recovery®	+34**	+46*	+14*	+32**
Start Making a Reader Today® (SMART®)	+16*	+17*	+14*	na
Stepping Stones to Literacy	+30*	na	Na	na
Success for All®	+13**	na	+8**	+10**

Voyager Universal Literacy System®	+11**	na	-25*	na
Waterford Early Reading Program	+19*	na	+4*	na
Wilson Reading	+13*	+6*	+7*	na

Note. Average percentile points refer to the difference between the percentile rank of the average treatment student compared to the percentile rank of the average control student. Extent of evidence categorization: *small; **medium to large. Evidence is categorized as small if, for a given outcome domain, it is based on only one study, or from only one school, or from a total sample size of less than 350 and a total of less than 14 classrooms across studies. Evidence is considered medium to large extent for a given domain outcome if it is based on more than one study, and from more than one school, and the total sample size is at least 350 students or from at least 14 classrooms across studies. na = not applicable. (Source: WWC, April 30, 2010)

second largest effect in that domain (Accelerated Reader), and the extent of evidence for that intervention was classified as small.

Only two other interventions besides Reading Recovery had medium to large extent of evidence for more than one outcome domain, but the magnitude of effects for those two programs (Ladders to Literacy and Success for All) were smaller for each domain compared to Reading Recovery. The Alphabetics (+34) and Reading Fluency (+46) effects for Reading Recovery were large, and the effect for comprehension (+14) was rather solid. Averaging the effects across the four domains, Reading Recovery clearly stands out as the beginning reading intervention with the most promise to scale up and effectively reach young children experiencing English-language literacy difficulties.

The effect magnitude in General Reading Achievement for Reading Recovery not only is significant and large, especially compared to other beginning reading interventions, it is vital if

many young children in persistently low-performing schools will have a realistic chance of being successful in school and life. Schools with achievement levels in the bottom of a state's distribution, or schools in Title I corrective action or restructuring contain many first-grade students with literacy skills that place them in the 10th to 30th percentile standing nationally. Improving their literacy skills, which are vital for learning across all academic subjects, to average national levels (i.e., about the 50th percentile) requires an intervention with an effect magnitude of at least +30 percentile points. If an early reader in a persistently low-performing school is provided a reading intervention with an average effect of +10 to +15 points, the child likely will continue to struggle and will remain at risk of falling further behind his or her more advantaged peers in all academic areas. Reading Recovery is the only beginning reading intervention with an effect magnitude in General Reading Achievement as determined by the WWC that provides young children with reading problems an opportunity to catch up and maintain performance levels necessary for school success. The WWC did not review the evidence for Reading Recovery effects beyond first-grade, but D'Agostino and Murphy (2004) in their meta-analysis found that Reading Recovery student achievement gains were sustained into second grade and concluded that "the results seem to indicate a lasting program effect, at least by the end of second grade, on broad reading skills" (p. 35).

C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant

The Reading Recovery network in the U.S. began at The Ohio State University; thus, the Reading Recovery faculty at OSU has over 20 years of experience developing and implementing Reading Recovery, a large and complex intervention, on a national scale. From the first training class of 17 teachers at OSU in 1984, Reading Recovery has grown to serve over 2,000,000 first graders.

Faculty at The Ohio State University have provided consistent leadership at the national level supporting the development of 22 University Training Centers across the U.S., the design of the *Standards and Guidelines of Reading Recovery in the United States, 4th edition* (Reading Recovery Council of North America, 2004), the development of the Reading Recovery Council of North America, and the establishment of the International Data and Evaluation Center as described in Section A of this narrative. Drs. Rodgers, Scharer, and McGee have extensive experience as OSU faculty working with Reading Recovery. As Reading Recovery Trainers, they have a strong understanding of Reading Recovery nationally and internationally as well as the relationships between university faculty, teacher leaders, and teachers across the U.S. They have not only worked to support the implementation of Reading Recovery nationally, they also direct a large literacy initiative composed of other related projects.

Along with Gay Su Pinnell, Professor Emerita at OSU, and one of the OSU professors who first brought Reading Recovery to the U.S., Drs. Rodgers, Scharer, and McGee compose the Faculty Board which directs Literacy Collaborative, a second large and complex literacy project. The Literacy Collaborative project began at OSU in 1994 based on the following question: What can we learn from Reading Recovery that can be applied in classroom contexts? This school reform initiative focuses on training an on-site staff developer and coach called a literacy coordinator who takes graduate coursework at the university for 7 weeks during the training year and begins a new role as a half-time coach the following year. Recent federally-funded research on student achievement in 17 Literacy Collaborative elementary schools documented that K-2 students learned an average of 32% more during the third year of coaching compared with the baseline training year (Biancarosa & Bryk, in press). Since its initial implementation at OSU in 1994, over 2,000 literacy coordinators have been trained across the U.S.

KEEP Books (www.keepbooks.org) is a third project initiated by OSU faculty. KEEP Books are inexpensive little books with interesting stories written to provide K-2 readers with easy-to-read books to take home to “keep.” Over 100 million little books have been sold on a not-for-profit basis since 1995 for as little as 25¢ per book. Typically, teachers introduce students to their KEEP Book as a shared or guided reading and then send the book home for students to collect and reread. There are now 208 different titles and more are being developed each year.

A fourth, more recent initiative, closely related to Reading Recovery, is Literacy Lessons professional development designed specifically for special education teachers or teachers of English language learners (ELL). The goal is to provide expert literacy training to special education and ELL teachers that they can use to design and deliver individualized instruction to their population of struggling readers. This is our latest initiative. We have been piloting this strategy for the last four years in 5 school districts in Ohio.

Working with Schools to Improve Student Achievement

OSU has a 25-year history working with a network of districts in Ohio. In 2007-2008, for example, OSU faculty worked with 18 teacher leaders who supported Reading Recovery teachers in 123 districts across the state. Through ongoing professional development and targeted intensive work with particular sites, we constantly strive to raise the rate of students successfully completing their series of lessons and reaching average reading levels. These efforts have had an important impact on the number of students retained or referred in districts served. Lyons and Beaver (1995) tracked referral rates to special education and rate of retention in one district for three years following their implementation of Reading Recovery and found that the

retention rate dropped from 4.3% to 2.9% and the percentage of first grade students placed in Learning Disabilities classrooms dropped from 1.8% to .63%.

Evaluation data of Reading Recovery in Ohio from last year demonstrate our record of significantly improving student achievement. In 2008-2009, the OSU Reading Recovery network in Ohio consisted of 19 teacher leaders and 451 Reading Recovery teachers working in 123 school districts across the state. Table 2 shows changes in Reading Recovery students' classroom reading group placement from the beginning of first grade to the end of the school year. 91% of all students who received Reading Recovery instruction were judged by their classroom teachers to be either working at well below, or below average reading levels at the beginning of the year. By the end of the year, just 37% remained in these two categories; most students (63%) had shifted to average, above average, or well above average levels of reading. These results have been consistent over the years and are representative of past performance.

Table 2. Change in classroom reading group placement from fall to year-end for all Reading Recovery students: Ohio, 2008-2009.

Reading Performance Placement											
	Well below average		Below average		Average		Above average		Well above Average		Total
	n	row %	n	row %	n	row %	n	row %	n	row %	n
Fall Reading Performance	1,501	54	1,037	37	228	8	11	0	15	1	2792
Year-End Reading Performance	395	14	653	23	1,292	46	401	14	76	3	2817

(Source: Rodgers, 2009).

Other ways to look at the impact of our Reading Recovery network on student achievement in Ohio are to examine trends in retention rates and referral to special education services. Eighty-nine percent ($n= 2,488$) of all children served by Reading Recovery in Ohio were not referred for special services in 2008-2009. This is quite an achievement in that all of the children selected for Reading Recovery come from the lowest 20% in their first grade classrooms. They were the lowest achieving children in their grade and, without an intervention, would have most likely remained at the lowest levels and needed a referral for special education services. In terms of retention decisions, 103 of students who received Reading Recovery services were initially considered for retention in grade, but not retained because they had made adequate progress (Rodgers, 2009).

Results from evaluation data are presented here for 2008-2009 only. OSU has partnered with school districts in Ohio to provide Reading Recovery professional development for the last 25 years. The results have been stable. When results are not as high as expected, OSU Reading Recovery faculty have designed more intensive professional development plans to help teachers in those districts to improve their results (Rodgers & Fried, 2009).

In sum, the OSU Reading Recovery faculty has a track record of implementing large-scale, complex, innovative literacy initiatives. In addition, evaluation data for Reading Recovery in Ohio, along with studies of Reading Recovery's impact, demonstrate that through our work with schools we have significantly improved student achievement.

The leadership and organizational skills required to support the ongoing development of literacy initiatives such as those described above are similar to the skills required to lead a large scale-up initiative as proposed in this document. Teamed with Dr. D'Agostino's evaluation

background, these professors are motivated, organized, and fully capable of successfully implementing the scaling up of Reading Recovery nationally as described in this proposal.

D. Project Evaluation

The evaluation design for the scale-up of Reading Recovery includes a rigorous mixed-methods research design, which will support strong causal inferences about program impacts, both short-term and long-term, along with rich descriptions of program implementation and analysis of individual and contextual factors related to variation in program impacts when implemented at scale. The external evaluation will be conducted under the auspices of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) at the University of Pennsylvania.

Multi-Site RCT for Estimating Short-Term Impacts

A multi-site randomized controlled trial (MS-RCT) will be implemented in order to produce strong causal estimates of the short-term impact of Reading Recovery on student achievement. At the beginning of each school year, teachers in participating schools will assess all first graders using the Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (OS) (Clay, 2002). Students will then be rank ordered by their OS scores and a cutoff (based on a composite of subscale scores) will be chosen for each school whereby students below the cut-score (typically the lowest 20% of students overall) will be assigned to a first or second cohort for Reading Recovery. Blocked random assignment to cohorts will entail ordering eligible students by their OS scores, then grouping them into pairs (i.e., the lowest two, the next lowest two, and so on), and then randomly assigning one student from each pair to begin receiving Reading Recovery and assigning the other student in each pair to receive Reading Recovery after the first student finishes the program, 12-20 weeks later. Reading achievement of both students will be measured

during this cohort transition using the OS and the Slosson Oral Reading Test, a standardized measure of reading achievement.

Short-term impacts on students' reading performance will be estimated by comparing the performance of students in cohorts one and two during the transition period (i.e., after cohort one is finished and before cohort two begins the intervention) after controlling for the OS pretest scores. Over the course of the study, a total of ten cohorts of students (two per year) will have participated in Reading Recovery. This multilevel design will include fixed effects for pairs and fixed effects for years (after Year 1) at the student level, along with a random effect for overall school performance (i.e., a random school intercept) and a random effect for the impact of Reading Recovery (i.e., a random treatment effect across schools). A power analysis for this design suggests very high power to detect even the smallest meaningful effects after just the first year. With 15 University Training Centers, each serving an average of 20 schools in the first year, and an average of 16 eligible students (i.e., eight pairs) in each school, 30% of the variability in the outcome explained by the blocking variable, plus an additional 20% explained by the pretest covariate, and an effect size standard deviation of .10, the impact analyses in the first year will have 80% power to detect an effect as small as .09 standard deviations. Even if the effect size variability increases dramatically to 1.0, the analysis in the first year will still have 80% power to detect an effect as small as .18 standard deviations.

The enormous sample size for this multi-site RCT also allows for additional school-level contextual analysis of factors associated with variability in program effects. Data from both quantitative and qualitative sources (described below) will be linked at the school-level and used as predictors of school-level variability in impact estimates. Power analyses of school-level estimates suggests that the sample of at least 300 schools in Year 1 will provide 80% power to

detect partial correlations as small as .16 between school-level contextual or implementation factors and school-specific program impact estimates. With each year of the study, the sample size at all levels will increase by approximately 750 teachers and 6,000 students, thus increasing statistical power even more.

Multi-Site Regression Discontinuity for Estimating Long-Term Impacts

Although the RCT control group for each cohort receives the treatment by the end of their first grade year, the use of a cut-off score on the OS reading assessment to determine eligibility of students for Reading Recovery presents the opportunity to estimate longer-term program impacts through a Regression Discontinuity (RD) design. At the end of each school year, all students in first grade will be assessed using the Slosson Oral Reading Test. These scores will be used to estimate short-term impacts on students' reading performance. In addition, most students in first grade during Years 1, 2, and 3 of the study will reach third grade in Years 3, 4, or 5 of the study. Therefore, reading achievement scores from state assessments will be available for grades 3-5 for the first two cohorts and for grades 3 for the next cohort. These state achievement scores will be used as longer-term outcome measures with cross-state impact estimates produced using methods described by May et al. (2009).

Program impacts will be estimated by comparing performance of students below and above the original cut score for Reading Recovery eligibility. Because there will be a small amount of variability in schools' cutoff values, the generalizability of results beyond students near a single level of performance is enhanced. Conservative power estimates were produced by modifying the MS-RCT multilevel power analysis to include a narrow bandwidth of only 5-8 students above and below the cut score in each school and by multiplying the sample size

requirements under the MS-RCT design by a design effect of 3.16 associated with a 10/90 program eligibility split and a 50/50 treatment and control analysis sample as described by Schochet (2008, p. 17). If school-level variability in the treatment effect is small (i.e., $\sigma_{\text{TRT}} = .10$), then the RD analysis after just the first year will yield 80% power to detect an effect as small as .14 standard deviations. If school-level variability in the treatment effect is large (i.e., $\sigma_{\text{TRT}} = .50$), then the RD analysis after just the first year will yield 80% power to detect an effect as small as .25 standard deviations. With each year of the study, the sample size at all levels will rise, thus driving statistical power even higher.

Monitoring the Implementation of Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is a very well-established intervention that has developed clearly-specified practices over many years. There are explicit protocols and requirements for the delivery of the Reading Recovery intervention, which support program fidelity. This evaluation plan involves several approaches to monitoring both program implementation and fidelity.

Semi-annual interviews with Reading Recovery teachers. Each year, a representative sample of 50 Reading Recovery teachers and 10 Reading Recovery Teacher Leaders will be selected to participate in semi-annual interviews. Each interview will take approximately 60 minutes. The first interview will be conducted in early fall of each year and will focus on issues related to professional development, identifying students for intervention, scheduling and logistics, communication with classroom teachers, use and adaptation of specific program materials and processes, and work in other grades or with other programs. The second interview will be conducted in late spring and will focus on implementation fidelity, experiences working with individual students and groups of students, communication with classroom teachers,

alignment with classroom instruction, interactions with parents, connections to or competition with other reading interventions, and the value of specific components of their own Reading Recovery training experience. Each year, approximately one-third of the sample of teachers (selected at random) will be resampled from the new cohort of Reading Recovery teachers and teacher leaders. The other half of the sample will continued to be interviewed during the next school year. This will yield a representative sample of 120 teachers and 24 Teacher Leaders, where 50 teachers and 10 Teacher Leaders were followed for one year, 30 teachers and 6 Teacher Leaders for two years, 20 teachers and 4 Teacher Leaders for three years, 10 teachers and 2 Teacher Leaders for four years, and 10 teachers and 2 Teacher Leaders for five years, giving us valuable information on how Reading Recovery teachers and Teacher Leaders implement the intervention over time.

Daily logs of Reading Recovery teachers' work. During each of the five study years, each Reading Recovery teacher will be asked to complete an online log of his/her activities for three randomly sampled days throughout the school year. This will yield a representative sample of more than 30,000 teacher-days for which we can describe the work of Reading Recovery teachers in terms of time spent assessing students, teaching individual students or groups of students, attending to specific elements of reading instruction (e.g., phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension), working with teachers or administrators, and numerous other instructional and administrative activities. The online logs will be modeled after the Principal logs used in CPRE's Study of Instructional Leadership (www.studyofschoolleadership.com). In addition to descriptive analyses of RR teachers' logged activities, data from the logs will be aggregated to the school-level and used to explore potential moderating effects of variations in program implementation. In other words, the log data will be

used to explore whether specific aspects of RR teachers' work are associated with larger or smaller impacts of the program in their schools.

Annual surveys of Reading Recovery teachers. In the late spring of each year, all Reading Recovery teachers will be asked to complete an online survey inquiring about their experiences during the previous year. The survey will include a mix of fixed response and open-ended items designed to measure the prevalence and severity of barriers to program implementation, specific conditions that support or enhance implantation, contextual factors that may be associated with the implementation or impacts of the program in a school, and Reading Recovery teachers' perspectives on the most promising aspects and the most pressing challenges of the program.

Annual school case studies. In each year of the study, eight schools will be selected to serve as case studies of implementation of the Reading Recovery program. These schools will be selected from a sample stratified by region, locale (urban, suburban, rural), school size, and prior performance. One or two researchers will be assigned to each of the eight schools and will (a) conduct both semi-annual interviews with the Reading Recovery Teacher, (b) interview the school principal once per year, (c) visit the school twice per year (i.e., 6-10 days total per year) to conduct additional interviews, observations, and shadow the RR Teacher, and (d) maintain an email conversation with the Reading Recovery Teacher during the course of the school year. Different schools will be sampled each year, yielding a total of 40 school case studies across the study period. Cross-case analysis will yield information about program implementation, modifications of program components and processes, relationships between Reading Recovery Teachers and school staff, and coordination of the Reading Recovery program within the larger school context.

Moderating Effects of School Context

Annual surveys of regular classroom teachers. In the spring of each study year, a stratified random sample (i.e., by region, urbanicity, grade-span) of 1,000 classroom teachers will be selected (with probability proportional to school size) to participate in a survey that inquires about their understanding of the Reading Recovery program, the involvement and perceived success of students in the program, their interactions with Reading Recovery teachers, and their own content knowledge and instructional practice in literacy. To ensure high participation, each teacher will receive a \$10 gift-certificate up front and will be entered into a drawing to win one of three notebook computers when they complete their survey. This should yield an average of 3 teacher surveys per school, with larger schools having up to 7 teacher responses. In addition to descriptive analyses of classroom teachers' responses, data from the teacher survey will be aggregated to the school level and used to explore potential moderating effects of school contextual factors. In other words, the survey data will be used to explore whether specific conditions described by classroom teachers are associated with larger or smaller impacts of the program in their schools

Reading Recovery from Administrators' Perspectives

Annual principal interviews. Principals in the 8 case study schools, plus an additional 20 principals selected from a stratified random sample of schools (i.e., by region, urbanicity, grade-span, school size) will be recruited to participate in an interview designed to gather information on principals' understanding of Reading Recovery, the fit of the RR program for their school, principals' involvement in Reading Recovery (e.g., monitoring progress of RR students), school-specific modifications to the RR program, and perceived impacts of RR on individual students

and school-wide performance.

Annual district surveys. A senior representative from each participating school district (e.g., superintendent, assistant superintendent, or director of curriculum/instruction) will be asked to complete an annual survey containing fixed response and open-ended items designed to gather information about district resources allocated to the Reading Recovery program, coordination and fit of the RR program within districts' instructional and programmatic framework, identification of teachers to be trained in Reading Recovery, use of data to inform and support the program, and perceived impacts of the program district-wide and for subgroups of students. Analyses of these data will be largely descriptive and qualitative. Sample sizes in later years of the study will be large enough to support exploratory analyses of district-level factors as moderators of program impacts.

Performance Feedback

As data are collected and analyzed under this external evaluation, periodic feedback to program implementers will be delivered in the form of (a) quarterly internal evaluation memos summarizing findings to date, (b) periodic conference calls to discuss emergent implementation issues and potential solutions, and (c) annual evaluation reports. The objective is to enhance quality and fidelity of the implementation of Reading Recovery by providing formative, timely, and ongoing feedback to the University Training Centers and teacher leaders as well as participating districts, schools, and Reading Recovery teachers.

Dissemination of Evaluation Findings

Each annual evaluation report and the final evaluation report will be disseminated publicly in electronic form via CPRE's website and through CPRE's email lists. Printed

hardcopies of executive summaries from the annual reports and the full version of the final report will also be distributed to key constituents involved in the study (e.g., participating school districts, USDOE), and other interested organizations (Reading Recovery Council of North America, National Council of Teachers of English) and individuals via CPRE's mailing list. All research reports will be peer-reviewed by one internal and two external reviewers. In years three through five, at least one academic manuscript per year will be submitted for presentation at a national conference and also for publication in an academic journal.

Resources for the Evaluation

The external evaluation will be conducted under the auspices of CPRE at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Henry May and Dr. Leslie Nabors Oláh will serve as Co-Principal Investigators, assisted by one full-time doctoral-level researcher, one full-time masters-level researcher, two doctoral student research assistants, four senior research consultants, and three project management/communications staff. The research team will be advised by three senior faculty members (i.e., Bob Boruch, Rebecca Maynard, and Andy Porter) who have extensive experience in large-scale randomized and quasi-experimental evaluations.

CPRE unites seven of the nation's leading research institutions in efforts to improve student learning through research. CPRE is distinguished by its contributions to education policy, strong quality-control procedures, and expertise in disseminating research products to policymakers and practitioners. CPRE researchers have extensive experience conducting experimental studies, large-scale quasi-experimental research, qualitative studies, and multi-state policy surveys. They have studied the design and implementation of state education policy in nearly two dozen states and over 50 school districts since 1985. CPRE has also conducted

numerous multi-site, mixed-methods experimental and quasi-experimental program evaluations, including evaluations of the America's Choice school improvement program, the National Institute for School Leadership, Ohio's Personalized Assessment Reporting System, and the El Paso Math/Science Partnership. CPRE also has experience in examining classroom-level implementation of instructional initiatives, including our recent study of teacher use of benchmark assessment data. CPRE has at its disposal all the space, equipment, and resources necessary to support multiple research efforts, including the ability to store project data on secure servers. The CPRE staff has full access to the resources of their host research universities, including library, computing and database resources.

E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale

The Reading Recovery network is fully prepared to scale up immediately. The 15 University Training Centers have both experienced faculty to oversee the project and teacher leaders geographically placed to begin the year-long training of RR teachers. During their training year, RR teachers work with 8-10 struggling readers across the year during half of their day and typically work in either a classroom or with small groups the other half of the day. Thus, the impact of Reading Recovery training on children is immediate as training and teaching occur simultaneously.

Number of Students

Grant funds will support 750 new RR teachers each year; each will work with a minimum of 8 Reading Recovery students across the year and teach approximately 36 other students during the other half day of their day. Thus, over the course of the grant, more than 90,000 Reading

Recovery students will be taught and approximately 405,000 in either classrooms or Title I small group instruction for a total of nearly 500,000 students. See Table 3.

Capacity

The 15 universities which are official partners have many years of experience training teacher leaders, recruiting schools, providing ongoing professional development, and working together at the national level to support the implementation of Reading Recovery. The network is not only at the national level, but also at the university level as Reading Recovery trainers work with teacher leaders and schools. During the preparation of this proposal, each university has used their network capacity to inform schools and districts of this grant and established a growing list of potential high-need schools interested in having Reading Recovery teachers trained for their struggling first graders.

Feasibility of Replication

The Reading Recovery network has over 20 years of experience maintaining high quality training and ongoing professional development in a variety of educational contexts. The training is directed by a set of standards

(<http://www.readingrecovery.org/implementation/standards/index.asp>) designed to ensure consistent quality of implementation. These standards are crucial to maintaining the fidelity of the program. The professional development is structured, intensive, and has layers of oversight. To become a university trainer, applicants must have a PhD in reading or a related discipline and attend either The Ohio State University or Texas Woman's University for a year of intensive post-doctoral study including graduate coursework and teaching 4 children each morning.

Teacher Leaders must have a Master's degree before training at an approved university training

Table 3. Scale up plan with projected number of students taught.

Year	UTCs	Teachers Trained per UTC	Schools per UTC	Small Group/ Classroom Students per Teacher	Small Group/ Classroom Students	RR Students per Teacher	RR Students
1	15	50	20	36	27,000	8	6,000
2	15	100	40	36	54,000	8	12,000
3	15	150	60	36	81,000	8	18,000
4	15	200	80	36	108,000	8	24,000
5	15	250	100	36	135,000	8	30,000
Total		250 * 15 UTCs=3,750	100 * 15 UTCs =1,500		405,000		90,000

Note. Each year, 50 more teachers would be trained per UTC, so by Year 5, 250 teachers will have been trained by each UTC, and these teachers will be located in 100 schools per UTC by Year 5.

center for a year and earn 21 graduate quarter hours of credit. They are then required to attend ongoing professional development at their affiliated university training center each year.

Teachers earn 9 graduate quarter hours of professional development during the year-long training with a teacher leader. Following the initial training year, all Reading Recovery teachers attend 6 days of ongoing professional development led by the teacher leader each year. Because of these rigorous standards and high quality implementation, Reading Recovery has been able to demonstrate not only exceptional fidelity to the model but also consistent results. The current Reading Recovery network has a capacity to grow beyond the grant if funds were available for additional university training sites for under-served areas of the country and the training of additional teacher leaders and teachers.

Estimate of Costs

Teachers typically work in the Reading Recovery role for half a day. They work the other half of the school day as either Classroom teachers or Title I teachers. Table 4 presents per student costs calculated based on either the students who will receive individualized Reading Recovery instruction only or all students who will be instructed by Reading Recovery teachers including Reading Recovery students and students in small group or classroom settings during the other half of the school day. It can be seen from Table 4 that costs per student decrease over time, because teachers trained in the early years continue teaching new cohorts of students which increases the number of students taught over time. The average cost over five years will be \$608 if only Reading Recovery students are counted, and \$111 per student when all students taught by Reading Recovery teachers are counted.

These costs per student would translate into \$60,800,000, \$304,000,000, and \$608,000,000 to provide individualized Reading Recovery to 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students, respectively. The costs to provide either individualized, small group, or classroom instruction for 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students would be \$11,100,000, \$55,500,000, and \$111,000,000, respectively.

Mechanisms for Dissemination

Information about this project will be posted on the websites for each University Training Center, disseminated via university list serves and printed in the fall and spring issues of the *Journal of Reading Recovery*. This is particularly important for the recruitment process as both current Reading Recovery sites that need more Reading Recovery teachers to meet the needs of

the students, and new sites without any Reading Recovery teachers may qualify for this grant. Information will also be presented at the national Reading Recovery Conference and regional

Table 4. Cost Estimates Per Student

	Cost per Year	RR Students	Costs per RR Student	Small Group or Classroom Students	Costs per Small Group/Classroom Students + RR students
Year 1	\$10,947,590	6,000	\$1,824	27,000	\$332
Year 2	\$10,470,486	12,000	\$892	54,000	\$159
Year 3	\$10,806,042	18,000	\$600	81,000	\$109
Year 4	\$11,105,397	24,000	\$462	108,000	\$84
Year 5	\$11,382,285	30,000	\$379	135,000	\$69
Total	\$54,711,800	90,000	\$608	405,000	\$111

Note. The cost per small group/classroom students + RR students values were based on the combination of RR and small/group/classroom students by row (e.g., for Year 1, the total cost, \$10,947,590 was divided by 33,000 total students).

Reading Recovery conferences. As evaluation results are available, sessions will be proposed at the National Reading Conference, the research strand of the International Reading Conference, and the American Educational Research Association’s annual meeting. Manuscripts on the evaluation findings will be prepared for peer-reviewed journals such as *Reading Research Quarterly*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Elementary School Journal*, and the Yearbook of the National Literacy Conference.

F. Sustainability

The operating model for the official applicant, Reading Recovery at the Ohio State University, is described in Appendix H, Reading Recovery and Literacy Collaborative Organizational Chart. The Reading Recovery project is one of several literacy projects that are directed by a faculty board; three members of the faculty board will be involved in this project. We are governed by our College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University. The financial plan for our literacy projects is provided in Table 5 and demonstrates our ability to sustain the project after the grant has ended.

As the lead applicant, our plan has the support of Ohio's state superintendent of education, the president of The Ohio State University, and the governor of Ohio. We also have the written support of school districts in Ohio and school districts affiliated with the other universities (See Appendix D for support letters and memoranda of understanding from the official partnering universities and many schools).

The long standing implementation of Reading Recovery at each university partner site speaks to the stability and sustainability of the project. The delivery of Reading Recovery professional development at each university is organized in a three-tiered structure: faculty provide professional development to their affiliated teacher training sites, teacher leaders at the training sites provide professional development to the teachers, and teachers work with students in schools. This model has been replicated at all of the 15 universities partners on this application and, at each university partner site, Reading Recovery has been in operation continuously since it was first implemented: in 1984 at The Ohio State University, at five more university partners between 1984-1989, eight more between 1990-1997, and two more partners in the last decade.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

The faculty who direct the Reading Recovery centers at their universities have an already established partnership called the North American Trainers Group (NATG). They meet twice a year for two days of meetings to solve implementation issues and to review progress on a research agenda. They have a stated mission and vision statement and a strategic plan with goals and objectives for communication and research which are reviewed twice a year. NATG has been in operation for 15 years and there is no reason to expect that the network will cease anytime soon.

We will target the lowest-performing school districts and provide professional development to teachers who might not otherwise have been able to afford the tuition to get the training. Funding from this grant will provide the initial professional development for teachers so they can design and deliver individualized Reading Recovery lessons. The plan does not require

the creation of new teaching positions. Teachers in existing Title I or classrooms positions can be trained by the teacher leaders who will deliver the professional development to work in Reading Recovery. The teachers work within the existing school structure to design Reading Recovery lessons for half of the day and they continue to work with Title I groups or classrooms during the other half of their day. Because these costs are one-time start-up costs and because no new positions are required with this model, the project can easily be sustained after the grant period ends with minimal financial contributions by districts.

The funding for this grant will not support salaries—a decision we made deliberately to assure the sustainability of the project. Once the teachers have the professional development, they can continue in the role for as long as they are teaching. The only ongoing costs after training are for annual data collection (\$45 per teacher) an annual per teacher fee to the regional training site (approximately \$2,000 per teacher) to pay for the ongoing professional development and school visits by the teacher leader. The application form for teacher training outlines the one-time costs of training (tuition, professional books, instructional materials, and a collection of children’s books), the annual costs for data collection and a fee to the regional teacher training site. Superintendents sign a form acknowledging the costs and agreeing to keep the teacher in the role for at least three years.

In addition to supporting professional development for teachers, funds from this grant will be used to establish one new teacher training site and teacher leader in a rural area of each state targeting low performing schools and high needs students. The grant will offset the one-time start up costs of establishing a new teacher training site and support the cost of tuition for training the teacher leader.

G. Management Plan and Personnel

There are numerous challenges to managing a multilevel project with 15 university training centers and over a thousand participating schools in 40 states. We have assembled a team with many years of funded project experience with complementary skills that together will have the capacity to handle this complex project. Each person will have a clearly defined role to complete necessary tasks, but the team will be flexible enough to take on any unforeseeable but necessary tasks.

Management Plan

Though each member of the project will communicate with individuals at various levels of the managerial system, members will have primary lines of communication in order to operate in an efficient manner. Figure 2 displays the primary flow of information between individuals involved in the project, and Table 6 provides the project tasks by objective for which personnel will be responsible in each program year. As depicted in the figure, Dr. D'Agostino (PI) will interact continuously with the Program Manager (who will report to Dr. D'Agostino) to monitor the budget. The PI also will work with the external evaluation team to ensure that IRB guidelines are followed and to support efficient data collection. He will contact UTCs and schools to monitor scale up and ensure that partnering schools meet eligibility requirements. Drs. Scharer and Rodgers will work closely with the PI to discuss issues related to scale up implementation, and they will spend considerable time and effort recruiting eligible schools, training teacher leaders, and working with faculty at the other university training centers who will be preparing teacher leaders and establishing training sites. Dr. McGee will help recruit schools for The Ohio State University training center, and will provide advice to the directors. The evaluation team

will work with the UTCs and schools to ensure data collection and to perform interviews with school principals, teacher leaders, and teachers.

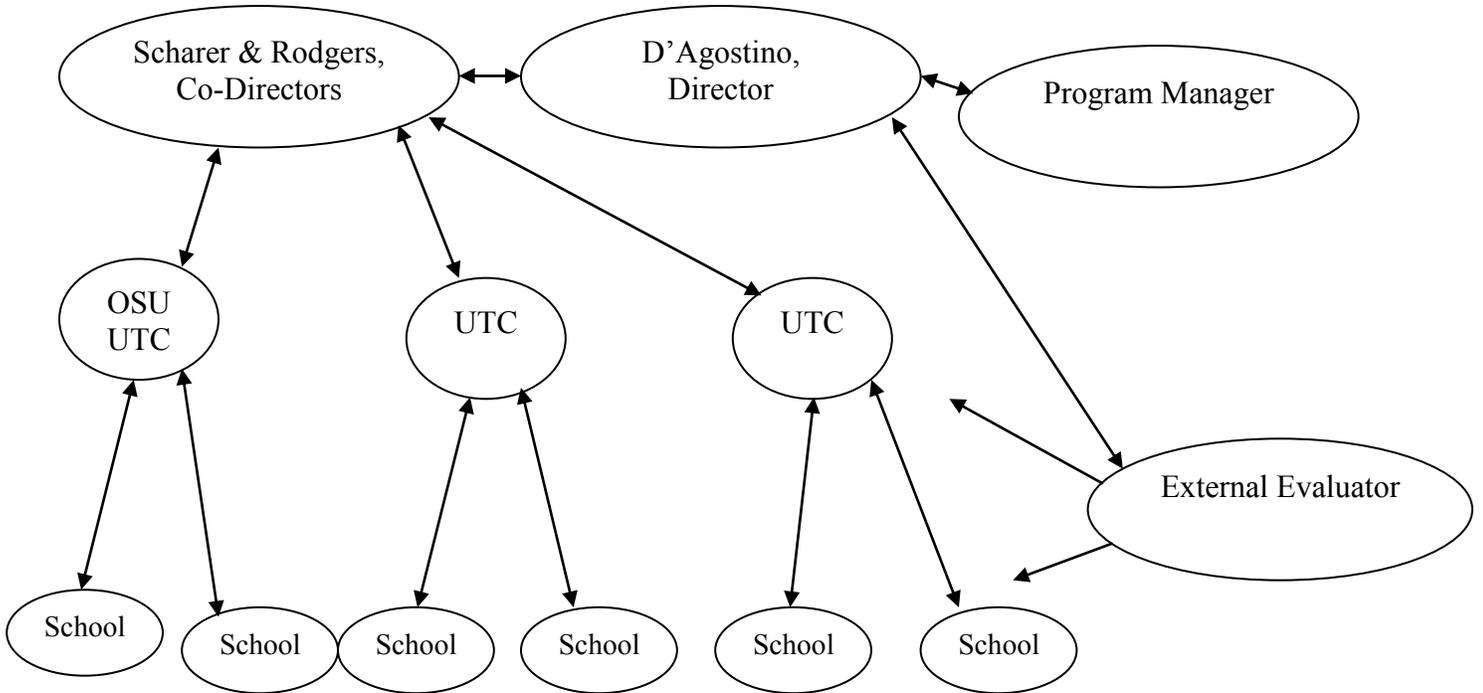


Figure 2. Managerial and communication flow chart

Table 6. Project tasks with personnel by objective and year

Objective	Tasks	Assigned Personnel	Year				
			1	2	3	4	5
Objective 1: Train 1 teacher leader at each university site ($n=15$) for an underrepresented area with a high population of qualifying schools.	<p>Design recruitment materials</p> <p>Recruit partner schools and teacher leader candidates</p> <p>Train teacher leaders</p> <p>Teacher leaders provide RR to students in partner schools</p>	<p>Rodgers & Scharer</p> <p>Faculty at 14 partner University Training Centers</p> <p>Teacher leaders from partner schools</p>	•	•	•	•	•
Objective 2: Train 750 new Reading Recovery teachers each year for a total of 3,750 teachers.	<p>Design recruitment materials</p> <p>Recruit teacher candidates at partner schools</p> <p>Train teachers</p>	<p>Rodgers & Scharer</p> <p>Faculty at 14 partner University Training Centers</p> <p>Teacher leaders and teachers in partner schools</p>	•	•	•	•	•
Objective 3: Trained teachers provide Reading Recovery to students in eligible schools	<p>Teacher students</p> <p>Teacher leaders provide site visits to teachers in training</p>	<p>Teacher leaders and teachers in partner schools</p>	•	•	•	•	•
Objective 4: Conduct external evaluation	<p>Train teachers on experimental & assessment models</p> <p>Collect and analyze test data</p> <p>Conduct interviews with teachers & principals</p> <p>Prepare reports and articles</p> <p>Teachers complete logs</p>	<p>CPRE faculty and staff at University of Pennsylvania</p> <p>Teacher leaders, teachers, and principals in partner schools</p>	•	•	•	•	•

Objective 5: Provide oversight for the project orchestrating activities across the 16 universities.	<p>Ensure that partner schools meet eligibility requirements</p> <p>Monitor budget</p> <p>Manage IRB approval and ensure its implementation</p> <p>Coordinate data collection with External Evaluator</p> <p>Monitor Scale up and document successes and issues in partner schools</p> <p>Prepare reports</p>	D'Agostino, Project Manager, GRAs	•	•	•	•	•
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Personnel

The Ohio State University personnel will include Jerome D'Agostino, Patricia Scharer, Emily Rodgers, Lea McGee, and a Program Manager that will be hired if the project is funded. The external evaluation team at the University of Pennsylvania will include Henry May, Leslie Oláh, Rebecca Maynard, Robert Boruch, and Andrew Porter. Approximately two university faculty members will lead each training center at official partnering universities. Abbreviated vitas of The Ohio State University faculty, Henry May and Leslie Oláh, as well as most university training center faculty are included in Appendix C. Specific experiences related to the project for key personnel follow.

Jerome V. D'Agostino, Associate Professor of Quantitative Methods in the Education and Human Ecology College at The Ohio State University, will serve as the principal director of the project. Dr. D'Agostino earned his Ph.D. in 1997 from The University of Chicago in Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistical Analysis (MESA). He specializes in program development and evaluation and assessment construction. Dr. D'Agostino was first involved

with Reading Recovery in the mid-1990s while working in the Evaluation Bureau of the Chicago Public Schools. He conducted a series of studies regarding the program's effectiveness across the school district, which entailed collecting and analyzing student achievement data, as well as observing RR teachers working with students. After his interest in the program was piqued, he conducted the most extensive meta-analysis of Reading Recovery effectiveness to date. He has been either a principal investigator or co-investigator on several state- or federally-funded projects. He has considerable experience managing large grant budgets and distributing grant resources to participants. For example, from 2000 to 2003, he managed resources and oversaw the evaluation of numerous Even Start program sites in Arizona, and led a consortium of site directors to share innovative delivery strategies and assessment methods.

He also has orchestrated evaluations of literacy and science programs, and interventions targeted for underprivileged children and families. He has extensive experience working with educators to develop formative assessments to monitor learning, and he has conducted numerous workshops throughout the country on classroom grading and test score interpretation for teachers. Much of his work has involved school and classroom observations and interviews with teachers, and he has helped several schools in Chicago and Arizona that had been identified for Title I program improvement. He has served on numerous state testing technical review committees, and was awarded a Spencer/National Academy of Education Postdoctoral Fellowship to study teacher tests. He presently serves on the editorial board for the *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment* and *Reading Research Quarterly*. His research has been funded by the National Science Foundation, United States Department of Education, and Spencer Foundation. Dr. D'Agostino will provide the overall direction and administration of the project, will communicate regularly with the evaluation team to ensure IRB rules and regulations are

followed and data collection proceeds smoothly. He also will monitor the extent of scale up that occurs in partnering schools, and document prevailing barriers and facilitators of effective scale up implementation.

Patricia L. Scharer, Professor in the School of Teaching and Learning in the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University, will serve as a co-director of the project. She is also a Reading Recovery University Trainer. Dr. Scharer earned her Ph.D. in 1990 and focuses her research on early literacy, school reform, phonics and word study, and children's literature. Her research has been published in *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Educational Leadership*, *Language Arts*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Reading Research and Instruction* and the yearbooks of the National Reading Conference and the College Reading Association. Dr. Scharer has served as co-editor of the *Journal of Children's Literature*, *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature*, and the Children's Books column of *The Reading Teacher*. Professor Scharer is also co-editor of *Extending Our Reach: Teaching for Comprehension in Reading, Grades K-2* and *Guiding K-3 Writers to Independence: The New Essentials*. She is co-author of *Rethinking Phonics: Making the Best Teaching Decisions*.

Dr. Scharer has been co-PI on two federal grants. First, she partnered with Karin Dahl to study phonics instruction in whole language classrooms. This large, qualitative study involved weekly observations in 8 first grade classrooms across the school year. More recently, she conducted federally-funded research to study the effects of Literacy Collaborative coaching and professional development in K-3 classrooms in 18 elementary schools across the U.S. This study was led by Dr. Anthony Bryk, President of the Carnegie Foundation, in partnership with the faculty from the University of Chicago, Lesley University, and Stanford University. Dr. Scharer's experience with federal grants includes collaboration across universities and working

within a large-scale project. In addition, she currently serves as one of four faculty directing a large literacy project at OSU including KEEP Books, Literacy Collaborative, Reading Recovery, and the International Data Evaluation Center. Dr. Scharer will work closely with Drs. Rodgers and D'Agostino to recruit eligible schools, train a teacher leader, and work with faculty at the other university training centers who will be preparing teacher leaders and establishing training sites.

Emily Rodgers, Associate Professor in the School of Teaching and Learning in the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University, will serve as a co-director of the project. Dr. Rodgers earned her Ph.D. in 1998. Her research interests include reading difficulties and teacher professional development. She studies teaching and learning with a particular focus on understanding scaffolding processes in the contexts of teaching young children having great difficulty learning to read and coaching teachers.

Dr. Rodgers has published articles in *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Journal of Reading Recovery and the Yearbook of the National Reading Conference*. She has written book chapters about teacher professional development and co-edited two books, *Strategies for Scaffolding Literacy Instruction in K-4 Classrooms* and *Learning from teaching in literacy education: New perspectives on professional development*. She is the co-author of *The Effective Literacy Coach*. She served for three years as editor of an international literacy journal *Literacy Teaching and Learning* and has served as a reviewer for four journals including *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Reading Research Quarterly* and *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. She served as a consultant on an IES funded project, (Principal Investigators were Ian Wilkinson, Karen Murphy and Anna Soter) and as an investigator with Dr. Scharer's federally funded study of teacher professional development to develop rubrics for teacher practice

Dr. Rodgers has received contracts totaling \$1.5 million from the Ohio Department of Education to evaluate Reading Recovery in Ohio and provide training and professional development to teacher leaders, and she has authored or co-authored 20 annual state and national evaluations of Reading Recovery.

Dr. Rodgers has co-directed OSU's Reading Recovery network since 1998, working with up to 130 teacher leaders in 8 different states over the last 12 years. She has collaborated with the Ohio Department of Education since that time to co-direct the Ohio Reading Recovery network of teacher leaders, teachers and site coordinators. This work has involved designing and delivering professional development to teacher leaders and supporting the implementation of Reading Recovery in the state. On this project she will train the new teacher leader for the UTC, help establish the new teacher training site, and support teacher leaders in training teachers.

Lea M. McGee, Professor of Reading and Early Literacy in the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University. Dr. McGee earned her Ed.D. from Virginia Tech University in 1980. She specializes in emergent literacy development and instruction and early struggling readers and writers. Dr. McGee is a University Trainer for Reading Recovery. She has co-authored the National Reading Recovery Evaluation Report (2008-2009) and a 2008 report from the Reading Recovery International Data Center in the *Journal of Reading Recovery*. In addition, she has published a review of Reading Recovery research in *Journal of Literacy Teaching and Learning: An International Journal of Early Literacy*.

Dr. McGee has been a Co-Director and Principal Investigator of two federally-funded projects. She has experience in managing large grant budgets and distributing grant funds to project participants according to the goals of the project. For example, she directed both a 2002

and a 2004 Early Reading First grant with budgets up to 1.9 million dollars. Because of her expertise in supervising teachers and coaching them through change in these two projects, Dr. McGee has conducted workshops around the country with teachers sharing her instructional approaches. She has published 6 textbooks on teaching reading and writing, nearly two dozen book chapters, and over 40 articles in refereed scholarly research journals as well as journals for teachers. Dr. McGee will serve the project by identifying low performing elementary schools in high poverty areas of the state of Ohio and will recruit school districts and schools in those locations to participation in the project. She will continue to serve as a liaison to those districts and schools.

Dr. Henry May is a Senior Researcher and Statistician at the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) an Adjunct Assistant Professor at PennGSE. His primary areas of expertise include methods for program evaluation, experimental and quasi-experimental design, multilevel modeling, longitudinal analysis, item response theory (IRT), and missing data theory. His current and recent research projects include a randomized evaluation of the National Institute for School Leadership, a randomized evaluation of the Ohio Personalized Assessment Reporting System, a regression discontinuity study of the America's Choice Ramp-Up to Mathematics program, and a longitudinal study of the International Baccalaureate Students' access, persistence, and performance in postsecondary education. Dr. May has extensive experience linking and analyzing large-scale national-level databases including NAEP, SASS, NELS, TIMSS in addition to several district and state-level databases from Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and Texas. Dr. May was also the primary author on an NCEE Technical Methods report from the Institute of Education Sciences on the use of state

test scores in education experiments. Dr. May teaches advanced statistics courses to graduate students at the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Leslie Nabors Oláh is a Research Assistant Professor at PennGSE and a Senior Researcher at CPRE where she has served as Co-PI and PI of several studies of instructional practice. She has published on children's cognitive growth as well as on teacher practice, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Prior to her research career, she was a teacher of English as a Second Language at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of California, Berkeley. She has served as Co-Chair of the Editorial Board of the Harvard Educational Review and as Editor-in-Chief of Working Papers in Educational Linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania, and is Co-Editor of Perspectives on Language and Literacy: Beyond the Here and Now (Harvard Education Press, 2001).

Dr. Rebecca Maynard is a University Trustee Professor of Education and Social Policy at the University of Pennsylvania and a leading expert in the design and conduct of randomized controlled trials in the areas of education and social policy. Dr. Maynard served on the technical review team during the design and development of the What Works Clearinghouse, and for the past four years, she has directed the University of Pennsylvania's Predoctoral Training Program in Education Sciences.

Dr. Robert F. Boruch is a University Trustee Chair Professor of Education and Statistics at the University of Pennsylvania. His work focuses on research methods and evidence for determining the severity and scope of social and educational problems, implementing programs and policies, and estimating the effects and the effectiveness of interventions. He has published extensively on randomized trials in education and other areas. He currently serves on the

National Academy of Sciences Committee on Field Evaluation of Behavioral and Cognitive Science Based Methods.

Dr. Andrew C. Porter is Dean of the Graduate School of Education and George and Diane Weiss Professor of Education at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Porter has published widely on psychometrics, student assessment, education indicators, and research on teaching. Dr. Porter is a former president of the American Educational Research Association (2001) and was elected a member of the National Academy of Education in 1994, where he has been vice president since 2005. He is a Lifetime National Associate of the National Academies.

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Status: Submitted
 Last Updated: 07/02/2010 11:44 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Reader #1:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	13
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	13
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	11
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	5
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	6
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	0

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	2
TOTAL	105	50

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #1:

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

The data presented on Reading Recovery's (RR) impact on struggling readers is strong. RR is exceptional in that it is a highly tailored intervention for this unmet need in schools (i.e., interventions that work for young readers).

This proposal presents an aggressive strategy for scaling up the implementation of this intervention model by underwriting the initial training costs for a large cadre of RR teachers. This addresses a key barrier to RR being able to scale its program because the intensive professional development needed to ensure program fidelity has made it too expensive for many schools. It also puts in place some permanent training and support infrastructure (e.g., regional centers) to support teachers in rural areas.

The delivering of a well-researched reading intervention is aligned with the applicant's stated goal of trying close the achievement gap for a large number of struggling first grader readers in low performing schools across the nation. This particular intervention specifically focuses on reading ability, accelerating skill acquisition so that students can achieve grade-level proficiency in reading.

The strategies discussed to ensure fidelity of implementation (p. 9-10 and 16) are reasonable in both their focus (i.e., teacher knowledge and pedagogy) and intensity (i.e., extensive training of teacher leaders and the classroom teachers that include access to support and training beyond the initial start-up). Teaching students to read is a complex task requiring extensive knowledge of the reading process and on-going supported practice in pedagogical techniques.

Weaknesses

Best practice with embedded coaching in the instruction of reading is about 50-90 hours of one-on-one coaching over a 12-18 month period. The application would be stronger with more explanation of why only four visits from the teacher leader to the RR teacher's classroom is sufficient to ensure quality instruction. It is not clear how much one-way mirror practice the RR teacher receive, which could off-set the need for as much in-classroom coaching. A 20:1 ratio for teacher coaches is also considered best practice, such that the 50:1 ratio identified in this proposal seems high. More information is needed to determine whether the supports offered by the training center would help to offset this high ratio.

Reader's Score: 13

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

Ohio State and its Reading Recovery program present strong evidence of improving student achievement and closing gaps for subgroups. The impact data on student referral to special education and grade retention is impressive (p. 27), as the outcomes of students assigned to these categories are not good. Retention and labeling a student as special education are both predictive of lower academic achievement and higher rates of high school dropout. An intervention that demonstrates the ability to reduce the number of students assigned to these categories through positive means (i.e., improving student achievement in reading and writing) merits careful consideration.

Evidence is provided that the applicant has experience with state-wide and national scale-up of Reading Recovery, as well as some additional programs. The mechanisms developed to ensure fidelity of implementation for RR seem well tested and thought through. The fact that there is a pre-existing network for these universities, the centers, and a teacher learning network strengthens this proposal significantly, as these relationships will not need to be built from scratch. They also add another layer of quality control by providing more local support and supervision of the project than what would be possible using a purely centralized model for scaling.

Weaknesses

While large, the RR network was built over 20 years and the past experience presented does not demonstrate the rate of growth being proposed. It is therefore unclear if RR has the capacity to fulfill the "rapidly growing projects" component of factor C.1.

Reader's Score: 13

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed

experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

The capacity of the applicant to manage the financial and budgetary aspects of this proposal is strong. All the lead staff for the project have experience with large and complex federal grants and other multi-state initiatives suggesting they have the capacity to bring this project to scale on a national level.

The applicability of RR to a diverse array of districts and students seems evident from the evaluation data collected to date. The incorporation of regional expertise in expanding the reach of this program through the 15 university partners and many regional centers will strengthen this programs ability to adapt to local contexts.

The budget for scaling this project to 90,000 students seems reasonable and focuses on what the applicant feels is the primary driver for strong implementation (e.g., teacher tuition and coaching support). The fact that they chose not to provide salary support for the RR teachers is wise, since controlling for district institutionalization of positions across so many sites in uncertain economic times would be virtually impossible.

Weaknesses

It is not clear, based on their resumes, that any of the leadership for this project have strong managerial skills. There is provision for a full-time program manager, but no resume data is provided for that person, or any job description to indicate a focus on management skills. Scaling this project with fidelity will require strong managerial leadership to ensure adequate support and accountability systems are implemented at every level.

Dissemination seems heavily focused on academic journals and makes no provision for reaching practitioner audiences. This is problematic given that superintendents and principals are the key decision makers in deciding to implement RR in a district.

Page 39 suggests further growth would require more grant funds, but no plan

is articulated for securing such funds. This suggests the applicant does not have a plan for generating more tuition scholarship dollars to expand the scale-up beyond the grant period.

The fact that only one grade level is targeted (grade 1) narrows the effect of the intervention.

No estimate is included of the costs for the applicant to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000.

It is unclear how many students will be reached by the proposed scale-up. It appears that only 90,000 students will receive the full, research-supported RR model. The applicant's assertion that another 400,000 students' reading and writing ability will be positively impacted through small groups and full classroom instruction by RR trained teachers is not supported by the research presented.

Reader's Score: 11

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

The fact that the cost to districts drops to fairly reasonable levels after the initial, grant-funded portion of the training for RR teachers expires should help the applicant sustain this new network beyond the grant period.

The applicant's strong track record in securing public and private grant dollars to grow the RR network to date suggests good potential for them to secure the necessary funds to sustain the network beyond the grant period.

The applicant's project purposes are well aligned with the overall mission

and established structure of RR, such that there is good potential for this scale-up investment to be incorporated into the on-going work of the applicant in growing the RR network.

Utilizing the other university centers and their respective regional training centers is a good strategy for achieving national scale without building out a whole additional infrastructure that would be potentially unsustainable after the grant period.

Weaknesses

There is no discussion or provision made for the natural turnover among teachers and even their university trainers. Teacher turnover is reduced when they receive this type of intensive training and support, but not eliminated. Teacher turnover rates tend to be particularly high in the type of low performing districts that this program will be targeting.

State agency and union support is not presented for the other university partners, raising concerns about the level of commitment among these two groups to RR and this scale-up initiative. State departments of education provide as much as 50% of the funds for districts and can have considerable influence on what interventions districts can choose from in using state dollars. Ensuring state approval and support of RR as an intervention strategy could be critical to both start-up and sustaining these scale-up efforts. Teacher union support can be critical to ensuring district's have the flexibility to send teachers for RR training based on merit and interest, rather than seniority alone. This can have a significant impact on the quality of the RR implementation at the school level. Further, strong union support can be very helpful in protecting the use of an intervention strategy like RR across superintendents (e.g., when a supportive superintendent leaves), as unions often wield significant political power within districts.

The cost for districts is still high and may be an issue in sustaining this work in these difficult economic times.

The applicant does not provide sufficient detail regarding the securing of resources beyond the length of the scale-up grant. No multi-year financial model is provided.

Reader's Score: 5

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

The qualifications of the project director and key personnel are good in terms of managing the budget, evaluation, and meta-level aspects of the effort. The qualifications of the independent evaluator show experience in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives. In addition, at least one member of the team has deep content knowledge of early reading acquisition.

Weaknesses

None of the lead faculty for this project are committed full-time and the only position (program manager) that is full-time is not clearly defined and no resume is provided. While this group of PI's have experience in implementing complex projects, none have ever done it at this scale. The travel budget alone suggests an expectation for minimal implementation issues (e.g., only one convening per year of the university partners and program director only going out to the 14 sites one time/year). This seems a bit risky, given the scope and speed of scale-up.

The proposal's timeline is brief and only charts responsibilities and activities by year, which is insufficient detail to assess the adequacy of the applicant's management plan. (pp. 47-48)

More detail is needed on the participating universities' respective management plans.

Reader's Score: 6

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must

provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Reading Recovery has some evaluation data to support its effectiveness in closing gaps in reading achievement for children with disabilities and limited English proficiency.

Weaknesses

The effects of RR have only been documented to last through 2nd grade (p. 23), which does not support the goal of this priority area to increase high school graduation rates.

The applicant has not developed a model of RR specifically designed to improve academic outcomes for limited English proficient students or students with disabilities.

Reader's Score: 0

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

This proposal's scaling plan includes a specific strategy for expanding the use of RR among rural districts. The creation of at least one new training center (p. 44) in a rural area of each state will begin to build out the necessary infrastructure to support RR implementation and scale-up beyond the grant period. This should have a positive impact on both student outcomes and teacher effectiveness among those schools and districts that implement RR through these new rural centers.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted**Last Updated:** 07/02/2010 11:44 AM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/06/2010 10:38 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Reader #2:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	0
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	15
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	8
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	0
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
TOTAL	105	23

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #2:

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program

that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion A.

Weaknesses

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion A.

Reader's Score: 0

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Ohio State University proposal to extend the Reading Recovery program in partner teacher training programs, school districts, and schools through training of teachers summarizes strong evidence for the efficacy of Reading Recovery for first grade students learning basic pre-reading skills.

A large body of research is available and a number of studies are presented.

A number of studies are included that use Reading Recovery's own student selection instruments and outcome measures that emphasize phonics and pronunciation. Studies presented demonstrate strong evidence that Reading Recovery impacts student performance in specific pre-reading and limited reading skills.

Weaknesses

Research on the impact of Reading Recovery on ELL students has not provided strong evidence of gains in reading ability (Factor 1).

The research presented does not make a strong case for the impact of Reading Recovery on non-phonics based measures. Evidence is mixed on the amount of long term impact of the program on reading. Magnitude of long term effect is not clear(Factor 2).

Additional evidence from controlled studies using causal designs and widely accepted measures is needed to establish the long term impact of the program and impact of the program on general reading ability(Factor 2). It is important that the impact (effect size) be included in research to estimate the effect of the proposed program (Factor 2).

Heavy emphasis is places on studies that use Reading Recovery's own student selection instruments and outcome measures that emphasize phonics and pronunciation. Many of these studies do not come up to the standard of strong evidence because of the quality of instrumentation, lack of blind administration of instruments, lack of random selection of participants, attrition or exclusion of some potential subjects, and research design (Factor 1).

Reader's Score: 15

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

(5) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to

carry out the project evaluation effectively.

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

A detailed and comprehensive evaluation design is provided as well as information on the independent evaluator (Proposal pp. 28-37).

The Ohio State Reading Recovery proposal calls for a quasi-experimental design measuring the success of students in designated Reading Recovery classrooms who have been selected using the Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (OS) screening instrument and their classmates. Students selected on the OS, usually the lowest 20% of students in each class, will be assigned to pairs based on scores. One student in each pair will be assigned to supplemental Reading Recovery instruction (12 to 20 sessions) during an early part of the year and the other student will be assigned to instruction later in the year. Students will be pre- and post-assessed using the OS and post assessed with the short (three to five minutes to administer) Slosson Oral Reading Assessment. A fixed effects for pairs design will be used to assess 10 cohorts of students over the course of the study.

In addition, a regression discontinuity approach will be applied to students divided on the basis of their selection on the reading recovery measure (using whatever is the individual school cutoff), Slosson Oral Reading Test scores at grade one, and reading state achievement scores as they become available.

Information will be collected from Reading Recovery Teachers and Principals on a regular basis. Teacher information will include three randomly sampled teacher logs to serve as the basis for a description of the work of reading recovery teachers. Case studies will be conducted of eight participating schools based on one or two visits by evaluators resulting in 40 school case studies over the study period. Principals in case study schools will be interviewed. Additional annual surveys of 1000 classroom teachers who are being assisted by Reading Recovery teachers will take place each spring along with a survey of a senior staff member in each participating school district.

Weaknesses

A number of weaknesses appear to be present in the research design. A number of things might be done to improve the quality of the proposed

quasi-experimental research design to make insure both internal and external validity. An ideal goal would be to improve the research to the point that it might be considered for the What Works Clearinghouse.

Potential improvements include:

- 1) The program is taking place through an expansion of Reading Recovery staff in schools and school districts with existing Reading Recovery programs. A more powerful design would include either random assignment of program and students that would allow an actual comparison of students, classrooms and schools that receive Reading Recovery and similar non-participating students, classrooms and schools.
- 2) All testing specified in the proposal appears to be done by Reading Recovery teachers or school staff members who are not blind to the student selection process, program participation, or expected program outcomes. Independent assessors blind to the status of individual students would remove a notable source of potential bias and add substantial credibility to the program evaluation.
- 3) Assessment instruments are limited. Other studies that were cited in the proposal and included in the What Works Clearinghouse have made use other common measures with proven evidence of validity beyond the RR programs own selection measures and the Lesson - two instruments designed primarily as early screening tests. Adding additional measures to assess the development of reading and pre-reading skills would add additional information on key elements of reading such as comprehension. The studies accepted by the What Works Clearinghouse might well be used as a reference in selection of measures, particularly measures of reading comprehension and general reading ability.
- 4) Special care needs to be taken in the documentation and tracking of ELL students who may fall into the category of students who do not meet Reading Recovery performance expectations in the allotted 12-20 sessions and who might have verbal characteristics that would affect their rating on the both the instruments proposed for the study.
- 5) Special care needs to be taken in the documentation and tracking of ELL students who may have scores on assessments affected by their linguistic ability and pronunciation.
- 6) Special care needs to be taken in the documentation and tracking of special needs students who may have scores on assessments affected by their linguistic characteristics.

7) The program places a heavy emphasis on increasing the number of Reading Recovery teachers in schools and districts that have already made a commitment to the Reading Recovery program. This may limit the utility of the proposed implementation as a tool to gain information about replication and testing in other schools and districts where Reading Recovery is not already being implemented. Evidence is needed on the potential of scaling up to schools and school districts that are not already committed to Reading Recovery.

8) It is not clear how the information on non-participating students will be collected by the Reading Recovery data center and made available to researchers who will need to match information on students and state test scores for analysis in the last two years of the program. More information is needed on the selection of potential comparison groups.

9) It is not clear how the information collected and reported for use in the evaluation through the Reading Recovery data center will be audited to ensure that it is complete and accurate.

10) The proposal indicates that many Reading Recovery teachers spend part of their day in intensive work with individual or small groups of students and part of their day working in the regular classroom. It is not clear how the classroom work might affect students identified for the second treatment cohort as well as the 80% of students not selected for special treatment. Additional discussion is needed of the impact of the Reading Recovery teachers and which students are affected by their services.

11) The proposal indicates that there will be a collection of information from state assessment systems and that this information will be used in an assessment of long term impact. It would be helpful to specify the type of data that is expected, the assessments that will be included, and how the use of various scores from various tests administered at various times will be incorporated into the RD long term design.

12) How will participating and non-participating students be identified and compared in the long term analysis that makes use of state assessment information?

13) Teacher, principal, and administrator survey data appears to be limited to individuals who are in Reading Recovery schools and teachers teamed with Reading Recovery teachers. Will there be inclusion of teachers who work with the Reading Recovery and non-Reading Recovery students as they move through the grades, teachers at the same grade level (grade 1) who do not participate in Reading Recovery, and schools not selected for participation in Reading Recovery?

14) It appears that Ohio State has control of the quantity and quality and initial data without oversight from the Project Evaluator.

15) The independence of the evaluator is not clear. Text indicates in roles of individuals that Ohio State manager also serves as PI.

16) The evaluation budget and evaluation budget relative to specific evaluation activities is not clear. Information in the time-line of activities is limited.

Reader's Score: 8

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

Weaknesses

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion F.

Weaknesses

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion F.

Reader's Score: 0

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;**
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and**
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2010 10:38 AM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2010 1:19 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Reader #3:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	17
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	13
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
TOTAL	105	30

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #3:

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit

strategy, with actions that are

- (a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,
- (b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Numerous empirical studies have been conducted. While the sample size of some of the individual more rigorous studies has not been large, the aggregated studies demonstrate acceptable sample size and cumulative evidence.

The continuous data collection by IDEC provides a rich data set for future empirical research.

Established credibility through WWC.

Examines four outcome domains of beginning reading rather than just acquisition of one skill.
Impressive results based upon findings presented in Table 1 (pg 21-22).

Weaknesses

The impact index is based upon percentiles. Because of the problems inherent in percentiles this is inferior to reporting more traditional effect sizes which allow for comparison of relative impact across different studies and proposals.

While short term impacts are clear, longer term impacts are less well established.

Greater evidence needed for efficacy with ELL students.

Reader's Score: 17

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.**
- (2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that**
 - (a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -**
 - (i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and**
 - (ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or**
 - (b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.
- (2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.
- (6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

This grant request proposes a sophisticated and rigorous mixed methods evaluation conducted by a highly credible independent academic entity. It is characterized by a sample of about 5000 students providing excellent power to identify program effects. The design will be analyzing both short term and long term effects. Strong formative and summative approaches. Effects are measured at the student, school, and district levels. Appropriate plans for dissemination.

Weaknesses

When one produces a smorgasbord of results it is easy to cherry pick the positives and declare the intervention a success. An a priori definition of what will constitute success if the intervention is funded would be a helpful addition.

Testing proposed to be done by teachers rather than independent testing introducing potential for bias.

Reader's Score: 13

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

Weaknesses

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources

to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Weaknesses

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

(a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and

cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);

(b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and

(c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

(a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;

(b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and

(c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

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Last Updated: 07/06/2010 1:19 PM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/07/2010 10:55 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Reader #4:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	13
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	13
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	12
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	8
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	5
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	1
TOTAL	105	53

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #4:

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Strengths of the project include robust university partnerships to assist in scale-up and as sites for training centers, the applicant's 20 year history of implementing successful training centers in 40 states, strong potential for scale-up, and a focused management plan. Weaknesses include vagueness in the timelines for project accountability, reliance on Title I funds for sustainability, and lack of data to support the project's aim, embedded in the design of the Reading Recovery program, to improve the academic achievement of students served.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet

need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

An unmet need addressed by this applicant is using a preventative approach to reading failure in young children by providing daily one-to-one, intensive reading instruction to at-risk learners in Grade 1.

Another unmet need is teachers' need for focused, multi-layered, and ongoing professional development in the teaching of reading with support from universities, teacher leaders, and trainers and involving classroom visits, observations, over-the-shoulder coaching and peer observations.

A clear set of goals, objectives, explicit strategies, and actions for achieving the goals of the project including scale-up and sustainability are outlined by the applicant on pages 47 and 48. These pages also match the responsible personnel to the objectives. Having targets and a well-defined approach increases the chances that the applicant and its partners will succeed in accomplishing its goals.

Weaknesses

The project does not meet the "not widely adopted" standard because it has been implemented and expanded for over 20 years.

The application would have benefited by a listing of the number of high poverty and/or high minority schools that will be served by the project to better document and support another unmet need addressed by the project.

Reader's Score: 13

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate

success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment,

or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

Ohio State University's past performance over a 20 year period of implementing Reading Recovery programs has resulted in the development of considerable expertise in the scale-up of complex projects.

The applicant and collaborating universities operate many training sites across the country.

Over the past 20 years, the applicant has contributed to the development of highly effective teachers of reading through providing robust, ongoing, focused, multi-tiered professional development.

Although data on student achievement and attainment was not presented by the applicant, the program's design - training teachers to work effectively with the lowest performing first grade students - is aimed at making significant progress in improving student achievement because through the program, as past performance indicates, the lowest performing grade 1 students are brought up to grade level performance in a period of 3-4 months, thus improving their academic achievement.

Weaknesses

Student achievement data for specific schools with which the applicant has worked in the past is not presented making it difficult to gauge whether or not the project significantly improves academic achievement over time. This is a weakness in the collection, analysis, and retrieval of data that makes progress in this area difficult to determine.

Reader's Score: 13

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate

information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

The applicant provided information on the number of high-needs Grade 1 students who would be served over the five years of the grant cycle through the Reading Recovery program - 90,000 students - and cited an additional 405,000 students at the primary level who would be served through small group instruction. The above numbers seem credible given the capacity inherent in establishing 15 new training centers which will train nearly 4,000 teachers in 1500 schools over a 5 year period to bring the project to scale.

The feasibility of scaling up to this degree seems likely because the applicant has replicated the Reading Recovery program with training centers in a variety of settings across the country.

The cost per pupil, averaged over 5 years, was provided for both at-risk learners and students involved in daily small group instruction. Cost estimates were also provided by the applicant for scaling up to 100,000, 500,000, and 1 million students respectively. This information is helpful because it allows for a more fine-tuned and balanced cost analysis with which to gauge the reasonableness of per pupil costs in relation to feasibility and replicability.

Mechanisms for dissemination of results and program information were presented in the narrative and include the Journal of Reading Recovery, presentations at national conferences, peer-reviewed journals of reading and literacy research, and national networks and web sites. Use of these sources of communication will enable broad distribution of program results and materials to professional associations of reading teachers, university training centers, and scholars and practitioners in the field of reading education.

Weaknesses

Only one grade level - Grade 1 - is affected by the intensive, one-to-one instruction. There is no provision in the program design for one-to-one instruction for students above Grade 1.

The number of students per teacher involved in direct, one-to-one instruction is relatively small (8 per year per teacher). Although no cost/benefit analysis was required in the application narrative, this might be a useful way to calculate and track value added by the program and identify potential barriers to scale up.

Reader's Score: 12

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Because university partnerships support the training centers, the applicant has the resources, through university partners, to operate beyond the 5 years of the scale-up grant.

The applicant's inclusion of a budget projection into year 6 (beyond the grant period) further demonstrates that some planning for sustainability has been done.

The applicant will integrate the 15 new university centers into its existing network of Reading Recovery support sites and providers thus meeting the requirement of incorporating the program into the applicant's ongoing work.

The program's strong professional development system through the five years of the grant cycle is designed to build a skilled cadre of highly trained teachers of reading who have the internal capacity to continue the work at their schools. The multi-tiered professional development provided for teachers - at the university level, training site level, and school level - consisting of workshops and courses, classroom coaching and mentoring by teacher leaders, observations, and behind the glass peer observations is aimed at capacity-building for sustainability through human capital.

Funding to support the salaries of Reading Recovery teachers was deliberately not included in the budget by the applicant so that schools would take responsibility for supporting the program with school-based resources that would not dry up when the grant period ended.

Weaknesses

The high initial cost factor for teacher training and the limits imposed by the

focus on Grade 1 and primary literacy could be problematic if budget cutting occurs in schools. This affects sustainability because schools and districts might choose to redirect funds to programs that have lower start-up costs and reach a larger number and range of students.

Contrary to information in the narrative, the dedication of a Title I-funded teacher to Reading Recovery work, which the applicant suggests as another strategy for financial sustainability, may be viewed by schools as limiting services to other high needs students at other grade levels.

Reader's Score: 8

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

An overall plan that lists project tasks matched to objectives and persons responsible is outlined on pages 47-48 - and spells out project responsibilities that are iterative each year over the five year grant period. This plan represents a credible means of completing project tasks necessary to insure scalability.

A strength of the management plan is that staffing is relatively lean given the scope of the project. A Director and two Co-Directors at Ohio State University will oversee the project. A Program Manager with overall responsibility for management of the budget will report directly to the Director. A Liaison/Recruiter and faculty member at Ohio State University will work with identifying high needs schools in partner districts. An External Evaluator will work closely with the Director, the University

Training Centers, and the schools. Faculty at the university training centers will manage each center. A lean project staff is a strength because more of the budget will be available to the training centers.

Director's and Co-Directors' resumes indicate extensive training, research, and scholarly writing in the field of reading acquisition and development. One co-director was also a Reading Recovery university trainer.

The applicant states that project staff have successfully managed training centers for 15 years and have worked with schools in 40 states using this model.

The independent evaluator appears to have the required qualifications for designing and conducting large scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies.

Weaknesses

In the plan on pages 47-48, project timelines are somewhat vague and need fine tuning month by month. Also, not all tasks and project deliverables are listed in the narrative. For example, annual reports, interim reports, budget reviews, meetings and conferences, dissemination activities, and planning for sustainability are not included. The budget narrative - Budget - pages 8-12 - is more detailed.

It is unclear from the narrative and the visual chart on page 46 - Figure 2 - whether the acronym "PI" in the narrative is the Director. It is also unclear what the relationship of the program manager to the University Training Centers will be.

Staffing of the University Training Centers should be included in the overall management plan since they are both part of the management plan for the scale-up effort and included in the contracts to each university in the budget narrative.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve

educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Priority not addressed.

Weaknesses

Priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Priority not addressed.

Weaknesses

Priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Since the project is aimed at using a preventative approach to reading failure in young children by providing daily one-to-one, intensive reading instruction for at-risk learners in Grade 1, the practices and instructional strategies of Reading Recovery are designed to close the achievement gap between special needs learners and their non-disabled peers and between limited English proficient learners and their English proficient peers.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

The strategies of Reading Recovery to improve student achievement for struggling Grade 1 learners can be effectively applied with students in rural LEAs.

Weaknesses

It is unclear from the project narrative that all the schools involved in the scale-up effort are rural LEAs.

Reader's Score: 1

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/08/2010 3:38 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Reader #5:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	14
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	0
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	0
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	15
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	7
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	8
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	2
TOTAL	105	61

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #5:

Applicant: The Ohio State University -- Office of Sponsored Programs, - Office of Sponsored Programs, (U396A100027)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

The proposal identifies an intervention that "takes struggling readers at the onset of difficulty and brings them to average levels of reading performance within a 20-week lesson framework." The strategies defined as part of the Reading Recovery program are proven to provide exceptional instruction for increasing student achievement among struggling first grade student readers across all high-need student population areas.

The grant is very detailed and provides plans for achieving all goals, objectives, and outcomes for successful project implementation. The goals are well written. Because there is so much background documentation connected to the success of the program each of the stated goals are very well connected to each of the priorities that the project is hoping to accomplish. In addition, the strategies that were developed within the Reading Recovery program have documented data that support this alignment.

Pages 1-15 provide a detailed description of the strategies and practices that the applicant will utilize in order to achieve final goal outcomes. The distinct features that distinguish the successes of the Reading Recovery program from other programs are clearly identified on page 6. These distinctions detail a plethora of successful outcomes and data-related documentation associated with the national success of the program relative to increased student achievement in meeting the needs for each of the student populations named in each program goal.

Weaknesses

Reading Recovery is a program that has been widely implemented over the past two decades in the United States. It is a very well known program that is established in a large number of schools throughout the United States.

Reader's Score: 14

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate

success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion B.

Weaknesses

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion B.

Reader's Score: 0

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

The Reading Recovery program began at Ohio State University. The faculty at the University has over 20 years experience developing and implementing the Reading Recovery program. The proposal provides documentation outlining the applicant's past success in implementing this project on a large scale. The proposal provides data demonstrating how Ohio State University has worked with the Reading Recovery project through professional development and intense delivery of instruction to significantly close achievement gaps for first grade students who have previously participated in the program for the past 20 years.

One of the overarching goals of this proposal is to provide professional development for selected highly qualified teachers so that teachers are trained to provide one-to-one, twenty minute lessons for first grade students. The successes attributed to the Reading Recovery program evolve around the applicant's work with school districts to recruit highly effective teachers and training them to provide intensive literacy instruction to first grade students. The past history of this practice is outlined in the proposal and demonstrates that the number of teachers and the success that the applicant has had in training the teachers is what is at the heart of why the Reading Recovery program data indicate documented success associated with increases in student achievement. In addition, the applicant outlined a process for working with selected principals in assisting with the recruiting of teachers for the program.

On page 24, the information presented demonstrates that "schools that worked with Ohio State University documented that kindergarten through grade 2 students learned an average of 32% more during the third year of coaching compared with the baseline training year." This demonstrates that focused professional development combined with carefully planned placement of highly trained teachers resulted in significant increases in student achievement. The chart presented on page 27 presents additional support that the Reading Recovery program maintains current data combined with past successes that demonstrate increased student achievement with large numbers of students.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.**
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.**
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.**

Strengths

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion D.

Weaknesses

Not assigned to score Selection Criteria D.

Reader's Score: 0

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed

project to scale, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.**
- (2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.**
- (3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.**
- (4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.**
- (5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.**

Strengths

The information provided with the proposal has highly qualified reputable personnel associated with the project. The applicant has provided resumes for each of the individuals who will be connected with the execution of the project. The documentation that has been provided with the application demonstrates that the combined assets of all the named personnel have the experience and past history of success with large scale projects and together possess the financial and intellectual knowledge to bring this project to scale on a national, regional and state level. In addition the applicant has provided named project partners and their credentials. The past successes of these partners in combination with the credentials of the university named academic personnel verify the capabilities of the organizational success for scaling up the project to state, national and regional levels.

The project proposes to serve 495,000 first-grade students in 40 states. All start up costs are listed and reasonably aligned with per-year direct and indirect costs. Table 4 demonstrates that costs per student decrease over time. Start up costs are estimated at \$608 per student with final costs

estimated at \$111.00 per student with the final year proposed to reach 1,000,000 students. These costs are aligned with funding that the applicant currently has budgeted in order to build capacity for the success of the project.

The plan details the process for successful replication and dissemination of the project in a variety of elementary schools with a wide range of student populations. The data documented in the proposal provide for the project to be delivered with fidelity to all types of students enrolled at the first grade level.

Pages 40 and 41 clearly articulate the mechanisms for dissemination of the project. Website posting, journal writing, and conference activities will be used for spread-of-effect for information. In addition, a chart on page 41 provides detailed estimated costs for disseminating information. Costs are based upon funding expended from past years.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

The proposal provides a lengthy list of well-known partners who have committed to provide long-term support and resources for the project. The documented list of reliable partners demonstrates that the applicant is able to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant.

The project has successfully sustained itself for the past 20 years. The proposal provides documented data from regional, national and state studies that have shown that the Reading Recovery program has continually generated student gains. Documented research evidence, support from committed project partners who have been with the University program since its inception, and prominent newly identified university partners are well documented throughout the proposal; thus providing nurturing factors that contribute as positive growth indicators for sustaining a successful multi-year long term project.

As experienced University personnel continue to train teachers, the teachers will serve as trainer of trainers for their peers; thereby building capacity for maintaining the project and incorporating purposes, activities, and benefits into the ongoing work of the schools that serve as partners with the applicant.

Weaknesses

The Reading Recovery program is focused on serving first grade students on a one-to-one basis primarily by removing the student from the classroom setting to provide personalized instruction. The applicant is adhering strictly to the fidelity of implementation of this limitation of the Reading Recovery program. There is no plan for expanding the program beyond the first grade level and small group instruction. With declining economic conditions, districts may not be able to support a Reading program that only targets one grade level of students with one teacher focused on providing one-to-one instruction for struggling readers. Budget cuts may result in elimination of one-to-one programs in order to accommodate larger class sizes and less teachers.

There is no support from state agencies or teacher unions at the district and/or university level to demonstrate support for such a large scale program. Teacher unions, strong state regional and national organizations have the ability to boycott and destroy programs that they have not sanctioned.

Reader's Score: 7

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

The proposal demonstrates that the applicant has maintained the successes of the Reading Recovery program for over 20 years. Ohio State University has successfully sustained the Reading Recovery project during this time period. The University will be maintaining the same personnel and partners that have assisted the applicant with successfully sustaining the project. These past successes are positive indicators for predicting the success of the project beyond the five year period of the grant proposal.

The proposal contains resumes and vitae of highly qualified management and academic personnel who have the capabilities to sustain a complex large-scale project. The qualifications of the project director and key personnel extend into the realm of financial and organizational experts with demonstrated histories of sustaining successful multi-year large projects. Each of the key individuals connected with the project have been involved with past successes of the program and/or published documents directly affiliated with the program.

The independent evaluator is a well known respected evaluator.

Resumes and credentials are provided as part of the proposal and this documentation solidifies the quality of management success factors relative to key personnel and independent evaluator experience in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Weaknesses

There should be stronger evidence for funding for a program manager at each of the universities that serve as partners for organization and valid data collection at the university level. Large student populations will require data

collection Sufficient personnel will be needed to collect and analyze the data in order to meet the professional development needs of the teachers, the academic needs of the students, and the research-based evidence that will provide the necessary documentation to effectively manage and sustain the program on a large scale level.

Reader's Score: 8

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

Strengths

Priority not addressed.

Weaknesses

Priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to

successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Priority not addressed.

Weaknesses

Priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

The proposal accounts for meeting literacy needs of ELL students and students with learning disabilities to be served by the Reading Recovery program.

Weaknesses

The proposal does not provide data connected to the third prong factor that was needed to meet the expectations of this competitive preference priority. Specific strategies, goals and data were not provided to show that the project increased college and career readiness for high school graduation

or increasing high school graduation rates.

Reader's Score: 0

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

The grant accounts for successfully meeting the needs of first grade students in rural areas through the innovative strategies provided by the Reading Recovery program. Data and strategies were provided for struggling readers in low performing Title 1 environments in rural areas. For example: The project is developing strategies to use distance learning technology to provide professional development and networking opportunities to teachers in rural areas.

The proposal documented data that showed how past performance of the program increased student literacy gains and closed achievement gaps for struggling readers involved in Title I programs in rural areas.

Many of the schools that the applicant has named as partners have student populations in rural areas.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/08/2010 3:38 PM

Project Narrative

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Absolute Priority 4A: Innovations That Turn Around Persistently Low-Achieving Schools

The focus of the proposed project will be on Title I elementary schools that are in corrective action or restructuring. These schools will receive project services, and will be selected for the longitudinal evaluation.

Competitive Preference Priority 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes

The Success for All elementary program is used in grades K-6, and there is a program for preschool that many schools use as well. The preschool program, Curiosity Corner, focuses on oral language, social, emotional, and cognitive readiness. It leads into phonemic awareness and other literacy skills, and makes effective transitions from preschool to kindergarten and beyond. The SFA kindergarten program continues these emphases (language, cognitive development, and

transitions), but adds an emphasis on phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension, which then build through the grades.

Competitive Preference Priority 7: Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students

Success for All uses an approach consistent with response to intervention (RTI) to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). That is, the program focuses on prevention by providing well-structured cooperative learning and instruction tailored to diverse needs in daily classroom instruction (Tier 1). Those children who are still found to be struggling receive small-group or one-to-one tutoring (Tier 2). The very few students who are still struggling receive more intensive one-to-one tutoring with unique adaptations, usually from tutors with special education backgrounds (Tier 3). Research has found strong impacts of *Success for All* for struggling readers (Slavin et al., 2009), as well as a halving of retentions in grade and special education placements (Borman & Hewes, 2002).

Success for All also has a strong emphasis on students who are limited English proficient. A version of the program exists in Spanish, with transition to English by second grade, and another version adapts the English program to meet the needs of LEPs by modifying instruction, providing constant opportunities to use English generatively, and using realia, pantomime, total physical response, and pictures to build English vocabulary. Research finds positive effects of *Success for All* on the achievement of LEP students and other language minority students (Slavin & Calderón, 2001). Some of our partner districts, including Philadelphia, Roosevelt (Arizona), and Garfield (Colorado), and our state partners, Pennsylvania and Colorado, serve substantial numbers of Hispanic students.

Competitive Preference Priority 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs

Success for All has long worked with schools in rural LEAs. Several of our “official” partner districts in this proposal, including Geary County, Kansas, Putnam County, Florida, Garfield, Colorado, and Bell and Knox Counties, Kentucky, serve small towns and rural areas. Some of the development for scale up proposed in this project will be of particular importance in rural areas. For example, we expect to develop distance education models for training and follow-up, including video demonstrations to enable isolated schools to see examples of good practice and give and receive comments on their implementations.

A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design

(1) The extent to which the project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet.

Enhancing the reading performance of at-risk elementary students presents some of the thorniest problems in American education. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, fourth grade scores in 2009 are only slightly higher than they were in 1992 (NCES, 2010), and in fact have changed little since 1980. Further, reading problems are not evenly distributed. There remain substantial gaps according to social class and ethnicity. Among fourth graders not eligible for free lunch, 45% scored at or above proficient, in comparison to only 17% among fourth graders eligible for free lunch. The percent proficient rates were 42% for White fourth graders, but only 16% for African Americans, 17% for Hispanics, and 20% for American Indians. These conditions have remained virtually unchanged despite extraordinary investments in many initiatives intended to improve reading performance over the past thirty years.

Investing in Innovation (i3) provides an opportunity to take a new and promising approach to improving educational outcomes on a broad scale. Rather than setting policies in Washington or state capitals and hoping they will make a difference, the idea behind i3 scale-up grants is to identify proven, effective strategies that have shown success in large, rigorous experiments and take them to national scale. The i3 strategy does not promise overnight change at the national level, but if there are programs known to be effective at scale, then i3 would start a process of moving from success to success, building a solid foundation for policy and practice.

This proposal describes a plan for scaling up Success for All, a whole-school turnaround model for elementary schools that has the evidence base and the capacity to go to national scale that i3 envisions for its scale-up grants. Success for All and other proven, scalable approaches reach directly into the heart of practice, the interactions between teachers and students, to improve daily lessons and school functioning, and then scale up cost-effective means of supporting improved practices to help thousands of struggling schools.

Success for All

Success for All is perhaps the most rigorously evaluated and scale-up-ready approach to improving the success of students in high-poverty elementary schools. It is a whole-school turnaround program that focuses primarily on ensuring that every child succeeds in learning to read throughout the elementary grades (Slavin, Madden, Chambers, & Haxby, 2009). The main elements of Success for All are as follows:

- Extensive professional development for all school staff to help them understand and use research-proven approaches to reading instruction, cooperative learning, classroom management, motivation, teaching of metacognitive skills, and assessment.

- A K-6 reading program (KinderCorner (K), Reading Roots (1), and Reading Wings (grade 2-6+ reading levels)) that uses extensive cooperative learning in pairs and small groups to build phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. In particular, the K-1 program emphasizes phonemic awareness, phonics, and language development, with direct teaching of letters, sounds, and sound blending, phonics, and application of these skills to phonetic mini-books, which students read to each other in pairs. Language development and vocabulary are emphasized at all levels, as students have constant opportunities to learn and use new vocabulary in their small groups, both orally and in writing. Comprehension strategies are taught at all levels. These include the use of clarification, summarization, prediction, graphic organizers, and other means of extracting and organizing meaning from all sorts of text, expository as well as narrative.
- Frequent criterion-referenced, instruction-based formative assessments to make sure that all students are on track toward success.
- Quarterly benchmark assessments to track progress toward grade level and above grade level expectations.
- One-to-one or small-group tutoring for students who are found to be falling behind grade-level expectations. Tutoring is closely coordinated with classroom teaching. Tutoring becomes a major focus of the school's Title I and special education programs, intended to ensure that struggling students get quickly on track.
- A Solutions Team, which works to prevent or solve problems that go beyond academics. This team focuses on issues such as parent involvement, attendance, behavior problems, and linkages with community agencies. The Solutions Team also helps teachers implement a schoolwide approach designed to improve social-emotional outcomes and

develop a common set of conflict resolution strategies to create a positive, achievement oriented school culture.

- A facilitator in each school (usually the Title I coordinator), who helps all teachers with program implementation, ongoing professional development, and schoolwide assessments. He or she helps coordinate classroom teaching with the Solutions Team, and works with the principal to ensure a coordinated schoolwide approach that progressively improves student outcomes, helps solve individual problems, and works with the staff to plan next steps.
- Leadership development that engages the principal and school leadership team in a continuous improvement process based on data analysis, goal-setting, and achievement monitoring using Success for All resources.
- Implementation self-assessment checklists for teachers and school leaders and implementation benchmarks, completed quarterly by coaches, which provide data for monitoring the quality of program implementation and formative outcomes.

Buy-in and Coaching Model

A key reason for the success and longevity of Success for All is the fact that we require a vote by secret ballot of the whole staff, to ensure that the staff are willing to give the program their best efforts. Schools that adopt SFA learn about it, hopefully send a delegation to visit a local exemplar, and ultimately vote to adopt the program by a supermajority of 75% of all teachers in favor. If the school is new or has been reconstituted, new teachers sign a form indicating their willingness to implement the program. After this takes place, the principal designates a full-time facilitator and Solutions Team leader, and all three participate in a week-

long training session. Program introduction workshops are then provided for the whole staff, usually during the summer before implementation begins.

In the first year, new SFA schools receive approximately 26 person-days of on-site professional development and coaching, as well as on-demand teleconference and email support. A larger number of days are provided if the school is in particular distress. After the program introduction workshops, coaching is provided in frequent visits to the school, with many telephone and email contacts between visits. An online resource center and professional community discussion board provide additional support.

After the first year, the number of coaching days diminishes to about 16 in the second year, 12 in the third, and then 5-10 in subsequent years. Coaching visits include classroom visits, reviews of student performance data, meetings with facilitators and principals, meetings with school teams such as the Solutions Team, and planning targets for next steps in achievement.

In the proposed project, we plan to substantially scale up Success for All, primarily by helping our district partners put in place coaches with expertise in Success for All, and by providing implementation grants to qualifying schools to reduce first-year professional development costs. These changes are described in the following sections.

Proposed Scale-Up Strategy

At present, Success for All is used in approximately 1,000 schools in 48 states across the US. These schools typically maintain the program for a very long time; the median SFA school has been implementing the program for more than ten years, meaning that the program in most schools has likely survived changes of principals and staff, several superintendents, funding cutbacks, changes in district, state, and federal policies, and so on.

While it is a significant accomplishment to reach so many schools and to remain with them for so long, 1,000 is less than 4% of the roughly 28,000 elementary schools with 50% or more of their students in poverty, our primary focus. Clearly, there remains much room for further growth.

To reach the next phase of scale-up, we believe we must significantly change our strategy for expansion. Currently, Success for All schools tend to be widely dispersed, with just a few SFA schools in each of many states and districts. As noted earlier, SFA coaches located around the US provide extensive services to schools, starting with at least 26 person-days in the first year. Trainers usually must travel to schools for coaching and meetings. This is an effective but expensive training model. SFA coaches spend a lot of time traveling, and the personal wear and tear of travel means that few coaches can provide more than 100 days of on-site service each year. In contrast, coaches who happen to live in the area where their schools are can typically spend 160 days per year in schools and can provide more flexible service depending on schools' needs. Further, as long as coaching is provided by an external non-profit organization, it does not fully belong to the schools, but always exists at a distance from district leadership.

In order to reach the next level of scale-up, we propose to use i3 funding to enable partner districts to hire their own SFA coaching staff. The Success for All Foundation will train and certify these local coaches, who will then provide coaching to schools adopting Success for All in their own districts and in neighboring districts. In their first operational year after training and certification, we expect these district-based coaches to provide approximately half of all coaching support to new SFA schools, with the rest provided by SFA staff. By the second year, we expect they will be doing 80% of the coaching in their areas.

We have experimented with a district-focused plan like the one we propose to scale up under i3 and have found it to have great potential. In Atlanta, school district staff provide about 80% of the support for SFA in a group of 34 high-poverty schools that have gone from scoring far below the state and district means to scoring above the district and near the state mean.

Providing district-based coaches will enable us to greatly reduce the costs of coaching, especially in the first year. In designated partnership regions, we will provide start-up credits of \$50,000 to cover most first-year professional development costs for schools that meet the “turnaround” definition (in corrective action or persistently low achieving). Since most coaching and nearly all materials are purchased in the first year of implementation, first-year costs are the main impediment to program adoption. We expect that the start-up credits will reduce the cost of SFA to schools from about \$100,000 in the first year for a school of 500 students to \$50,000.

In areas with many persistently low achieving schools in which we do not have official school district partners, we will establish local coaching teams composed of SFA employees, to reduce the costs of coaching and to increase sensitivity and adaptation to local needs. In these areas, we will also provide start-up credits.

The new coaching plan is only sustainable in areas in which there is a concentration of new SFA schools, in which our district partners or locally placed SFA coaches can provide some or all of the coaching support. However, our expectation is that with the participation of our local partners and the greatly reduced first-year cost, we will be able to recruit many schools in each area of focus. Where a concentration approach is feasible, we expect to be able to continue to offer Success for All professional development at much less cost indefinitely, not just during the period of the i3 grant. The economies of going to scale locally or regionally are so great that we

believe we can pass meaningful savings on to schools, and thereby significantly increase program adoptions in the areas in which we are able to make this offer.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are (a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet, and (b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Specific Goals

1. Reduce the cost of Success for All in regions in which district partners can provide local training and coaching.

As noted above, the main inhibitor to scale-up of Success for All has been its first-year cost, which is in turn driven by the costs of having SFA staff travel to distant locations. Adding many schools in areas with district-embedded or locally-based coaches and with many persistently low achieving elementary schools will significantly reduce the cost of professional development and coaching services and will enable the Success for All Foundation to provide the program at a lower cost. In the current economic climate, this reduction in cost is essential. We propose to offer elementary schools in corrective action or restructuring first-year start-up credits of \$50,000. These credits should cover most professional development costs, and will reduce the total first-year costs of Success for All from an average of \$100,000 to about \$50,000. As local coaches begin to provide most coaching, these costs will diminish further. In addition to increasing the attractiveness and affordability of adopting Success for All, the reduction in first-year professional development costs will enable Success for All schools to use their limited Title

I resources to do a better job of implementation, investing (for example) in increasing the number of tutors available to work with struggling students.

2. Substantially increase the numbers of Title 1 elementary schools making effective use of the Success for All turnaround strategy.

Working with our school district partners and building up the capacity of the Success for All Foundation, we expect to add to our network a total of 200 elementary schools in 2011-2012, 250 in 2012-2013, 300 in 2013-2014, and 350 in 2014-2015, for a total of 1,100 (in addition to the 1,000 schools we already serve). At 500 children in an average elementary school, this would be 550,000 additional children. Including schools already using SFA, the total would be 2,100 schools and 1,250,000 children by 2015. We project that about half of the additional students (275,000) will be in schools that will qualify for start-up credits because they are initially in corrective action or restructuring. The other half are likely to be high-poverty, low-achieving schools taking advantage of the lower training costs due to having coaches located nearby, and other high-poverty schools not in areas of concentration that adopt Success for All as they have done for many years, without start-up credits. Over time, both our district partners and our SFA coaches will build up capacity to serve larger numbers of schools, enabling us to add larger numbers of schools to our network each year.

3. Develop new coaching models for Success for All to take advantage of the new district partnership arrangements.

The concentrated regional approach to scale-up we propose to create will have important consequences for our professional development model. Instead of working with schools in a set number of whole-day sessions, coaches will be able to work more flexibly with neighboring schools, visiting schools more frequently than they can today. Models for how to do this kind of

support, emphasizing progress in implementation quality and student outcomes rather than centering around a limited number of full-day visits, will be developed, piloted, and deployed.

4. Develop new marketing and awareness models to take advantage of the new district partnership arrangements.

At present, marketing efforts for Success for All are designed to go wherever there is interest, and our awareness activities are the responsibility of SFA staff. In the district partnership model, we expect to expand within our partner districts, in other areas of concentration, and in neighboring districts, so awareness efforts will focus more intensely in targeted areas. Further, district partners and other experienced SFA schools will take a role in making their neighbors aware of Success for All, holding demonstrations at current schools achieving excellent outcomes with the program. We will need to develop new materials and procedures to support this type of intensive local awareness and marketing.

5. Adapt the Success for All Foundation's certification procedures for internal staff to the needs of district-housed coaches.

Success for All is a complex program to implement for greatest effectiveness, and local partner coaches will need significant support to provide the kind of outstanding coaching now provided by SFA staff. We will need to provide a training and certification process for these local coaches, in which coaches will receive basic training, provide coaching services in parallel with SFA coaches, and obtain certification of capacity to coach each program component.

6. Create additional media tools as models of high quality implementation.

We will need to develop additional video material for use in new SFA schools to illustrate each aspect of the program. These videos, some of which already exist, will model for teachers how each program element looks when it is implemented properly. The importance of

this is heightened by the delegation of coaching responsibilities to local district coaches, as we need to make sure that the program that has produced such positive outcomes in research is implemented with fidelity and understanding. For some program elements, such as cooperative learning and use of metacognitive strategies, we have developed video materials for classroom use, to show students what these elements look like when implemented properly, and we plan to develop many more student videos of this type to help facilitate high-quality implementations.

7. Develop distance education methods to help schools participate in professional development sessions.

In order to increase the quality and reliability of program implementations in areas served by district-housed coaches as well as those in other areas where it is not practical to send coaches so frequently, we plan to create distance education methods. Some of these will be podcasts or webinars in which SFA experts will make presentations and conduct discussions on issues of common concern, such as adaptations for English language learners, classroom management challenges, using Success for All strategies as response to intervention (RTI), or engaging parents in support of their children's reading. In each case, participants will be able to view video examples, ask questions of the presenter and of each other, present their own video examples, share data on student progress, and so on.

Another use of distance technology will be to enable SFA or district partner coaches to provide tailored feedback to individual teachers, by having teachers send videos of themselves implementing various aspects of Success for All. Such video coaching may be one-to-one or may be in small groups, with teachers at a given level (e.g., teachers of grades 3-5) participating in sessions in which they can exchange video and provide helpful comments on each others' lessons or procedures.

B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence that its implementation of the proposed program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement.

Success for All clearly meets the i3 standards for strong evidence of effectiveness. It has been evaluated in a large-scale longitudinal cluster randomized experiment (Borman et al., 2007). This study found positive effects of Success for All in comparison to control groups, using hierarchical linear modeling (HLM). The study, published in the *American Educational Research Journal*, received the Palmer O. Johnson Award for the best article in an AERA journal in 2008. In addition, there have been many high-quality, large, and longitudinal quasi-experiments, in which Success for All has been compared to matched control schools. The largest multi-school evaluations of SFA are described in this section.

The most important evaluation of Success for All was a three-year longitudinal cluster randomized experiment (Borman, Slavin, Cheung, Chamberlain, Madden, & Chambers, 2007). In this study, 35 Title I schools throughout the US were randomly assigned to use Success for All either in grades K-2 or 3-5. The 3-5 group served as a control group for the K-2 schools. A total of 2,108 K-2 children (1,085 E, 1,023 C) remained in the study schools all three years. Attrition was equal in the two treatment groups. Among the final sample, 72% of students received free lunches, and 57% of students were African American, 31% were White, and 10% were Hispanic.

Children were pretested on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and then individually tested on scales from the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test each spring for three years. Testers were not aware of the treatment assignments of each school. Data were analyzed

using HLM, with children nested within schools. Using individual posttests adjusted for pretests, effect sizes were +0.22 ($p < .05$) for Word Identification, +0.33 ($p < .01$) for Word Attack, and +0.21 ($p < .05$) for Passage Comprehension, for a mean of +0.25.

Other than the Borman et al. study, all studies of Success for All have used matched designs. Correnti (2009) and his colleagues at the University of Michigan carried out the largest matched evaluation of Success for All over a 4-year period (also see Rowan, Correnti, Miller, & Camburn, 2009). The study compared three comprehensive school reform models, SFA (30 schools), America's Choice (28 schools), and Accelerated Schools (31 schools). These were compared to 26 control schools. The schools were located throughout the U.S. The schools were relatively disadvantaged, with 69% receiving free lunch, 52% African American, 22% White, 19% Hispanic, and 6% Asian. Two cohorts of students were followed from kindergarten to grade 3. A total of 831 students were in the SFA schools one or more years, and they were compared to a total of 2,932 students in the other CSR and comparison schools, analyzed together. Students were pretested and then posttested each year on the Terra Nova. Propensity matching was used to ensure a close match between SFA and other students. Adjusting for covariates and mobility, the effect size for SFA students compared to all others was +0.43. The authors estimated that the implementation of Success for All moved the average student from the 30th percentile to the 50th.

A large, longitudinal matched study in Baltimore was reported by Madden, Slavin, Karweit, Dolan, & Wasik (1993; Slavin, Madden, Dolan, & Wasik, 1993). In this study, students in five inner-city Baltimore schools were individually matched with those in similar control schools. Individual matching was based on spring kindergarten CTBS or CAT scores administered by the district, and school matching was based on free lunch and historical

achievement levels on district standardized tests. All children were African American, and approximately 95% of children qualified for free lunches.

Each spring, children in all SFA and control schools who had begun in their schools by first grade were individually assessed on the Woodcock Word Identification, Word Attack, and Passage Comprehension tests. Students in grades 1-3 were also given the Durrell Oral Reading Test, while those in grades 4-5 were given the Gray Oral Reading Test. Testers were not made aware of the schools' treatment assignments. Children were followed and tested as long as they remained in their schools, even if they were retained or assigned to special education. Each year, an additional cohort was added.

Data collected when the oldest cohort was in fifth grade revealed substantial positive effects (Madden et al., 1993; Slavin et al., 1993). Averaging across the three Woodcock measures, the two Gray measures, and district-administered CTBS scores, the mean effect size for fifth graders, who were in their fifth year in SFA, was +0.48 (n=128E, 159C), and ES=+0.45 for fourth graders (n=151E, 155C). Averaging across three Woodcock scales, the Durrell, and CTBS, effect sizes were +0.49 for third graders (n=151E, 187C), +0.32 for second graders (n=204E, 233C), and +0.55 for first graders (n=256E, 301C). All comparisons were statistically significant ($p < .001$). Effect sizes were larger for students in the lowest 25% at pretest: ES=+1.03 for fifth graders, +0.80 for fourth graders, +1.32 for third graders, +0.92 for second graders, and +1.18 for first graders. Averaging across all grades, the mean effect size was +0.46 for all students and +1.05 for low achievers.

Beyond the achievement effects, Slavin et al. (1993) also reported a substantial difference in retention rates between SFA and control schools. By fifth grade, 34.9% of control students but only 11.2% of SFA students had been held back ($p < .001$). According to state data, third

grade absences in 1993 were 8.8% in SFA schools and 13.5% in control, and among fifth graders the rates were 6.4% in SFA, 13.7% in control.

Borman & Hewes (2002) carried out a follow-up assessment of children in the first four Baltimore cohorts when they were in the eighth grade (if they had been promoted each year). Since SFA schools only went to the fifth grade, these students would have been out of the SFA program for at least 3 years. Analyses showed that former SFA students still scored better on CTBS than controls ($ES=+0.29$, $p<.001$). Effect sizes were similar for the lowest achievers ($ES=+0.34$). The SFA students were also significantly less likely to have been retained or assigned to special education.

Many other studies of Success for All have been carried out by researchers throughout the US. Several reviews of comprehensive school reform models, by Herman (1999), Borman et al. (2003), CSRQ (2006), and Social Programs that Work (2008), all concluded that Success for All is one of the two or three most effective whole-school reform models. In Social Programs that Work, in fact, Success for All was the only whole-school educational program that was found to have methodologically adequate positive effects.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth or close achievement gaps.

As is apparent from the summary of research above, the effects seen in studies of Success for All are almost always significantly positive, but they vary considerably in magnitude. The best estimates are those from the large-scale Borman et al. (2007) randomized study, which found an average effect size of $+0.25$ on reading measures, the even larger longitudinal matched

study by Correnti et al. (2009), which reported an effect size of +0.43, and the six-year longitudinal study by Slavin et al. (1993), which found an effect size of +0.48. These are evaluations of the fully developed model as used on a significant scale. Averaging across 23 methodologically adequate studies synthesized in a Best Evidence Encyclopedia review by Slavin et al. (2009b), the sample size-weighted mean effect size was +0.29. The mean was +0.33 for decoding measures and +0.27 for comprehension/total reading measures. Effects of this size for widely replicated models, especially in studies by third-party evaluators, indicate a robust impact of practical and policy importance. To give a sense of perspective, the difference between African-American or Hispanic and White reading scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress is equal to an effect size of about 0.50. Success for All effect sizes are more than half of this gap, and in several studies the outcomes achieved would completely close the gap.

C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant

- (1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.**
- (2) The extent to which the eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that it has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.**

The Success for All Foundation (SFAF), the nonprofit organization that will lead the proposed project, has an exceptional record in carrying out projects of the size and scope of this one, and achieving positive student outcomes in urban and rural schools serving many children in poverty. SFAF spun off from Johns Hopkins University in 1998 in order to carry on the

development, evaluation, and dissemination of Success for All that had been under way at Johns Hopkins since 1987. SFAF has a total staff of 220, of whom about 120 are coaches located in various parts of the US and 100 are developers, researchers, and experts on finance, human resources, marketing, information technology, and so on. The total annual budget of SFAF is about \$30 million, and comes mostly from fees for service and materials that schools usually pay from their Title I budgets. SFAF also receives grants to develop and evaluate new programs, usually from the U.S. Department of Education. This research work is carried out in collaboration with researchers at the Center for Research and Reform in Education (CRRE), part of the Johns Hopkins University School of Education.

SFAF has extensive experience in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects. Throughout the 1990's, the core Success for All program was growing its network of schools by about 50% each year. In more recent years, Success for All turnaround has continued to grow, adding approximately 100 schools per year to its network. We have developed, evaluated, and scaled up programs in middle school reading, preschool, elementary and middle school math, elementary writing, and reading for English language learners, and we are currently piloting a high school reading program under a grant from the US Department of Education. We are developing, evaluating, and disseminating tutoring and beginning reading models that make extensive use of technology. Each of these projects is large, complex, and rapidly growing, but we have developed a talented staff and extensive infrastructure to enable us to successfully carry out these projects.

The evidence that the Success for All Foundation has significantly improved student achievement is presented in Section B, above. In addition to our elementary turnaround model, we have also created programs that have demonstrated positive effects on student learning

outcomes in preschool (Chambers, 2009), middle school reading (Slavin, Chamberlain, Daniels, & Madden, 2009), elementary writing (Madden, Slavin, & Logan, 2010), and elementary and middle school math (Slavin & Lake, 2008; Slavin, Lake, & Groff, 2009).

D. Quality of Project Evaluation

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed experimental study.

An independent third-party evaluation, conducted by MDRC, will include a rigorous cluster Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) to measure program impacts. A total of 50 Title I elementary schools that have been designated by their respective states as either in corrective action or restructuring under NCLB will be recruited from geographically diverse districts and randomly assigned to either a treatment group implementing SFA or a control group continuing with business as usual. Students will be followed over four years and assessed on reading skills at baseline and each spring. The implementation research, discussed below, will assess treatment fidelity and the treatment-control instructional contrast.

Research Questions: To reduce concerns about multiple hypotheses testing producing statistically significant impact by chance, we will follow IES guidelines (See NCEE- 2008-4081) by pre-specifying a small number of primary – confirmatory – research questions and by conducting a composite statistical test to “qualify” or call into question multiple hypothesis tests that are statistically significant individually but that may be due to chance in the context of mixed results.

The main **confirmatory** research question guiding the study design is: ***What is the impact of SFA on elementary school students’ reading achievement, compared to students in***

non-SFA schools? An answer to this question will determine our assessment of whether SFA is successful at turning around low-performing schools.

In addition to the main confirmatory question, this evaluation will address **exploratory questions** intended to deepen our understanding of the overall average impact of SFA:

1. ***Subgroup impacts (experimental)***: How do impacts of SFA differ for students at high, average, and low levels of reading readiness (measured at baseline)? For students of various ethnic backgrounds? For boys and girls? For English language learners (also measured at baseline)?
2. ***Impacts on non-cognitive outcomes (experimental)***: What is the impact of SFA on school-level measures of attendance, special education assignments, and retention rates?
3. ***Dosage (non-experimental)***: Does SFA produce greater impacts for students who receive a greater amount of SFA services: that is, a “stable sample” of students who remain in the SFA schools over several years?
4. ***Program Implementation (correlational)***: Are impacts on reading achievement higher in districts with stronger implementation of the SFA treatment?

Site Recruitment and Random Assignment: During the 2010-11 school year, districts will be recruited for the study. Within each district, we will offer eligible elementary schools an opportunity to participate in SFA at no cost for staff training or instructional materials. School staffs will receive information about SFA and will vote to participate in the study (as is done in all SFA scale-up schools). Only schools in which 75% of teachers vote in favor of participating will be included. Schools will be randomly assigned to either the SFA treatment or the control condition. To gain their cooperation for the study and data collection activities, the control schools will be offered payments of up to \$20,000 to use for any purpose. (We decided against a

research design that would delay implementation in the control schools because of the 4-year study period.)

Student Study Sample: Fall 2011 kindergarten students in the randomly assigned schools will comprise the student study sample. Assuming an average of 60 kindergarten students per school, this will result in a total baseline sample of about 3,000 children (1,500 in the SFA schools and 1,500 in the control schools). These students will be followed for four years, through the end of the 2014-15 school year when they will reach third grade. Since the analysis focuses on the schools in the sample, we will not follow students who move away from their original study school, but will include “in movers” who join the target grades over time. We will collect annual data on the composition of students in both the treatment and control schools to check for any unexpected effects on student mobility and, if there are none, we will also be able to examine impacts for a “stable sample” of students who remain in the SFA and control schools over time.

Key Outcome Measures: The primary student outcome is students’ achievement in reading. In the fall of 2011, kindergarten students will be individually pretested on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and on Woodcock-Johnson III Letter-Word Identification. In the spring of 2012, we will field individually-administered follow-up tests using the Woodcock Letter-Word Identification and Word Attack scales. In the spring of 2013 (when students are completing first grade) and 2014 (when they are completing second grade) and 2015 (when they are completing third grade), we will field individually-administered Woodcock Letter-Word Identification, Word Attack, and Passage Comprehension assessments, and the DIBELS, a reading fluency measure. Each wave of testing will be completed within a 4-5 week window to reduce growth-related differences, and the treatment-control schools within districts will be tested concurrently to reduce the possible introduction of bias from test timing differences.

Because of the policy importance of state assessments, we will also make arrangements with the study districts to obtain state reading test data for students, which will be analyzed as a *sensitivity test* of the confirmatory findings, as discussed below. We anticipate that state test data will only be available for students in grade 3, though testing regimes may include lower grades by 2015. To deal with the variation in tests across states we will place the different tests on the same metric by converting them to z scores, as suggested by May (2009). In addition, we will collect attendance rates, special education assignment rates, and retention rates from school records for individual students, which will allow us to estimate impacts on these exploratory outcomes for students at all grade levels in the study.

Impact Analysis: Our basic impact estimate will be a two-level HLM model with students nested in schools. (Students cannot be nested in classrooms as students are regrouped every quarter, and may have several reading teachers in a year.) Blocking will account for any stratification in the school lotteries should districts request this. Covariates in the impact model will include key student characteristics such as percentages of ELL, special education, and free/reduced price lunch students, and baseline student reading achievement test score. This model will provide an intent-to-treat estimate of providing access to the intervention on students in the average school in the sample.

We estimate minimum detectable effect sizes (the smallest true effect that can be detected for a specified level of power and significance level for any given sample size) of .19 for reading achievement test scores for students. These calculations are based on a sample of 50 schools split evenly between treatment and control, 60 students per grade per school, 80 percent power, an R^2 of covariates in predicting outcomes of 0.50, a statistical significance level of .05 with a two-tailed test, and between-school variation in test scores of .09 and between-teacher variation

in test scores of .14, and covariates explain 53 percent of between-school variation and 76 percent of between-teacher variation. Analysis of student subgroups constituting approximately half the sample (30 students per grade per school) would have MDESs of approximately .21 for reading outcomes.

Exploratory Analyses: As mentioned above, our analysis of exploratory questions will be conducted to interpret the finding on the confirmatory research question. We will use the same impact model in estimating impacts on other outcomes and for other groups. However, we will present these findings to help readers understand the source of findings on the confirmatory question and as a source of hypotheses about explanations.

(2) The extent to which the experimental study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

The experimental study will evaluate Success for All under precisely the conditions that exist in scale-up. That is, schools randomly assigned to use Success for All will receive the same amount of training and coaching and the same materials as schools in being added to the national network of schools. They will go through the same buy-in procedure, with staff voting to participate if selected.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Our planned evaluation will address four key topics related to the implementation of SFA in the study schools: 1) How did SFA staff work with schools to implement the SFA program?

What resources, training, materials, and ongoing technical assistance were needed? 2) Was the SFA model implemented with reasonable fidelity in the study schools? 3) What was the contrast in the education experience, especially related to reading instruction, between the SFA schools and the control schools? and 4) What are the implementation lessons both as the study unfolds and for future replication efforts? Our analysis will draw on information collected through four methods, as discussed below in order of the key topics listed above.

SFA Implementation Experience: Our analysis will rest on structured interviews and brief surveys with SFA staff and school administrators and teachers. Experienced MDRC qualitative researchers will visit the 25 program schools (and, as discussed below) a sample of control schools in the spring of 2012 and 2013. During the visits to the program schools, they will interview the principal and teachers providing reading instruction to understand their perspectives on SFA and its implementation, the support they received, challenges that arose, and responses that were developed to address them. In addition, a teacher survey will be the source of information about teachers' background and experience, knowledge of reading instruction, relationships with students, and perceptions of the school environment. MDRC staff will administer the surveys at the SFA schools during the course of site visits conducted during the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years. These data, in conjunction with the School Achievement Snapshots, discussed below, will provide valuable insights into the conditions under which effective and faithful implementation of the program model is most likely to occur.

Fidelity of Implementation: SFA is a complex program which has developed detailed rubrics, known as the School Achievement Snapshot, that trained SFA coaches use in the course of regular site visits to rate each school on the extent to which it has implemented the key structures and instructional processes associated with the program and to guide ongoing technical

assistance efforts. Given the extensive knowledge of SFA needed to rate its fidelity and the investment SFA has made in the design and fielding of the Snapshot, MDRC intends to capitalize on this instrument to develop measures of the extent to which the 25 program schools exhibit fidelity to the SFA model. MDRC staff will then use these data to identify key constructs that summarize the extent to which key elements of SFA are implemented with fidelity in the treatment schools. This strategy will provide much more reliable measures of fidelity than any effort by evaluators to rate program services.

Service Contrast between SFA and Control Schools: The service contrast produced by implementing SFA is the driver of observed impacts on student outcomes, so it is important to measure the extent and dimensions of the service difference between the SFA and control schools. In our field research, we will interview control school administrators to learn about improvement efforts. As a quantitative measure of the key service contrast related to reading and literacy instruction, we will field in both SFA and control schools the teacher instructional logs developed by Brian Rowan and his colleagues (n.d.) at the University of Michigan for the Study of Instructional Improvement. The log is a close-ended instrument that has been shown in prior research to differentiate effectively between instruction in SFA schools and in schools that adopted two other special reading programs (as well as schools where no special reading intervention was in place). We plan to collect logs from each reading teacher in each of the 50 study schools in the winter and spring of 2012, 2013, and 2014, with an expected sample of approximately 20 logs per school or 500 for the SFA schools and 500 for the control schools each year, which is sufficient to identify differences in instruction between the two groups of schools.

Feedback on Lessons for Scale up and Replication: At the end of each of the first three study years, we will produce an annual interim report that will provide both periodic assessments of the impact of SFA on student’s achievement outcomes, as well as of the fidelity of implementation, and the treatment-control contrasts. These will be relatively short reports intended to examine the extent to which progress is being made. The final summative evaluation report will report all of the annual impact estimates, as well as the planned sensitivity and exploratory analyses, the analysis of the treatment fidelity data, and the longitudinal treatment-control instructional contrasts.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

The data described above will also allow us to describe in project reports the effort needed to implement the intervention and the lessons learned for successful operation. We will be able to document the nature of the services provided, the staffing arrangements, types of training provided staff, and the challenges encountered in implementation and promising responses.

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

Our evaluation budget of approximately \$6,000,000, plus extensive support for schools randomly assigned to implement SFA, will allow us to conduct a high quality, rigorous study and share findings widely. Because the program will be offered to schools free of charge, recruitment should be relatively easy, and we can insist on clear buy-in from prospective schools

and on their full participation in the evaluation, either as Success for All or as control schools. For measuring program impacts, we have budgeted for individually-administered measures, which, although expensive, are far more sensitive than group reading measures, and will provide accurate and valid measures of key outcomes. Routine state assessments will also be analyzed in grade 3. Resources for training and coaching will be the same as those used in all Success for All schools, but these are extensive and should ensure high-quality implementations.

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

The evaluation of the implementation and impact of SFA will be conducted by MDRC, which is completely independent of the SFA Foundation. MDRC will be solely responsible for random assignment of schools to treatment conditions and will inform both the schools and SFA of the final outcome. MDRC will collect all measures of student outcomes and be solely responsible for the analysis and interpretation of findings. MDRC will seek comments and suggestions from the program developer on draft reports but its technical review process and quality control systems will provide the final review of evaluation products. Further, the team will seek out venues for the dissemination of study findings both at the end of the annual impact assessments and at the end of the entire study. These will include presentations at professional conferences and meetings, and submissions to peer-reviewed journals. Finally, we will prepare a restricted use file that will be made available to other researchers who can conduct further analysis to verify and extend the findings.

Required Evaluator Collaboration and Dissemination: As specified in the grant application, the evaluation team will comply with the requirements of any program evaluation conducted by ED, and with any technical assistance provided by the Department.

E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale

We are confident that the scale-up strategy described in Section A will greatly expand the numbers of students who will benefit from the proven Success for All model. With the active involvement of district partners, concentration of scale-up efforts in local areas with large numbers of eligible schools, and reductions in first-year program costs, we expect to be able to substantially increase the reach and impact of our program.

(1) The number of students to be reached.

As noted in Section A, we expect to add 200 additional schools in 2011-2012, 250 in 2012-2013, 300 in 2013-2014, and 350 in 2014-2015, for a total of 1100 schools, or roughly 550,000 students. These schools will be in our partner districts, in local areas near our partner districts, in additional partner districts we plan to add over the course of the project, in states whose state departments of education have agreed to partner with us, and in other areas. All will be high-poverty Title I schoolwide projects, and about half will be schools initially in corrective action or restructuring.

(2) Capacity to bring the project to scale.

Working with our district and state partners, we are confident that we have the capacity to bring the project to scale. As noted in Section D, we have many years of experience in scaling up proven programs, especially the Success for All turnaround model that we are proposing to further scale up through the development of local sustainability supports.

School District Partners

Our official partners in the scale-up of Success for All represent a broad range of outstanding school districts primarily serving high-poverty schools. They range from large urban districts to smaller rural ones, from Pennsylvania to Arizona. Some have long and successful experience with Success for All, and will primarily work with SFA to expand the program in neighboring districts, while others will primarily be building capacity to establish Success for All in schools in their own districts. Characteristics of our partners are as follows.

Atlanta Public Schools is a real Success for All success story. In collaboration with a national program called Project GRAD, 26 elementary schools have used SFA for up to 10 years. These schools started off scoring 25 percentage points below the state mean, and now score near the state mean state reading tests, gaining 45 points since 2001 while the state gained 24. The Atlanta Public Schools serve about 57,000 students. 79% of Atlanta students qualify for free lunch, 78% are African American, 17% White, and 4% Hispanic.

The School District of Philadelphia primarily expects to use Success for All to help accelerate achievement in its struggling elementary schools. Philadelphia serves 178,000 students, 52% African American, 32% White, and 13% Hispanic, and 76% of students qualify for free lunch. Philadelphia's superintendent has a long association with SFA in previous districts.

Detroit Public Schools is a district that is in considerable financial difficulty and is rapidly losing population and closing schools. It currently has about 110,000 students, of whom 74% receive free lunches, 90% are African American, and 7% are Hispanic. Two Detroit charter schools have had great success with SFA. The district plans to create a special subdistrict for struggling schools, and to use Success for All in the elementary schools in this subdistrict. The

district leadership has verbally indicated its intent to partner and will complete a full partnership agreement in the coming weeks.

Prince George's County (MD) is a large suburban county with 131,000 students, located just outside of Washington, DC. Its students are 70% African American, 19% White, and 8% Hispanic, and 59% of students qualify for free lunches. Our Prince George's partners will seek to scale up Success for All within the district and in the Maryland/DC region.

Steubenville, Ohio is a small city in southeastern Ohio. The Steubenville Public Schools have been using Success for All in all five of its elementary schools for more than ten years, and the district has received national recognition for its outstanding success over many years in advancing the performance of all students. In the three original SFA schools, 94% of students passed the 2009 Ohio reading test, compared to 77% in the rest of Ohio. Steubenville serves 2340 students, of whom 66% are White, 28% African American, and 1% Hispanic, and 62% qualify for free lunch. Steubenville partners will work with districts in Ohio and West Virginia.

Geary County, Kansas serves about 6900 students, including those at the Fort Riley army base. The district has six very successful elementary schools using Success for All. The four original schools scored 15 percentage points below the state reading mean in 2000, but now score five points above the state mean, at 91% passing. The district plans to help scale up Success for All in its own district and elsewhere in Kansas. The district is 54% White, 27% African American, and 12% Hispanic.

The Roosevelt School District in Phoenix, Arizona, is an urban district serving 12,500 students, of whom 74% are Hispanic, 18% African American, and 4% White. The new superintendent in Roosevelt came from Alhambra, a similar neighboring district that has had

exceptional success with SFA. Roosevelt will scale up Success for All in its own district and elsewhere in Arizona.

Bell County and Knox County are rural Appalachian districts in Kentucky. Bell County has five and Knox County three highly successful Success for All schools. Since 2001, the Bell County SFA schools have gained 32 percentage points on the Kentucky reading test, and are now well above the state average. The Knox County schools gained 28%, while the state gained 15%. Both districts plan to work in Eastern Kentucky and Tennessee to help scale up the program. Bell County has 86% of its students receiving free lunches, and Knox County has 72%; both are overwhelmingly White.

Lorain City, Ohio serves about 8,900 students in an inner suburb of Cleveland. It has ten schools using Success for All, and plans to help disseminate the program in Northern Ohio. 53% of Lorain students are White, 30% Hispanic, and 24% African American, and 60% qualify for free lunch. Lorain's superintendent was an SFA principal and has a long association with the program.

Putnam County, Florida is a rural district in North Florida that serves 11,800 students, of whom 79% receive free lunches, 68% are White, 24% are African American, and 10% are Hispanic. Putnam has 10 schools using Success for All, and the district leadership plans to help other North Florida districts adopt the program.

Garfield, Colorado is a rural district on the Western Slope of the Rockies. The district serves 4900 students, of whom 38% receive free lunch, 56% are White, and 42% are Hispanic. It has three current Success for All schools.

Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania, is one of the lowest achieving districts in the state. It serves 8,400 students, of whom 62% receive free lunch, 67% are African American, 17%

Hispanic, and 15% White. Harrisburg plans to build capacity to scale up Success for All in its own district and then disseminate it in Central Pennsylvania.

The William Penn district outside of Philadelphia plans to scale up Success for All within its district and to work with other districts in Eastern Pennsylvania. 53% of its students qualify for free lunch, 58% are African American, 36% White, and 2% Hispanic. William Penn's associate superintendent was an SFA principal and then worked as a trainer and area manager for SFAF.

An additional district in northeast Pennsylvania has indicated an intent to partner. The district includes 17,892 students. Of whom 77% qualify for free lunch and 17% are African American, 20% are White, and 62% are Hispanic.

Beyond the partners we have identified so far, we expect to add 3 additional official partners by September, 2010. We are conducting discussions with several districts, all of which are high-poverty and ethnically diverse. Some will be planning primarily to scale up Success for All internally and some to primarily work in neighboring districts, because most or all of their eligible elementary schools are already using the program. We will choose our partners based on their capacity to support scale-up of Success for All in their district or in their region.

State Partners

In addition to district partners, we have letters of support from the State Departments of Education in Pennsylvania and Colorado, as "other" partners for this i3 proposal. They will help us with access to qualifying schools and districts, integration with state plans for turning around low-achieving schools, and sharing of information. We expect to add additional state departments as "other partners" over the course of the grant period.

Matching Organizations

As a key part of our scale-up plans, we have obtained commitments from several private-sector organizations to provide matching funds of at least 20% of the amount of our request for federal funding (\$10 million). The Bowland Charitable Trust, a UK foundation, has promised \$1 to \$2 million. The Pitney Bowes Company has committed about \$1 million in direct grants and discounts, and the HBP Printing Company has also committed about \$1 million in grants and discounts. We are discussing discounts on books and direct donations of books from First Book. The Success for All Foundation will contribute funds in the form of discounts to schools. Details of these matching sources will be finalized before a grant award is made, but we are confident that we will obtain the required match.

(3) The feasibility of the project to be replicated in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations.

The experience of the Success for All Foundation extends to every type of school in all parts of the US, and with all types of students. Current Success for All schools exist in 48 states. They include many large urban districts such as Atlanta, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Honolulu, smaller cities such as Long Branch, New Jersey; Bessemer, Alabama; Roosevelt, Arizona, Steubenville, Ohio; and Victoria, Texas., inner-suburban districts such as Lorain, Ohio and Dolton, Illinois; and rural districts such as Geary County, Kansas; Putnam County, Florida, the Bering Straits in Alaska, Appalachian Kentucky, and Indian reservations in several states. In all of these places, we have evidence over many years that SFA schools are gaining on state assessments more rapidly than are other schools in the state. About 50 of our schools are charter schools, such as The Commonwealth Community Development Academy in Detroit and the Detroit Edison Public School Academy, Pacoima Elementary Charter in Los Angeles, and

Milestones Charter in Florida. We serve African American, Hispanic, White, Indian, and Inuit students, and have evidence of positive outcomes for each of these groups. The Success for All program exists in Spanish and has an adaptation for English language learners being taught in English.

The Success for All Foundation has the resources and expertise to scale up its program, as documented in Section C, above.

Surveys of teachers using Success for All have found uniformly positive attitudes toward the program (Slavin, Madden, Chambers, & Haxby, 2009). For example, in San Antonio, Texas, a superintendent several years ago asked teachers implementing several comprehensive reform models to vote on whether they would want to maintain or drop the program. More than 80% of teachers in the Success for All schools voted to continue, far more than for any other program.

(4) Estimated Cost of the Proposed Project

The cost per student of Success for All at scale is approximately \$85 per student per year over 4 years. In schools that qualify for start-up credits to help with first-year professional development costs, the cost will be \$60 per student per year, but these grants greatly reduce first-year school-level costs (from \$100,000 to \$50,000), facilitating program adoption. We do not expect a significant difference in per-pupil cost above a total of 500,000 students.

(5) Mechanisms to be used to broadly disseminate information to support replication

We propose to disseminate information on the project in many ways. First, we will purchase advertising space in popular magazines, such as *Educational Leadership* and *Education Week*, and in on-line outlets such as the *ASCD SmartBrief* and *Google Adwords*. We will attempt to take advantage of free media by talking with journalists, bloggers, and others about

newsworthy developments with Success for All and the scale-up project, especially research findings. We will purchase booth space at major national conferences, such as Title I, ASCD, AASA, and NAFEPA, and local conferences in areas where our district partners are located.

Perhaps the most effective form of dissemination is word of mouth from principal to principal and teacher to teacher. We propose to hold local demonstrations to invite principals and teachers to visit existing Success for All schools, speak with their counterparts, and form their own opinions.

In addition, our district partners and state department of education partners in several states will disseminate information about Success for All and will encourage districts and coalitions of schools to become additional partners over time.

F. Sustainability

For twenty years, the dissemination of Success for All has sustained itself almost entirely on revenues from school districts receiving SFA services and materials, which they pay from their Title I allocations. We have had federal and private foundation funding from time to time to support research and development and creation of infrastructure, but we have always been careful to ensure that the dissemination is financially self-supporting, so that we do not become dependent on external funding.

After the i3 grant period is over, we are confident that the gains we expect to make in numbers of schools making effective use of Success for All will be sustained, and that our network will continue to grow. The scale-up project will invest in infrastructure, particularly district-based coaches responsible for schools in their areas, as well as the development of materials and procedures to support high-quality implementations of Success for All in the new,

locally-focused scale-up strategy. If all works as planned, we expect most or all districts to maintain these trainers at the end of the project with their own Title I resources, because as long as the districts continue to implement Success for All, a local coach will always be their most cost-effective means of providing high-quality coaching. These coaches will already be trained and fully capable. If districts do continue to support their coaches, the scale-up strategy can continue indefinitely after project funding has ended. In situations in which they do not, the Success for All Foundation will, wherever possible, locate trainers in the local area. In either case, the schools that have adopted Success for All will, based on our past experience, be likely to continue to use it for many years without additional grant funding beyond ordinary Title I funding, ensuring that the investment made by i3 in the scaling up of Success for All will continue to benefit hundreds of thousands of vulnerable children.

Partnerships with state departments of education, intermediate units, and other cross-district organizations, will also contribute to the sustainability of scale-up. State departments are charged with helping schools and districts meet national standards under ESEA. If they have good experiences with Success for All in their struggling schools, they are likely to continue to support schools and districts in adopting and maintaining the program.

G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

Management Plan

The project will be managed by the leadership of the Success for All Foundation (SFAF) which has long experience in scaling up proven whole-school reform designs in a wide range of school settings and locations.

Partners and Coordination

The scale-up of Success for All will involve close partnerships with school districts throughout the US. Each partner district will hire one or more persons to serve as local coaches for Success for All, and SFA staff will provide extensive training and follow-up to ensure that these district-based coaches are fully prepared to provide outstanding services to local schools. Coordination between SFA and district partners will be critical to the success of this initiative. We will have regular meetings of district partner coaches and their SFA counterparts approximately 6 times during 2010-2011, and 4 times a year in 2011 and beyond. The initial group of coaches will spend the 2010-2011 school year undergoing the same training process experienced by all SFA coaches, including training in each program component, goal-focused continuous improvement strategies, and coaching approaches. Each district partner coach will be assigned to a regional SFA mentor. SFA mentors will frequently visit district partners, observe them doing coaching, and exchange feedback and new ideas. District partner coaches will participate in learning communities of SFA coaches in their region, whose members will support them in reflection on their practice as coaches, share solutions to problems, and discuss common challenges. District-based coaches will participate along with SFA coaching staff in ongoing workshops for experienced coaches and experienced schools. In addition, electronic

communications including email, webcasts, webinars, and conference calls, will be used to connect district-based coaches with SFA coaches.

SFA leaders will maintain regular contact with district leaders, such as superintendents, directors of elementary schools, and principals. SFA staff will meet regularly on site with these leaders, to review outcome and implementation data and plan for goal-focused continuous improvement. We will also meet with district leaders and coaches as a group at our annual experienced sites conferences.

District leaders, district coaches, and SFA staff will jointly agree on annual objectives in terms of amounts and quality of coaching, program adoption, and student outcomes. We will then jointly develop a goal-focused plan and monitor progress toward agreed-upon goals, recommending changes intended to improve outcomes.

SFA staff will also coordinate with “other partners,” such as state departments of education and intermediate units. Memoranda of Understanding will be negotiated individually with all partners to specify precisely what each is expected to do and to agree to time scales.

<u>Timeline</u>		
<u>Dates</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Annual Milestones</u>
October 2010- August 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit additional partners, 200 schools, plus 50 study schools • Train district coaches • Engage in planning with partner districts • Enhance scale-up materials, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lists of partners, schools • Manuals, videos • Marketing collateral

	<p>procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance marketing materials, procedures • Hold meetings among partners 	
September 2011- August 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin randomized evaluation, pre- and post-test. Analyze data. • Recruit 250 schools • Support district coaches • Monitor quality of coaching, implementation • Hold meetings among partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First-year report on outcomes • Lists of partners, schools • Implementation reports
September 2012- August 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue randomized evaluation • Recruit 300 additional schools • Support district coaches • Monitor quality of coaching, implementation • Hold meetings among partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second-year report on outcomes • List of schools • Implementation reports
September 2013- August 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue randomized evaluation • Recruit 350 additional schools • Monitor quality of coaching, implementation • Hold meetings among partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third-year report on outcomes • List of schools • Implementation reports

September 2014- September 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze final data, write final report • Plan with partners for sustaining project after grant period • Disseminate outcomes, reports of project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final report on outcomes • Sustainability report • Reports, press releases, articles
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Institutional Capabilities

Success for All Foundation (SFAF) is a nonprofit organization in Baltimore that spun off from Johns Hopkins University in 1998. It has a total staff of approximately 220, including 120 field coaches who work full-time with Success for All schools and districts. SFAF develops, evaluates, and disseminates programs for high-poverty schools from prekindergarten to high school, and has considerable experience with both elementary and middle school reading reform. The Foundation has a small, active Board of Directors led by Dr. Robert Slavin. It includes Kent McGuire, Dean of the School of Education at Temple University and former Assistant Secretary of Education; Myra Williams, former CIO of Merck; and John Arnholz, an attorney at Bingham McCutchen.

(1) SFAF Facilities. SFAF’s headquarters in Baltimore houses the Foundation’s executive management as well as administrative functions including Contracts, Accounting, Outreach, Information Systems, Human Resources, and Customer Service. The facility also contains SFAF’s curriculum development groups, research staff, and several trainer support functions, including conferences, training materials, and the training institute. State-of-the-art

computers and communications systems, with technical support staff, will be available for the project.

(2) Professional Development and Curriculum Development Resources. With a professional development and coaching staff of approximately 120, SFAF has the resources to support principals, teachers, assistants, and central administrators. Currently, Success for All schools are located in more than 400 school districts in 48 states throughout the US. SFAF also has a staff of about 40 program developers working in reading, writing, math, social studies, and science, in grades prekindergarten to 10.

(3) Video Production Facilities. SFAF has an award-winning video production team that is experienced in creating television-quality content cost effectively. In addition to a producer, assistant producer, and support staff, SFAF regularly uses studios, actors, and other contractors to create educational videos.

(4) Publication and Support Services. SFAF has the publications and distribution capabilities to provide the curricular materials necessary to implement innovative programs. There is a staff of 22 publications professionals who do project management, artwork, design and layout, printing, and inventory control.

MDRC

In its 35-year history, MDRC has earned a reputation as a trusted and authoritative source of information about what works and what doesn't work in education and social policy. MDRC is known for the rigor of its research and for its commitment to building evidence and improving practice in partnership with school districts, community colleges, state and local governments, and community-based organizations. Working in fields where emotion and ideology often

dominate public debates, MDRC is a source of objective and unbiased evidence about cost-effective solutions that can be replicated and expanded to scale. With staff of more than 200 in New York and California, MDRC is engaged in close to 80 projects in five policy areas.

At a time of growing national and state interest in improving low-performing schools and better preparing students for college and work, a commitment to rigorous evaluations and demonstration programs has established MDRC as a respected voice in education research and policy. To date, MDRC has managed 20 major education studies representing a range of both structural and instructional reforms at both the secondary school and elementary school levels. At the high school level, these have included several prominent comprehensive reform interventions as well as specialized literacy programs aimed at students who enter ninth grade reading below grade level. As MDRC continues to build a body of knowledge on high school reform, it is examining school-based interventions in the elementary grades and middle school that seek to give children a strong start in developing reading and math skills as well as after-school programs that extend children's learning beyond the school day. Across the entire span of its work, MDRC has concentrated on key elements of students' instructional experiences: the skills of teachers, the content of what they teach, the duration of instruction, and the organizational setting in which teaching is done, which affects the relationship between adults and students in the schools and in the classrooms.

Central to MDRC's mission in education research is facilitating dialogue among researchers, policymakers, funder, and educators – building a shared learning community in which researchers are responsive to the needs of practitioners and practitioners are committed to taking lessons from research as they innovate.

District Partners

The identities and characteristics of our district partners were described in Section E(2).

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

The proposed staff of the Success for All scale-up project have been working for many years on development, evaluation, dissemination, and scale-up of complex school and classroom reforms. We have designed and carried out many large-scale randomized and quasi-experimental evaluations. Our school district partners also have extensive experience in educational innovation, management, and reform. Our qualifications and roles in the project are as follows.

Robert E. Slavin, Ph.D., Project Director. Dr. Slavin is Chairman of the Success for All Foundation, Director of the Johns Hopkins University Center for Research and Reform in Education, and Professor at the Institute for Effective Education at the University of York (England). Dr. Slavin has carried out many rigorous field experiments, including randomized studies of Success for All, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, bilingual education, and quasi-experimental studies of Success for All, mastery learning, individualized instruction, and other interventions. He has published more than 200 articles and 20 books on these and other topics, including educational psychology and research methods textbooks. Dr. Slavin was the PI on an IES-funded randomized evaluation of the Success for All program. He will serve as the main link to the independent evaluation and will be responsible for reports to the US Department of Education.

Nancy A. Madden, Ph.D., Project Co-Director. Dr. Madden is the President and CEO of the Success for All Foundation, which provides the training and implementation support for 1000

Success for All schools, and will provide the support for schools in this study. Dr. Madden has been President of the Foundation since it was established in 1997. Dr. Madden is also a professor at Johns Hopkins University and the University of York's Institute for Effective Education in the UK. Dr. Madden will be responsible for overseeing the provision of implementation support for schools in the study.

GwenCarol Holmes, Ed.D., Director of Partnerships. Dr. Holmes, Chief Operating Officer of SFAF, has been an elementary principal, Title I director, and director of training for Edison Schools. In her current position with the Foundation she has been responsible for coordinating services between SFAF headquarters, field operations, and SFA schools, as well as statewide initiatives. She will take primary responsibility for forming and managing partnerships with school districts.

Lynsey Seabrook, Director of Field Operations. Ms. Seabrook, Vice President for Field Operations of SFAF, will work with Dr. Madden to oversee the coaching, mentoring, and monitoring of district partner coaches.

Dan Anderson, Dissemination Director. Dan Anderson, Outreach Manager for the Success for All Foundation, has more than 13 years of experience at SFAF. He developed and executes the sales and marketing plan adopted by the Foundation. In his earlier work as an area manager he oversaw the implementation of SFA in Mid-Atlantic schools. He will be responsible for developing and then leading an outreach plan to recruit additional partners and schools and disseminate information about Success for All broadly.

(1) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Fred Doolittle, MDRC, Vice President and Director of Policy Research and Evaluation Department and Acting Director of K-12 Policy Area. Dr. Doolittle has focused on implementation and impact evaluations of programs for low-income children and youth. When he joined MDRC in 1986, he led evaluations employment programs for youth who have dropped out of high school. Starting in the mid-1990s, he began working on evaluations of elementary and secondary school reforms. He has served as leader or senior reviewer of more than 20 national, multi-site randomized field trials and other evaluations at MDRC. Recently, Dr. Doolittle completed two IES projects on which he served as project director or co-director: IES's Reading Professional Development Evaluation and the Evaluation of Enhanced Academic Instruction in After-School Programs, which both were randomized control trials. He has also served as the Co-Project Director of the Math Professional Development Evaluation (another experimental study) and is currently leading the Impact Evaluation of Response to Intervention in Early Reading, which will involve nonexperimental methods. He is also a senior reviewer on MDRC's evaluations of employment programs for individuals with substantial barriers to employment (high school dropouts, those with disabilities, and those with criminal records and of innovations in community colleges. The author of many publications, Dr. Doolittle is heavily involved in developing and reviewing research designs for projects, and reviewing reports and other products.

Dr. Doolittle has served on the faculty of the Summer Institute of Education Sciences Training on Randomized Clinical Trials and is an advisor to grantees of the W.T. Grant Foundation on research design and implementation. Prior to joining MDRC, Doolittle was on the faculty of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, where he taught graduate public policy analysis and during his tenure at MDRC he has taught program evaluation at the Yale

School of Management. He holds a law degree and Ph.D. in economics from the University of California, Berkeley Campus.

Janet Quint, MDRC Senior Associate, K - 12 Education Policy Area. Dr. Quint has led or participated in a number of mixed-methods studies of education reform initiatives. She currently leads a team examining the implementation of small high schools in New York City that were established with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. She recently directed an evaluation of the impacts of FAST-R, a Boston-based initiative to help teachers use data to improve students' reading comprehension. She was project manager for MDRC's Scaling Up First Things First evaluation and is the author of a report synthesizing the findings of that study and of two other MDRC evaluations of high school reform initiatives. She was also principal investigator for a study of a theory of instructional change enunciated by the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh; the study used survey and observational data to develop statistical indicators of the stages in the theory and to develop quantitative estimates of the links between these stages. Before joining MDRC's K-12 policy area, she played major roles in the organization's evaluations of programs for welfare recipients and young mothers. A graduate of Harvard University, she received a Master of Arts in Teaching degree from the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. in sociology from the City University of New York.

Pei Zhu, MDRC Senior Associate, K - 12 Education Policy Area. Dr. Zhu is an economist in MDRC's K-12 Education policy area whose current work focuses on experimental and quasi-experimental impact analyses, evaluation design, and related methodological issues. She is leading the student achievement impact analysis for several federally funded group-level randomized experiment projects, including evaluations of professional development programs for second-grade reading teachers and seventh-grade math teachers, as well as the evaluation of

the Response to Intervention program for struggling readers in early elementary grades. In addition, she has worked on the impact analysis on student outcomes in the National Reading First Impact Study and the evaluation of enhanced academic instruction in after-school programs for second- through fifth-graders. Her work at MDRC also includes several methodological studies on empirical issues related to group randomized experiments and on reliability of measurements for group settings. She received her Ph.D. in economics from Princeton University.

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Reader #1:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	13
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	15
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	9
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	8
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With	1	1

Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students
(0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	0
TOTAL	105	62

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #1:

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the

proposed project.

Strengths

This project represents a major scaling up of a program that has solid research support working with high-need students in multiple contexts (48 states, rural, suburban, and urban settings) and from different backgrounds (Black, Latina, American Indian, Asian, Immigrant). While Success For All is over 20 years old and operates in 1000 schools, these are still a small fraction of the total number of schools nationally in corrective action or restructuring.

Success for All (SFA) has shown good resiliency to school and district-level churn (e.g., teacher, principal, and central office) (p. 7), with schools maintaining the model at a median rate of 10 years. Given that the particular districts that this project will target tend to be more chaotic, this is an important strength.

The model itself, with its use of classroom embedded support for teachers and on-going support/training for its coaching corps, is a robust approach in terms of ensuring fidelity of implementation and buy-in from schools over time. The use of data from formative and summative assessments to inform instruction and school intervention is excellent. The additional supports provided by the Solutions Team for schools to address school climate/student behavioral issues strengthens the utility of this model for use of struggling schools, since often these schools lack a cohesive plan to manage school climate and connect with community resources for the families of students needing more support than the school can provide.

The applicant provides a thorough description of why Goal 1 (reduce cost of SFA) addresses a major barrier this program has faced (and will face) to scaling. The strategy of localizing its coaching support staff makes sense both financially and in terms of fostering sustained district and schools' support and buy-in. It also should strengthen the fidelity of implementation because local coaches will be able to give much more intensive, tailored, and timely support to teachers/schools. Providing scholarships to the neediest schools while these local coach networks are being established seems a good strategy to ensure the rate of scale-up proposed stays on target. The additional rationale regarding the difficult financial outlook for districts over the next several years seems compelling and well aligned to the source of the i3 funding (e.g., ARRA).

The plan for reaching Goal 2 (reaching over 500,000 students) seems grounded in reasonable assumptions in terms of district interest and the capacity of SFA to scale-up at the proposed rate per year. The investment in marketing and awareness models (p. 12), the creation of media tools, and distance learning models for use by rural sites should all support SFA

reaching the number and diversity of schools it proposes.

Weaknesses

Success for All's laser-like focus on reading achievement and ensuring all students are on grade level by the time they transition to middle grades is also its weakness. It assumes that improved reading proficiency will translate into sufficient overall gains across the academic areas to close achievement gaps. While reading skills are critical to mastery of math and the other academic areas, skilled instruction in concepts and skills particular to those domains is still necessary to close gaps for high need students.

The proposed shift to having Districts hire groups of coaches could be problematic in terms of ensuring they are strong teachers in the first place. Districts are often bound by union agreements that require seniority act as the primary criteria in selecting teachers for advancement to coach or for any other position on the career lattice. It will be important for SFA to pay close attention to how the Districts will choose their coaches as part of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) process described on page 39.

It is not clear that SFA has fully accounted for in its scale-up plan the cliff most states (and districts) will be facing in the next couple years as ARRA funds dry up and the economy still continues to sag. More districts and schools may need the \$50,000 credits than what SFA is anticipating.

Reader's Score: 13

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant,

substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

SFA did grow at a rapid rate in the 1990's (p. 19, 29) and continues to grow and maintain a large and diverse network of schools. The proposed rate of growth for this project is similar with that of past performance. The SFA model is multifaceted and suggests the applicant has experience in implementing complex projects at scale as well. For instance, SFA includes:

extensive professional development for teachers and principals across a range of skills and knowledge (p. 4); an articulated K-6 reading program (p. 5); a system of formative and benchmark assessments (p. 5); tutoring for students (p. 5); and the Solutions Team to address non-academic issues that arise in schools (p.6)).

Strong evidence that this applicant has improved student outcomes and closed gaps is provided on page 17 and 18, with a sufficient number of effect sizes falling into the .40-.48 range.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.**
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.**
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

The number and spread of students SFA proposes to reach via this grant is significant (500,000), and their strategy of focusing on empowerment or turnaround schools in both rural and urban settings is compelling. The applicant's plan for scale up is strong. SFA has the capacity to expand at a rapid rate, as evidenced by their scale-up in the 90's (p. 29). The fact that their network extends across 48 states and is large (1000 schools) demonstrates good capacity as well. The proposed change from a purely centralized coaching and new school support structure to a more localized model seems sensible and should improve SFA's capacity to scale up and also to sustain the work beyond the grant period. The resumes of the personnel to be assigned to this project are well aligned with the goals, with

all having significant prior experience cultivating and supporting new SFA schools.

The proposed strategy of requiring MOU's with State (p. 32) and District (p. 39) leadership and a school-level super-majority vote (p. 6) to become an SFA school (p. to ensure strong buy-in and minimizing problems with implementation due to district churn is good. It should help protect the project against changes in strategy that often accompany changes in leadership at each of these levels.

The applicant's plan to localize coaching and thus significantly reduce costs to expansion going forward greatly strengthens the feasibility of replication for SFA after the i3 grant is over. Linking replication to Title 1 funds is also a good strategy since its unlikely those funds will dry up in the next 10 years. The diversity in the district partners identified (p. 30-33) is good from both the perspective of regional and district-type and in the large number of high need students and schools in the urban districts that are not SFA affiliated yet. This should give the applicant plenty of scale-up potential from the very start.

The fact that SFA has a Spanish version, as well as a track record with immigrant students speaking a wide variety of languages is a strength. (p. 34-35)

The fact that the median number of years the SFA schools have sustained implementation is 10 years is impressive and makes a strong argument for user satisfaction and sustainability.

The cost estimates per student for the proposed project seem reasonable (\$85)(p. 35). The applicants plan for matching is also reasonable, as it is a diversified approach that does not rely on any one source exclusively (p. 34). They are also organizations that SFA has prior relationship with, which in the case of foundations (Bowland) and vendors (Ptney, HBP Printing, and First Book) are an important factor in securing additional funds.

The dissemination plan (pp. 35-36) includes a mix of academic and practitioner audiences, as well as a diverse array of strategies (e.g., national and local conferences, word of mouth, local demonstrations, state department of education).

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

The applicant's discussion of sustainability shows a strong understanding of district finances and the current and future challenges they face in this economic downturn. SFA's current network has been self-sustaining to date on Title 1 funds. The applicant's budget discussion suggests SFA is not expensive to maintain, and that it's been the start-up costs that have been prohibitive. This proposal addresses that issue directly through the shift to more localized coaching/new school support personnel. This capacity investment in SFA should be a one-time cost and tool the organization for continued aggressive expansion after the grant.

On pages 36-37, the applicant makes a strong case for how the changes in infrastructure this grant would support (e.g., the development of local coaching corps) would allow SFA to control start-up costs in a manner that should allow the program to both sustain its expanded network and continue to grow more rapidly than it has in has in the last 10 years.

The application includes information on a multi-year financial and operating model (pp. 35-36).

Weaknesses

The memoranda of understanding discussed on page 39 do not address the matter of sustainability for each district explicitly, thus it is unclear if they intend to continue SFA beyond the grant period.

The multi-year financial and operating model described in the application lacks specifics on costs.

Reader's Score: 9

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

The annual setting of objectives (p. 39) regarding coaching and program implementation, as part of the MOU with each district, is a good strategy for maintaining the district leadership's focus on the project and making midcourse corrections.

The SFA leadership team is well seasoned in scaling this model across many contexts.

SFA has a large corps of coaches (120) and trainers that should be able to support the rate of expansion proposed. The fact that the applicant has a strong in-house research and development division is also a strength to this application in providing capacity to adapt to new contexts/challenges and also to learn from and coordinate the Manpower Development Research Corporation (MDRC) evaluation.

MDRC has a strong track record of rigorous research in education (e.g., evaluation of Talent Development, Career Academies, First Things First).

Weaknesses

The assigned percentages (e.g., 25%) for this project for the Director of Partnership and the Director of Training seem low given that this proposed expansion would double the number of schools.

The application does not include clearly defined responsibilities for the management personnel. The timeline and milestones provided are not sufficiently detailed given the complexity of the project. More information on the expected flow of activities within each academic year is necessary to evaluate this aspect of the management plan.

Reader's Score: 8

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

SFA's ability to close gaps in reading achievement in grades K-3 is impressive (p. 18). The model provides schools with a consistent, comprehensive, and research-based approach to reading in the early grades that maximize student skill acquisition.

SFA's formative and benchmarking assessment system addresses developmental milestones in reading acquisition.

SFA's reading program is aligned to support children's transition from pre-reading to fluency, and provides aligned instructional materials to support smooth transitions from kindergarten through third grade.

Weaknesses

SFA program does not target children from birth to age three, or preschool children.

Reader's Score: 1

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to

successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

The impact of SFA on student retention and assignment to disability status (e.g., lowering those rates) is well evidenced and impressive, as is their data on closing gaps for these two populations. (p. 2) The fact that their approach is consistent with response to intervention guidelines is also a strength. The program has two versions to specifically address the needs of ELL students (p. 2)

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement

innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

The applicant provides information on its experience working with rural schools and includes scale-up strategies that are specific to rural schools. (p. 3)

Weaknesses

No particular adaptations of the SFA model are proposed for rural schools, such that one could describe the approach as being innovative for this particular competitive priority.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/02/2010 11:50 AM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/06/2010 10:48 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Reader #2:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	20
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	14
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	_____

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
TOTAL	105	34

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #2:

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Success for All provides evidence that relates directly to each of the two factors related to the strength of research evidence.

Ample strong research evidence is provided of the efficacy of Success for All is provided including longitudinal studies using matched control groups. A number of well designed and well implemented experimental and quasi-experimental studies are summarized in the proposal.

High quality research designs have used standard measures such as the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test and Woodcock Reading Mastery Test administered by testers not aware of treatment assignments. Demonstrated gains in multiple studies have been significant and notable(Proposal Pp. e13 to e18).

In addition to the evidence reported in the proposal, Success for All has been

considered by the What Works Clearinghouse which has recognized evidence of program impact.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 20

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.**
- (2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that**
 - (a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -**
 - (i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and**
 - (ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or**
 - (b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed**

quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

Success for all has provided a comprehensive program evaluation that addresses all of the major elements of the project.

1) The project evaluation to be conducted by MDRC is based on randomized controlled trials including 50 schools designated under NCLB for restructuring or corrective action that are randomly assigned to either treatment (SFA) or control groups.

2) Student growth will be assessed over four years and analysis will include subgroup impacts, cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes, and intensity of treatment for schools, and program implementation at the district level.

3) Comparison schools will be offered payments of \$20,000 to be used for any purpose.

4) Standard measures of reading ability will be used including the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Woodcock tests, and DIBELs as a reading fluency measure. Assessments will be administered by trained testers blind to the participation status of the students being tested.

5) A variety of proven non-cognitive measures will be used to assess implementation and track impacts as reported by teachers and school administrators. Annual impact evaluations will be provided and data files will be made available to other researchers.

Weaknesses

Much of the expansion and implementation will take place in Partner Districts where Success for All has already established programs in local schools. The expansion of the program in these districts may be to schools that might be considered as late adopter schools which may have desired to enter the program in the past but were unable to enter because they had lacked funds, lacked commitment to the program, or were given a lower priority for Success for All implementation by their school districts. The research design should take into account the fact that many of the participating districts and schools are already Success for All partners. Because of the scale-up nature of the program it is important to provide for exploration of the differences in implementation and success between districts and schools in Partner Districts and in districts and schools new to Success for All.

Success for All is a complicated program that requires substantial commitment and activity on the part of partner schools and districts. More detail is needed in the exploration of the fidelity of the program implementation and the relation of fidelity of implementation to program success. Fidelity is mentioned in the research design but it is not treated in depth.

Reader's Score: 14

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.**
- (2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.**
- (3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.**

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

Weaknesses

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Weaknesses

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;**
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and**
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2010 10:48 AM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 0:21 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Reader #3:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	19
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	15
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	_____

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
TOTAL	105	34

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #3:

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

An impressive array of large well constructed, rigorous studies, both experimental and quasi-experimental with excellent internal and external validity, has consistently demonstrated robust, positive results. The intervention has been particularly successful with at risk students. Success has been demonstrated through reading scores, retention rates, and assignment to special education.

Weaknesses

Reported effect sizes, while consistently positive, have varied considerably. However, the consensus indicates a robust effect which is somewhat modest in magnitude.

Reader's Score: 19

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the

key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

A highly credible, independent external evaluation of outcomes is planned. It will be a randomized control trial with a substantial sample of schools in corrective active or restructuring followed for a substantial term (4 years) serving about 3,000 students. It includes a strong HLM design with an appropriate selection of covariates. The accompanying process/implementation evaluation plan is rigorous.

The budget for the proposed evaluation is appropriate.

The prioritization of research questions is well done, minimizing the possibility of selective reporting of mixed results.

There is a strong array of exploratory research questions to be answered.

Evaluation of outcomes will employ standard measures of reading readiness and achievement (PPVY & WJIII) with strong established psychometric characteristics.

A reasonable plan for dissemination of results is in place with a restricted use data file to be made available to the research community.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

Weaknesses

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Weaknesses

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

(a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);

(b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and

(c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement

innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 0:21 AM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/07/2010 1:38 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Reader #4:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	9
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	0
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	12
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	12
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	5
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	7
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	1

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	1
TOTAL	105	48

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #4:

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

The application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

The unmet need presented in the application is to create partnerships with districts to hire local Success for All training staff so that by Year 2 of the project and into the future, program training can be conducted by district and school-based coaches.

Clear goals and strategies are stated for scale-up. The goals are simple, straightforward, and related to the project's priorities. The plan for accomplishing the goals is well-designed to achieve the outcomes of the project.

Weaknesses

The project is not a new innovation. According to the application, it is used in one thousand schools in 45 states and has been in operation since 1987. As a result, the "not already widely adopted" standard has not been met.

In spite of clear goals and strategies stated in the application, it is unclear how the partnership structure will develop district-to-district and school-to-school partnerships for sharing coaches. Information on the system or guidelines that will be used to insure equitable distribution of coaches between districts and, within districts, between and among schools would be helpful because the amount of coaching time available to schools and districts would affect project outcomes. Since this is at the heart of the scale-up effort, it should be spelled out in more detail.

Reader's Score: 9

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion B.

Weaknesses

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion B.

Reader's Score: 0

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

The applicant has a long history of experience with managing large, complex projects beginning in 1987. According to the application narrative, 100 Success for All schools are added every year and the program had a 50 percent annual growth rate in its first years of operation.

The program has expanded across grade levels and now goes from pre-school to middle school. In addition, a high school program is currently being piloted. The program also expanded from a focus on reading only to mathematics and writing.

The applicant has developed and managed an impressive and integrated infrastructure of support for schools and districts that is extensive and complex.

Data provided by the applicant supports its claim that use of the program has produced positive trends in student achievement. Studies ranging from 1993 to 2007 using a variety of reading tests consistently showed more gains for students using Success For All than for students not involved in the program. In addition, students in the program were less likely to be held back a grade or referred for special education services.

Weaknesses

In certain aspects of implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects, the applicant's past performance is not well established. These aspects include:

- a) The experience of the applicant in creating successful across district partnerships.
- b) The experience of the applicant in coordinating local coaching services across schools and districts. The example used in the narrative - schools in Atlanta, Georgia - does not indicate the number of schools involved nor how the budget and cost is shared among schools.
- c) The applicant's track record for building local supports at each site with speed and efficiency.

Reader's Score: 12

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.**
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.**
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.**
- (2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.**
- (3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student**

populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

The number of schools that will be added to the network of Success for All schools through the scale-up project is impressive and was reported in the narrative - 1100 schools. According to the application, all are high-poverty Title I-eligible schools with school wide status. The applicant estimates that one-half will be in corrective action under the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Good detail on the districts to be served by the project was provided in the narrative. The departments of education of two states that will consider Success for All as a turnaround model for their lowest performing elementary schools were also named. In addition, the applicant reports successful implementation in urban, rural, and public schools including public charter schools. This is useful information for determining feasibility and replicability.

The applicant indicates that some foundation-based funding has been secured for some of the districts and schools involved in the scale-up so that funding is available to assist with replication.

The cost per pupil was provided and seems to be reasonable and is borne out by budget calculations.

Dissemination is planned and will be accomplished through ads in education magazines, Education Week, and online education sites. In addition, purchasing booths at conferences, conducting local demonstrations of the program, hosting press conferences on results, and publishing blogs will also be used.

Weaknesses

Calculation of the numbers of students in the 1100 elementary schools to be served by the project could be overstated, especially in rural LEAs. The calculation is based on 500 students per elementary school which may be too high a figure.

Reader's Score: 12

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

The main funding source for Success for All has been Title I funds because of the program's focus on reading and intensive remediation for at-risk learners. Title I funds are a more stable funding source than foundation funds. As a result, Success for All will continue to identify and recommend Title I funds, rather than foundation dollars, for program continuance.

Success for All will add the new schools to its already existing network of schools thus incorporating them into the ongoing work of the organization.

Weaknesses

Title I funding is seen by many school districts as external to local school budgets contrary to the applicant's claim that the project is not dependent on external funding. As a result, if a district experiences cuts in Title I funds or schools become ineligible to receive Title I funds, problems with sustainability will occur.

No mention of the provision of training for local coaches beyond certification is made in the application. It is unclear how quality control and fidelity of implementation can be assured as part of the sustainability effort if

training does not continue after certification.

While the applicant cites partnerships with other states as an indication that the project will continue into the future, partnerships have only been secured with two departments of education in two states - Colorado and Pennsylvania - and letters of support from state officials indicate that these two states will use the partnership with Success for All as a possible turnaround model for their lowest-achieving elementary schools. No firm commitments are contained in the letters.

Letters of agreement from partnering districts are contractual and indicate that Success for All will provide funding for coaches through the 5 years of the project. No mention is made in the letters of the districts' continuing funding on their own when the project is over.

While the applicant included a multi-year financial plan in the budget narrative to scale up the program over the five years of the grant cycle, the plan did not provide evidence that the applicant has the financial resources to continue the program for schools and districts after the funding period.

Reader's Score: 5

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.**
- (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.**
- (3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.**

Strengths

A timeline with dates, activities, milestones, and deliverables is provided in the narrative on pages 39-40. Since this timeline will be incorporated into Memoranda of Understanding with districts, clear expectations for

performance and accountability are spelled out. This increases the likelihood that performance targets will be met.

The management plan is comprehensive. Key project personnel include a Project Director, a Co-Director, a Director of Partnerships, a Director of Field Operations, and a Dissemination Director. Personnel appear to have range of project management experiences with complex and growing projects as well as knowledge of the Success for All program. In addition, members of the central Success for All executive management staff who will support the project have extensive operational expertise, including budgeting, accounting, human resources, customer service, information technology, and marketing. A large coaching and training staff will also be used.

The independent evaluator appears to have the required qualifications for designing and conducting large scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies.

Weaknesses

Although, the narrative outlines coordination activities of the Success for All leaders, persons (or positions) responsible for project activities, milestones, and deliverables are not yet specified in the project's timeline. Clear assignment of duties and responsibilities is needed to insure that sustainability and scalability goals are adhered to and met.

Reader's Score: 7

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**

(c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

The project focuses on readiness in core academic subjects, developmental milestones are included in program outcomes for early learners, and alignment and articulation with the elementary program is part of the program.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 1

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Priority not addressed.

Weaknesses

Priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique

learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

The program focuses on the identification and remediation of struggling learners through one-on-one and small group instruction. It is a preventative approach to early learning difficulties experienced by special needs and limited English proficient learners.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Some rural LEAs are included in the project scale-up plan and a distance learning effort is proposed.

Weaknesses

It is unclear from the project narrative that all the schools involved in the scale-up effort are rural LEAs.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/07/2010 1:38 PM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/08/2010 3:38 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Reader #5:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	14
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	0
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	0
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	15
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	8
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	10
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	1

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	1
TOTAL	105	65

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 2: 84.396A

Reader #5:

Applicant: Success for All Foundation -- , - , (U396A100050)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

The project addresses serving Limited English Proficient students. The program also addresses benefits for students with vision, hearing, emotional, and learning disabilities. In addition, Success For All includes a Spanish version that provides solid evidence that the program focuses on English Language Learners. Many of the partner school districts that the project serves also have high numbers of LEP student populations.

Pages e9-e12 provide a detailed listing of 7 project goals. All of the goals are clearly stated and each goal is supported by strategies that are explicitly aligned with meeting all of the goals and objectives. The goals are listed in the abstract and then followed through in a separate section dedicated to the goals. The strategies that support the project are listed under each goal. As strategies are described under each goal, each strategy is described and connected to activities which support the goals and align with the outcomes of the project

Weaknesses

Success For All is not a new program. It has been widely adopted in a variety of schools throughout the United States for the last 2 decades.

Reader's Score: 14

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion B.

Weaknesses

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion B.

Reader's Score: 0

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

The proposal provides evidence of the applicant's past performance for implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects on page e17 and e18 where it indicates the applicant has developed and maintained a program has been functioning since the 1990s and has added an average of 100 schools per year for the past 20 years.

On pages e13-e17, the applicant provides numerous data demonstrating a plethora of increased student achievement successes sustained with schools from 1998 to the current date.

There is documented evidence that the program has increased student achievement in math and reading at the preschool, elementary and middle school levels. In addition, the program is looking to pilot at the high school level. On page e20 the proposal sites studies which support the increases in student achievement for all the student populations cited in the grant proposal

The proposed applicant has demonstrated the ability to replicate the program with success for more than twenty years. The project is already successfully operating in multiple settings with different types of students. The reference on page e5 that there will be a "facilitator in each school who helps all teachers with program implementation, ongoing professional development, and school wide assessments" demonstrates a strength for facilitating placement of high-quality teachers in demonstrating how to gather and use meaningful data and provides strong evidence for successful fidelity of replication of the program.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion D.

Weaknesses

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion D.

Reader's Score: 0

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

The vision of the project is recognized on page e28. In this portion of the proposal the notes state that 1,100 additional schools will be added over 4 years which would include approximately 555,000 students.

On pages e29-e33, the proposal lists a variety of urban and rural school districts that have been involved with the project over time. The range of these districts provides a span that has successfully replicated the project at national, regional and state levels.

On page e34, the grant proposal clearly identifies the cost per pupil and estimates that significant differences in per pupil costs above the cost of reaching out to 500,000 students should not result in significant increases. Overall, the estimated cost of the project is aligned with the large numbers of students that the applicant proposes to reach with the project.

Documentation is provided relative to districts and states that have been part of the program and projects and these entities have committed to continue support and spread of effect for the project.

On page e34 the applicant proposes to "disseminate information in many ways". For example, the application indicates that Success for All, university partners and teachers will publish articles in well respected educational journals, work with journalists and technology media, and participate in major local and national conferences. The applicant also proposes to work closely with state education agencies and cohorts of districts as well as partner coalitions.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

The grant proposal provides evidence of a detailed multi-year timeline of activities and financial and operational budgets. In addition the applicant demonstrates commitment for the long-term sustainability of the project with well-known established partners. The applicant indicates that there is little dependence on federal and private foundations and that the Success For All program seeks out ways to be financially self-supporting which provides further verification for the successful sustainability of the project beyond five years. In addition, it is clear in the documentation that the program has successfully sustained itself for the past 20 years indicating a clear history of success in this area.

By training teacher coaches to adopt the project purposes, the coaches will pass the on-going benefits of the project onto the students, teachers, and administrators and the scale-up strategy can continue to build capacity beyond the years of funding.

On page e35, the scale-up project will "invest in infrastructure." The application proposed investing in infrastructure such as professional development for district-based coaches along with the development of materials and supplies designed to assure fidelity of implementation.

Weaknesses

On page e36, the proposal states, "if all works as planned we expect to maintain these trainers." With declining economic status for districts, it is questionable as to how schools will afford to continue and sustain funding if funding and budgets allotted to districts are cut back or eliminated. Because of lack of funding furloughing of teachers is occurring throughout the nation.

Much of the program sustainability is based upon utilization of Title I funding. It is unclear how the sustainability will be maintained if all does not work out as planned.

Reader's Score: 8

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

The documentation provided relative to personnel demonstrate that all personnel have training and experience in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects. On page e37, the proposal indicates that the management team that has been in place for the past 20 years will continue to maintain the management of the project activities. In addition, resumes and references for each key management person is provided and detailed paragraphs on pages e42-44 document each person's experiences in designing and conducting large-scale rapidly growing projects.

The independent evaluator has been named as part of the project and has documented experience with evaluating large scale programs. Pages e41 and e42 highlight the credentials and references attesting to the successes of the

independent evaluator. In addition, the independent evaluators have documented credentials demonstrating their expertise with experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Pages e38-e39 succinctly outline detailed timelines and milestones for the project. The project timelines and milestones indicate that the project will meet all goals and objectives on time and within the proposed budget. The documented experience of the program staff in scaling up proven reform designs in managing projects of this nature and in successfully accomplishing large scale project tasks in a timely manner and at the same time assuring long-term sustainability.

Current partners will be maintained. In addition local state and national partners will be recruited to meet the goals of the project. On page e40, the proposal documents the number of staff and field coaches available to successfully handle the implementation and execution of the project.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

Strengths

On page e0, the application states that "The Success for All elementary program is used in grades kindergarten through grade 6. The preschool program focuses on oral language, social, emotional and cognitive readiness... and makes effective transitions from preschool to kindergarten and beyond." The application demonstrates this commitment through the literacy success of the partners associated with the Success for All program. Additionally, the new schools that are being recruited for the project have high numbers of students at the prekindergarten through grade 3 levels. The program provides for effective transition from preschool to kindergarten and beyond by focusing on language, cognitive development, and transitions, while adding an emphasis on phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension, which then builds as children progress through the grades.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 1

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;**
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and**
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.**

Strengths

Priority not addressed.

Weaknesses

Priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

The program demonstrates a strong emphasis on increasing literacy gains for students who are identified to receive Limited English Proficient services.

A Spanish version of the program is offered for LEP students along with accommodations and transition from Spanish to English and English to Spanish strategies.

On page e1 the supporting evidence for successful studies linked to LEP students is highlighted. The research provided throughout the grant has provided evidence of high rates of increased student achievement especially for LEP students in kindergarten through grade 8.

Weaknesses

There is limited data found in the grant proposal to support that the Success For All program has been the prime strategy for increasing college and career readiness.

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or

improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

The grant proposal will serve students in rural and isolated areas. Partner schools in rural areas are named in the grant proposal by the applicant.

On page e2, distance education is being utilized as one of the strategies to increase contact with students and provide professional development for teachers and principals in rural areas. Also on this page the applicant provides a listing of partners served in small towns and rural areas.

Weaknesses

The project proposes that the program will meet the needs of students in all areas. The majority of partners documented with success in the proposal are urban settings and the majority of successful data are provided for urban areas. However, there is not an overall underlying conviction of successful past experience components dedicated to students in rural areas.

Urban areas receive direct contact interventions. The rural areas receive distance learning interventions. Considering school district budgets, personnel and program cuts, there is not dedicated funding for rural districts that may not be able to afford distance learning technology.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/08/2010 3:38 PM

Investing In Innovation (i3) Fund

Scaling Teach For America:
Growing the Talent Force Working to Ensure *All* Our Nation's
Students Have Access to a Quality Education

TEACHFORAMERICA



Submitted to:
The U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement

May 11, 2010

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A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design

In America, education is supposed to be the great equalizer and the primary vehicle for upward mobility. But, the reality today is that all too often, where children are born determines their educational prospects. Across the country, the 14 million children living in poverty¹ have academic and, therefore, life prospects that are dramatically different than those of their peers in wealthier communities. This gap starts early: children living in low-income communities are already two to three grades behind their higher-income peers by the time they reach fourth grade.² And it widens as students progress to high school: about 50% of students in low-income communities will not graduate from high school by the time they are 18 years old³; those who do graduate perform, on average, at the level of eighth graders in higher-income communities.⁴ By age 24, only 9% of young people from low-income communities have attained a bachelor's degree, compared with 75% of people from high-income families.⁵

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008," 2009.

² U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2009 Reading Assessments.

³ Editorial Projects in Education / Education Week, "Diploma Counts," 2009.

⁴ On average, 12th graders whose family income makes them eligible for free or reduced lunch scored at roughly the same level on the 2005 NAEP reading assessments as 8th graders from wealthier families.

⁵ Kati Haycock, "Promise Abandoned: How Policy Choices and Institutional Practices Restrict College Opportunities," Education Trust, 2006.

President Obama said in a landmark speech on education last year, “From the moment students enter a school, the most important factor in their success is not the color of their skin or the income of their parents, it’s the person standing at the front of the classroom.”⁶ Research consistently shows that teacher quality has the most important school-based effect on student outcomes.⁷ Yet schools serving low-income students struggle to attract sufficient numbers of highly effective teachers. Students growing up in poverty need truly exceptional teachers to help them overcome the extra challenges they face relative to their wealthier peers. They need more teachers with the conviction, skills, and abilities to change the academic and life trajectories of students. This project will provide more of those teachers.

Teach For America serves the highest-need students in the country. In the schools where we place teachers⁸, about 90% of students are African American or Latino/Hispanic and roughly

⁶ Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on a Complete and Competitive American Education,” March 10, 2009.

⁷ See for example, Steven G. Rivkin, Eric A. Hanushek, and John F. Kain. “Teachers, Schools, and Academic Achievement.” *Econometrica* 73 (2005): 417-458.

⁸ Teach For America places teachers in around 140 school districts and an additional 200 charter schools. For this i3 grant, we are partnering with 148 LEAs. We anticipate adding additional LEAs as partners through outreach to other current placement districts over the summer and to new sites throughout the project period. We will add LEA partners based several criteria including student achievement gaps, the concentration of high-need students, the vision for education reform in the local community, and capacity to place Teach For America teachers. The new site development team makes recommendations to the operating committee, which formally approves new site partners.

80% receive free or reduced-price lunch.⁹ According to a 2004 study by Mathematica Research Inc., students in Teach For America teachers' classrooms began the year, on average, at the 14th percentile against the national norm.¹⁰

Teach For America fills critical needs for the highest-poverty districts in the country. Currently, Teach For America teachers represent between 10% and 15% of new teachers hired in high-poverty schools across our 35 regions, covering most of the country's major urban and rural areas. (Teach For America's "regions" are cities or contiguous rural areas. These regions often contain multiple LEAs. See Appendix H for a list of all of our regions and the LEAs and charter partners within them.) As more and more districts place a strong emphasis on significantly advancing student achievement, they seek more teachers with the same orientation. Teach For America meets our partners' need for a steady, reliable source of highly effective, student-achievement-focused teachers.

As our teacher corps continues to grow, we not only will increase the supply of quality teachers for students in need, but also will expand dramatically the pipeline of future school and district leaders with the experience, skills, and conviction to effect transformational change.

A(1) An exceptional approach to the priorities

Absolute priority number one. Since 1990, Teach For America has recruited, selected, trained and supported around 25,000 new public school teachers for all subject areas and grade

⁹ The demographic information comes from the websites greatschools.org and schoolmatters.com. Using these websites, we looked up the demographic information for each school in which we placed corps members during the 2008-09 school year.

¹⁰ Paul T. Decker, Daniel P. Mayer, and Steven Glazerman, "The Effects of Teach For America on Students: Findings from a National Evaluation," Mathematica Research Inc., 2004.

levels, placing them with partner schools and districts serving the highest-need students in the country. Teach For America's work, and the work proposed in our Investing in Innovation scale-up project described in detail below, explicitly addresses Absolute Priority 1 – Innovations that Support Effective Teachers and Principals.

This i3 project also will allow Teach For America to have a broader and deeper impact in the following competitive priorities, discussed in more detail later in this proposal:

- Competitive Preference Priority 5 – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes
- Competitive Preference Priority 7 – Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students
- Competitive Preference Priority 8 – Innovations that Serve Schools in Rural LEAs

Teach For America's approach. Teach For America brings a unique combination of methodology, experience, and capacity to address the need for additional effective teachers and leaders in high-need schools and districts. While many LEAs now access new teachers from local alternate routes, Teach For America remains the sole source for exceptional national prospects, with a comprehensive and aligned training and support program that works closely with teachers for two years of classroom teaching and beyond.

At a high level, there are six distinctive characteristics that make Teach For America's approach exceptional in serving the highest-need students across the country:

1. **Grounded in student achievement outcomes, with multiple rating categories of effectiveness:** We measure the success of our teachers by the degree to which their students achieve academic gains, with the expectation that they will lead their students

forward at least 1.5 years in one academic year. Additionally, we recruit and select individuals based on their potential to be highly effective teachers in low-income communities, and we train, support, and develop them to do so. With more than a decade of experience explicitly linking student gains data to our recruitment, selection, training, and support practices, we have accumulated significant knowledge regarding what it takes to produce highly effective teachers for high-need schools. This central focus on student achievement places more students on the path to academic and life success.

2. **A national infrastructure, strategy, and brand for recruiting the most committed leaders from across the country to teach in LEAs in low-income communities:** We recruit and select top recent college graduates to the classroom, most of whom would not otherwise have considered teaching. Stephanie Day, the recently named Washington, D.C., teacher of the year, provides a case in point: “I was considering the Ph.D. program in sociology at the University of Oregon and Teach For America contacted me. We had a conversation about the education challenges of students in the District of Columbia. That conversation changed my life and I eventually moved to Washington, D.C., to begin my teaching career.” Our national infrastructure and reputation allow us to compete for talent with the best recruiters in the country – top private companies and prestigious programs such as the Peace Corps. Thus, through a strong brand, aggressive outreach, and careful selection, we provide high-need LEAs with access to a unique national pipeline of new teachers.
3. **Pre-service and ongoing professional development based on practical experience in low-income schools with a clear vision and road map for success in this context:** With thousands of teachers in hundreds of underserved schools across the country, our

curriculum and support models have emerged from, and continue to be informed by, practical experience in a specific context: students disproportionately affected by the achievement gap growing up in low-income communities. At the cornerstone of our program is our Teaching As Leadership framework, which maps out what successful teaching looks like in this context at increasing stages of proficiency.¹¹

4. **Explicit focus on recruiting, placing, training, and supporting diverse, effective teachers who fill our most pressing needs within high-need schools:** Teach For America is deeply committed to increasing the racial and economic diversity of our corps to ensure that more high-need students have positive role models who share their backgrounds and experiences. We also work to build a force of teachers to meet our nation's most pressing needs in early childhood, special education, and math and science – as well as in remote rural communities.
5. **Demonstrated ability to grow rapidly to meet the demand for great new teachers and educational leaders.** By leveraging significant private funding, and working closely with our LEA partners, Teach For America has grown from placing 875 new teachers in the 1999-00 school year to nearly 4,100 in the 2009-10 school year.
6. **Experience developing the mindsets, skills, knowledge, and opportunities that foster the leadership of alumni in closing the achievement gap.** Teach For America recruits individuals with leadership skills, ensures they gain the foundational experiences and insights that are critical to great educational leadership and advocacy, and then works in partnership with other educational institutions to accelerate their career paths as excellent

¹¹ Please see Appendix H for detailed information about the Teaching As Leadership framework and rubric.

teachers, school principals and district administrators, policy and advocacy leaders, innovators and leaders in other sectors working to address educational inequity. Our teachers become members of a community that reinforces their long-term commitment to advancing student achievement and educational opportunities for all students.

Collectively, these characteristics create a student-achievement-centered, data-driven, scalable model for supplying the highest-need schools with a growing and unique source of effective teachers who are recruited, trained, and supported to lead their students to significant academic achievement, even in their first year in the classroom, where they also gain the experience and conviction required to become the next generation of educational leaders.

A(2) Project design: Reaching 850,000 students by the 2014-15 school year

Teach For America teachers, whom we call corps members, teach for two years in low-income urban and rural communities across the country; today, corps members reach approximately 450,000 students in 28 states and Washington, D.C. At the same time, there are 5,000 “alumni” teachers (alumni are individuals who completed our two-year program) serving hundreds of thousands of students directly and 460 alumni who are school leaders reaching an estimated 500,000 high-need students. Through this i3 project, Teach For America – in partnership with 148 LEAs nationwide and with broad support from public and private sector champions – will grow our teacher corps by more than 80% by September 2014. During this four-year project (payment to the evaluator will extend into a fifth year), more than 28,000¹² talented, young leaders will enter high-need classrooms as new teachers via Teach For America, and we will achieve the following outcomes:

¹² This figure includes an estimated 5,300 in the 2011-12 school year, 6,000 in 2012-13, 6,700 in 2013-14, and 7,500 in 2014-15.

- Grow our corps to 13,500 teachers (first- and second-year corps members) reaching 850,000 students in high-need schools
- Train and support teachers so that a majority of them earn the rating of “highly effective”¹³ during their first or second year of teaching
- Establish proven pipelines for recruiting, training, placing, and developing “highly effective” teachers in 52-54 regions across the country, spanning at least 35 states and Washington, D.C., and accounting for approximately 20% of new hires in high-need schools across these regions

Section C details the methods and strategies Teach for America has developed over the past 20 years to identify, recruit, select, place, train, and develop highly effective teachers and accelerate their impact as leaders. It also outlines our past success scaling this approach. In this section, we lay out our goals and strategy to scale up our unique and proven approach.

Specifically, we will pursue the following goals to increase the supply of effective teachers and leaders in the highest need schools and communities:

Table 1: I3 Program Goals

Grant period	October 2010 – September 2014					
School year	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Growth Goals						
Number of students impacted	450,000	500,000	600,000	675,000	750,000	850,000
New teachers recruited, selected, trained, and placed for coming year	4,500	5,300	6,000	6,700	7,500	8,000

¹³ We define “highly effective” teachers as those who move their students forward at least one-and-a-half years and “effective” teachers as those who move their students forward at least one year. Please see page 34 for more detailed information about how we define these categories.

Total teachers (1 st and 2 nd year)	7,300	8,300	9,600	11,000	12,300	13,500
Number of regions	35	39	43-44	46-47	49-50	52-54
<u>Impact Goals</u>						
% of highly effective teachers (1st years/2nd years)	44%/55%	45%/56%	46%/57%	47%/58%	48%/59%	50%/60%
# of highly effective teachers (1 st year and 2 nd years)	3,600	41,00	4,900	5,700	6,500	7,500
% of highly effective and effective teachers (1st years/2nd years)	70%/80%	71%/81%	72%/82%	73%/83%	74%/84%	75%/85%
# of highly effective and effective teachers (1 st years and 2 nd years)	5,500	6,300	7,300	8,500	9,600	10,900

This project will focus on scaling our core program strategies and activities: recruiting and selecting high potential teachers; partnering with LEAs to ensure our teachers are placed in the highest-need schools; training our new teachers, providing intensive professional development during their two years in the classroom, and measuring and managing their impact on student achievement; and accelerating their leadership for educational progress.

Recruitment and selection. Through a national recruitment effort that spans 370 college campuses and nearly 130 recruitment partner organizations, Teach For America recruits, selects, and matriculates outstanding recent college graduates, only one in six of whom would have

entered the teaching profession if not for Teach For America¹⁴, to teach in schools serving low-income communities. To field a corps of 8,000 first-year teachers by the 2014-15 school year, maintaining quality as we grow, we must increase applications, though at a slower rate than in the past. This year, over 46,000 individuals applied to our program for just over 4,500 positions. Since we currently have a wait list of over 1,000 applicants who would be admitted under our selection criteria, we will attain some growth without growing applications, but by 2012, we will need to see annual growth in applications of at least 10% (we have grown applications between 32% to 42% each of the last three years).

We will scale our recruitment and selection efforts effectively and efficiently by:

- **Gathering, analyzing, and utilizing significant amounts of data to identify the most promising prospects and personally convince them to apply to Teach For America.**

We will build a database of more than 300,000 prospective applicants each year to enable proactive, targeted outreach to the most desirable candidates. This academic year, we held one-on-one meetings with 24,700 college seniors; we have already met with nearly 5,000 undergraduates interested in applying in future years.

- **Seizing untapped potential on college campuses.** Across the universe of undergraduate campuses, we see significant opportunity to emulate our success at our top performing schools. For instance, Harvard College is our leading Ivy League campus (18% of the senior class applied to Teach For America), the University of North Carolina is our leading “most selective” public university (7.7% of the senior class applied), and the University of Wisconsin-Madison is our leading “more selective” public university

¹⁴ This figure is based on a survey distributed to individuals who were accepted to the 2010 corps.

partner (5.7% of the senior class applied). By replicating strategies used on these campuses, we will increase applications at their peer institutions. We also will grow by increasing the number of full-time campus recruiters from less than 60 in the fall of 2010 to nearly 80 in the fall of 2014, which will allow us to double our presence on the highest potential campuses and increase applications from college seniors by 30% to 35%.

- **Continuing to grow applications among graduate students and professionals at the early stages of their careers.** Since 2007, applications from graduate students and professionals have more than quadrupled; this year over 18,000 graduate students and professionals applied to Teach For America. We have just begun developing targeted outreach to these markets through on-campus meetings, strategic partnerships with professional networks, and tapping into online social media strategies and faith-based communities and see great potential in building upon our brand and reputation to refine and expand our efforts.

Our strong reputation and track record of success gives us confidence we will be able to achieve our recruitment and selection goals. College students recently ranked Teach For America as the #9 most desirable employer on a survey of all employers (Google was #1, and Teach For America was ahead of prominent private companies such as Microsoft and Goldman Sachs).¹⁵ Additionally, Teach For America was the top employer on 25 college campuses last year, including Dartmouth, Georgetown, Marquette, Pepperdine, Spelman, Tulane, Vanderbilt, University of Chicago, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Building on this strong foundation, we are optimistic about executing our plan.

¹⁵ BusinessWeek, “The Hottest Employers 2010,” April 30, 2010.

Placements in LEA districts and opening new regions. We will secure the necessary placements to grow to 13,500 first- and second-year teachers in the 2014-15 school year by closely monitoring, managing, and responding to demand from new and existing communities, districts, and charter schools.

- We will open at least 12 new regions by the 2014-15 school year (3 to 5 per year), placing at least 1,000 new teachers in regions that do not currently have Teach For America teachers. We will focus initially on 20 prospective regions that have expressed interest and demonstrated need.
- We will work closely with our 35 existing regions to grow their LEA partnerships and placements. Twenty of our 35 regions currently have concrete plans and strong potential to grow in 2011 and beyond.
- We will seize new opportunities for growth created by Race To The Top (RTTT) and increased demand for effective teachers in state plans. Funding for human capital strategies that include Teach For America were proposed by 11 of the 16 finalists (CO, DC, DE, FL, GA, IL, KY, LA, NC, RI, and TN)¹⁶, including both of the first-round winners. Were every application to be fully funded, demand associated with these RTTT applications would result in estimated incremental growth in our corps in these regions of nearly 2,000 teachers between now and 2015.

¹⁶ In all of these instances, Teach For America was either explicitly mentioned in state budgets or would be competitive for human capital funding pending a state level procurement process.

- We will closely monitor local placement and funding landscapes – how many placements and LEA contracts we have secured, and the prospects and probability for additional placements – growing or contracting our local teacher corps according to demand.

In addition to the growing demand for our teachers and our 20 years of experience partnering with LEAs and opening new regions, our recent placement success supports the viability of our plan. Despite significant state and district budget cuts and unfavorable hiring landscapes in many states, we opened six new regions and placed 4,100 new teachers this past school year, up from 3,700 the previous year. This coming school year we will open four new regions and place a still larger corps.

Training and support of teachers to ensure effectiveness. We will continue to produce more highly effective teachers each year by scaling our core infrastructure, particularly our summer training institute and program director¹⁷ models; making more effective use of high-touch technology; and continuously improving our measurement system, trainings, and supports.

- We will open an additional summer training institute in 2012 and another in 2014 to accommodate our growing corps, utilizing the systems and processes developed in successfully opening five new institutes in the last five years.
- We will hire and train additional program directors each year, continuously improving the quality of our coaching model and taking advantage of our growing alumni base – currently 17,000 strong – as a readily accessible and high-quality pool of talent.

¹⁷ Program directors are regional program staff members who were successful corps members themselves and who serve as instructional coaches for corps members. For more information about our program directors, please see page 33.

- We will expand and enhance our online Teaching and Learning Center, based on very positive and constructive feedback from corps members, program staff, and alumni teachers. The Teaching and Learning Center is part of a an online portal called TFANet where corps members and alumni have access to information, tools, and resources designed to enhance their effectiveness as teachers and where corps members can exchange ideas and questions with one another.
- We will develop, refine, and roll out a new approach to measuring and managing the effectiveness of our teachers, based on their performance relative to top teachers nationwide. As the common core standards and assessments work develops, we will incorporate those into our approach.
- We will offer more and better subject- and grade-level specific training and support through more tailored planning and instructional tools, online communities and resources, and more specialized program director assignments (e.g. in larger regions, program directors will increasingly specialize according to grade levels or subject matter expertise when possible).
- We will work to ensure that every corps member has a full suite of rigorous diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to inform and improve classroom instruction.
- We will continue to research the drivers of teacher performance and improvement to inform program design and development, including our selection model and recruitment approach.

These strategies will enable us not only to scale our teacher training and development model as our teacher corps grows, but also to continue to increase the number and percentage of “highly effective” teachers each year by providing them with ready access to high-quality,

increasingly tailored resources, learning communities, and support while holding them accountable for achieving results with their students on par with the most effective teachers across the country.

Accelerating alumni leadership. We will continue to provide support to alumni who remain as teachers in classrooms, and to accelerate and increase the impact of our alumni who aspire to become leaders in schools and school systems through expanding our educational leadership initiatives. This is particularly critical as our alumni force will grow from 17,000 to over 30,000 during the course of this project. We will:

- Pilot alumni teacher activities related to recognizing top performing teachers through a national teacher awards program, facilitating opportunities for having a voice in the education reform movement, and supporting professional growth
- Deepen relationships with principals, district leaders, and charter management organizations to help them attract and retain our alumni in their talent pipelines
- Work with states and LEA partners develop and launch a district leadership initiative to meet the demand for individuals with the skills and experiences necessary to be transformational leaders

Thus, in growing our corps by more than 80% over the course of this project, we will be expanding the pool of highly effective teachers, and of future school and district leaders, for many years to come.

B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect

B(1) Strength of the evidence on Teach For America's impact

There is a growing body of research documenting the positive effect that Teach For America teachers have on their students' academic achievement. Research consistently shows that corps members' students' academic results are stronger than those of students of other novice teachers at statistically significant levels. Additionally, some studies show that students of corps members outperform students of veteran teachers. These results are confirmed by both a large-scale experimental study as well as numerous quasi-experimental studies.

Experimental.

At the elementary-school level, Teach For America corps members' positive impact on student achievement is most rigorously supported in a 2004 large-scale randomized controlled study published by Mathematica Policy Research Inc., a highly regarded research firm with extensive experience in successfully implementing experimental education studies.¹⁸

The Mathematica researchers concluded that Teach For America corps members had a positive impact on their students' achievement in math: "Average math scores were significantly higher among TFA students than among control students." Teach For America teachers achieved larger math achievement gains than did the non-Teach For America teachers, including experienced teachers; in comparing the growth of Teach For America students and the growth of non-Teach For America students, the difference was statistically significant. The researchers concluded that the impact of Teach For America teachers was equivalent to an effect size of about 0.15, or approximately one additional month of instruction.

¹⁸ Decker, Mayer, and Glazerman.

When the Teach For America teachers were compared only to the novice non-Teach For America teachers (novice teachers were defined as being in their first three years of teaching), the effect size was 0.26. The authors noted that this impact of having a Teach For America teacher compared with another novice teacher was roughly equivalent to reducing class size by eight students.

In reading, the students of Teach For America teachers experienced about the same growth as the students of non-Teach For America teachers.

In the study, researchers compared student outcomes of Teach For America teachers with student outcomes of other teachers in the same schools and at the same grades. The researchers randomly assigned students in grades 1 to 5 to their classrooms before the start of the school year to ensure that the classes were essentially identical in terms of average characteristics of the students – that way, any differences in average student outcomes could be attributed to differences in teachers.

The study was done in two stages. First, the researchers conducted a pilot study in our Baltimore region during the 2001-02 school year. Then, they conducted a full-scale evaluation in five additional urban and rural regions during the 2002-03 school year: Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, New Orleans, and the Mississippi Delta. (This sample included 6 of the 15 regions in which Teach For America placed teachers at the time the study was designed.)

The strength of this research design reinforces the causal conclusions of the study (high internal validity) as well as the ability to generalize the findings to represent the impact of Teach For America teachers on student achievement on a national scale (high external validity).

Quasi-Experimental.

North Carolina (high school): The most persuasive study documenting the impact of Teach For America corps members on student achievement at the high-school level was conducted in 2008 (and updated in 2009) by the Urban Institute and the National Center for the Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (CALDER).¹⁹ Researchers found that when looking across eight subjects at the high school level, the impact of a Teach For America teacher is equivalent to an effect size of 0.10. This impact was two to three times the size of the impact of having a teacher with three or more years of experience relative to a novice teacher. When looking at science only, the effect of Teach For America teachers over non-Teach For America teachers was 0.18. Concluding that corps members had a stronger impact on student achievement than all other non-Teach For America teachers, including teachers certified in their field and more experienced teachers, researchers wrote: “Disadvantaged secondary students would be better off with TFA teachers, especially in math and science, than with fully licensed in-field teachers with three or more years of experience.”

Using end-of-course exam data from the 2000-01 to 2006-07 school years from 23 LEAs in the state, researchers estimated the effect of Teach For America teachers compared to traditional-route teachers. They were able to link end-of-course state exam data to individual teachers for eight subjects. Teach For America teachers in this study were first- and second-year corps members; the non-Teach For America teachers in this study were experienced and novice teachers, all certified.

¹⁹ Zeyu Xu, Jane Hannaway, and Colin Taylor, “Making a Difference? The Effects of Teach for America in High School,” Urban Institute/CALDER, 2008-09.

This quasi-experimental study used a sophisticated methodology developed by well regarded researchers²⁰ for analyzing outcome data without prior year test scores²¹ that concluded that student ability varies little by subject in North Carolina high schools. The Urban Institute/CALDER researchers also found that Teach For America teachers are assigned to more academically challenged classrooms and, on average, their classes have a much higher concentration of minority students. The study was reviewed by the Institute for Educational Sciences' What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), which concluded it meets the WWC evidence standards with reservations.²² The researchers re-analyzed the data in 2009 with a larger sample and with additional comparison groups and came to the same conclusions.

²⁰ Charles T. Clotfelter, Helen F. Ladd, and Jacob L. Vigdor, "Teacher Credentials and Student Achievement in High School: A Cross-Subject Analysis with Student Fixed Effects," Urban Institute/CALDER, 2007.

²¹ Given the nature of high school courses (typically a student only takes a subject once) there are no lagged or prior year test scores available, so the researchers identified alternate models for isolating teacher impact.

²² The What Works Clearinghouse reviewers noted that students in the high school classrooms may have been non-randomly assigned to teachers and as a result differences in student abilities may influence the results attributed to individual teachers. Teach For America corps members are assigned to classrooms with lower-performing students. Therefore, this scenario would likely underestimate the corps members' impact on student achievement, not overestimate it. The reviewers also noted that the teacher-student links are not based on classroom rosters for specific courses taught. However, the researchers underwent significant efforts to ensure that the

In addition to these two larger studies, there are a growing number of smaller-scale studies from across the country showing that Teach For America teachers have a positive impact on their students' achievement.

New York City (middle school): In 2009, a value-added study of middle-school math teachers in New York City found that Teach For America math teachers are more effective than other beginning math teachers.²³ The study included new teachers from traditional teacher-preparation programs, the NYC Teaching Fellows, the NYC Teaching Fellows Math Immersion program, and Teach For America. Researchers concluded that Teach For America teachers' impact on student achievement relative to all other new teachers teaching middle-school math was positive and statistically significant. The study also found that the students of Teach For America corps members were entering their classrooms significantly further behind than students taught by teachers from any other pathway.

New Teacher Comparisons. Several states have begun to look at the effectiveness of particular teacher pathways into the profession. When Teach For America is one of the programs included in comparative analysis, our teachers are among the strongest new teachers using measures of student achievement.

matching data was adequate, including running analyses only for those teachers for whom they had a confident match, and the results were consistent.

²³ Don Boyd, Pam Grossman, Karen Hammerness, Hamp Lankford, Susanna Loeb, Matt Ronfeldt, and Jim Wyckoff, "Recruiting Effective Math Teachers, How Do Math Immersion Teachers Compare?: Evidence from New York City," 2009.

Louisiana: For the last several years, the state of Louisiana has been conducting a value-added study of teacher-preparation programs to assess the effectiveness of each preparation program based on the achievement of students taught by new teachers from that program.²⁴

In 2009, the researchers conducted an analysis of Teach For America teachers using data of students in grades 4 to 9 from the 2004-5 to 2006-07 school years from longitudinal databases linking students, teachers, and courses.²⁵ (The researchers used grades 4 through 9 because those are the grade levels in which state-administered standardized tests are available for each spring and the preceding year.) The Teach For America teachers were compared to all non-Teach For America teachers, and also separately to veteran non-Teach For America teachers, and to novice non-Teach For America teachers.

Researchers found that Teach For America teachers were more effective than novice non-Teach For America teachers, and were as effective as veteran non-Teach For America teachers across the state in math, science, reading, and language arts. The researchers concluded that the positive results surpassed what traditionally would be expected of new or, in many cases, veteran teachers: “Overall, the data suggest that TFA corps members may be more comparable to experienced certified teachers than new teachers in their effectiveness.”

²⁴ The reports from the Value-Added Teacher Preparation Program Assessment Model are available on Louisiana’s Board of Regents’ website.

²⁵ George H. Noell and Kristin A. Gansle, “Teach For America Teachers’ Contribution to Student Achievement in Louisiana in Grades 4-9: 2004-2005 to 2006-2007,” 2009.

North Carolina: In 2010, researchers from the University of North Carolina system completed a study of pathways into teaching in North Carolina.²⁶ The study was designed to understand better the impact on student achievement of graduates from the UNC traditional teacher preparation system, which is the leading provider of teachers in the state, compared with individuals from other pathways, including Teach For America. The researchers' sample included more than 700,000 students and more than 18,000 teachers with less than five years of teaching from all school districts in North Carolina.

The researchers conducted 99 different analyses to compare the UNC graduates with teachers from other pathways. Teachers from other pathways had a bigger impact on student achievement that did the UNC graduates in only eight of those comparisons – and of those eight comparisons, five were comparisons with Teach For America corps members.

The researchers concluded that Teach For America corps members had a greater impact on student achievement than traditionally prepared UNC graduates in middle school math and in high school math, science, and English. At every grade level and subject studied, Teach For America corps members did as well as or better than the traditionally prepared UNC graduates. The researchers suggested that Teach For America “represents an opportunity for UNC and North Carolina to learn and improve” and recommended that UNC identify elements of the Teach For America model that would be “portable and scalable” to UNC preparation programs. The results are consistent with the above study by CALDER/Urban Institute but include more recent data and additional subject areas than were available in the prior study.

²⁶ Gary T. Henry and Charles L. Thompson, “Impacts of Teacher Preparation on Student Test Scores in North Carolina: Teacher Portals,” The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill / Carolina Institute for Public Policy, 2010.

The research literature on teacher experience has found that, on average, novice teachers do not perform as well as more experienced teachers. Given that high-poverty schools are more likely to have inexperienced teachers than lower poverty schools, this means low-income students may bear a larger burden of any negative effects of teacher inexperience. However, as the research above demonstrates, new teachers from Teach For America typically do better than other new teachers and do as well as, or often better, than experienced teachers in advancing student achievement.

B(2) Magnitude and importance of the potential effects

Research has shown that most educational interventions yield low to moderate effect sizes. The effect sizes from the most rigorous studies on Teach For America as discussed above are among the highest of those found for popular educational interventions. Notably, since conducting rigorous research on teacher performance may require several years of data, many existing studies focus on corps members who participated in the program several years ago. Given the significant organizational resources we have dedicated in recent years and will continue to dedicate to improving the effectiveness of our corps members, we are optimistic we will see even larger effects in the coming years through this scale-up effort.

The effect sizes for several common education interventions are as follows:

- **National Board Certified Teachers:** Two longitudinal state-level studies of the impact of having a National Board certified teacher in Florida and North Carolina detected effect sizes of .02-.04 in reading and .01-.07 in math.²⁷

²⁷ Dan Goldhaber and Emily Anthony, “National Board Certification as a Signal of Effective Teaching,” Urban Institute, 2006; Douglas N. Harris and Tim R. Sass, “The Effects of NBPTS-Certified Teachers on Student Achievement,” Urban Institute, 2008.

- **Charter schools:** A recent study of New York City charter schools conducted by Caroline Hoxby of Stanford found the average gain per year spent in a charter school is .09 in math and .06 in English.²⁸
- **Class size reduction:** Using the most widely cited research on class-size reduction, an experimental study in Tennessee found the impact of reducing class size from 22-26 students to 13-17 at the early grades ranged from .1 to .2 in reading and math.²⁹ A study on teacher credentials in North Carolina found that the impact of a class size reduction of five students was .01 to .025 – much smaller than the impact above and than the effect of teacher quality measures.³⁰
- **Master’s degree:** Most research on teachers having master’s degrees as a measure of teacher quality finds no impact.³¹

²⁸ Caroline M. Hoxby, Sonali Murarka, and Jenny Kang, “How New York City Charter Schools Affect Achievement,” New York Charter Schools Project, 2009.

²⁹ Barbara Nye, Larry V. Hedges, and Spyros Konstantopoulos, “The effects of small classes on academic achievement: the results of the Tennessee class size experiment,” *American Educational Research Journal* 37 (2000): 123-51

³⁰ Charles Clotfelder, Helen F. Ladd, and Jacob L. Vigdor, “Teacher Credentials and Student Achievement in High School: A Cross-Subject Analysis with Student Fixed Effects,” Urban Institute/CALDER, 2007.

³¹ Daniel Aaronson, Lisa Barrow and William Sander, “Teachers and Student Achievement in the Chicago Public High Schools.” *Journal of Labor Economics* 25 (2007): 95-135.; David W. Grissmer, Ann Flanagan, Jennifer H. Kawata, and Stephanie Williamson. *Improving Student*

- **Comprehensive teacher induction:** A 2009 experimental study of structured comprehensive teacher induction programs found no impact on student test scores (relative to teachers who received whatever typical district-based induction program was available).³²

Teach For America effect sizes are as follows:

- The 2004 experimental study by Mathematica Policy Research found an effect size of .15 in math when comparing Teach For America corps members with all other teachers in the study, including more experienced teachers. When compared only with other novice teachers, the effect size of having a Teach For America corps member was .26.
- In their 2008-09 study, researchers from the Urban Institute/CALDER found that the effect size across subject areas in high school was .10, with a larger effect size of .18 in science. This impact was two to three times the size of the impact of having an experienced teacher relative to a novice teacher.
- In their 2010 study, researchers from the University of North Carolina found that the effect size for Teach For America corps members relative to traditionally prepared UNC graduates across high school subject areas was .13. For middle school math the effect

Achievement: What State NAEP Scores Tell Us. Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 2000; Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain.

³² Eric Isenberg, Steven Glazerman, Martha Bleeker, Amy Johnson, Julieta Lugo-Gil, Mary Grider, Sarah Dolfen, and Edward Britton, “Impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction: Results from the Second Year of a Randomized Controlled Study,” U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 2009.

size was .15, and researchers found that the positive impact on student test scores was roughly the equivalent of 90 days of additional instruction – or an additional half year of learning.

Because evidence shows that Teach For America teachers on average effect greater student achievement gains than the teachers that students would otherwise have, because we continue to improve our selection, training, and support program to produce even more highly effective teachers, and because Teach For America will grow teacher placements by 80% to serve 850,000 students by the end of the project period, we believe the project will have significant impact on the high-need students and LEA partners we serve. We look forward to working with Mathematica Policy Research to examine these impacts more fully.

C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant and Partners

C(1) Past performance developing, executing and growing a proven model

Over the past 20 years, Teach For America has developed a comprehensive, data-driven approach to identifying, recruiting, selecting, placing, training, and developing talented recent college graduates to teach successfully in low-income communities, with the expectation that they will achieve at least 1.5 years of academic growth and put their students on the path to college and life success. According to Education Trust President Kati Haycock, “From its very beginnings, Teach For America has invested more energy in understanding effective teaching than any teacher preparation program I know. And year after year, they have fed that information back into their own selection processes and teacher supports with a single goal: producing more teachers who can change the life chances of poor children.”

Over the last decade, while continuing to refine and improve our model for attracting and developing effective teachers, and supporting them as alumni, we have implemented two large-scale, multi-year growth plans. In doing so, we have grown the organization from 1,200 teachers in 15 regions to 7,300 teachers in 35 regions – significantly increasing the number of LEA partners and new teacher placements and attracting the necessary resources to support larger scale. The remainder of this section highlights our deep experience implementing and scaling our program model and executing against growth plans.

Recruitment and selection. Teach For America enlists exceptional college graduates to commit to teach for at least two years in the highest-need urban and rural public schools. We identify top students from all majors and fields and proactively reach out to convince them to apply, even if they have not expressed a previous interest in teaching.

Recruitment. Our recruitment teams, led by over 60 recruitment directors (the majority of whom are alumni), focus on the following activities:

- Building a database of potential prospects sourced from campus registrars, campus and conference presentations and events, grassroots efforts and referrals from professors, campus leaders, clubs, social networks, and from national partner organizations such as Golden Key, Hispanic Scholarship Fund, and National Society of Collegiate Scholars. This database includes important information on each prospect – GPA, leadership roles, diversity, interest level, notes from personal meetings or references – which is used to identify the highest potential prospects and track our outreach and engagement.
- Reaching out to high potential prospects and having one-on-one meetings to discuss the achievement gap and Teach For America with the most outstanding students on approximately 370 college campuses, including over 200 private schools and over 160 state universities.
- Working with undergraduate “campus campaign coordinators” on 165 of the 370 campuses. These coordinators help gather data and build the pipeline of candidates by executing major publicity campaigns, organizing events, networking with professors and student organizations, and identifying and reaching out to high potential prospects of all backgrounds and majors.

Selection. We select, through a rigorous screening process and from a large and diverse pool of candidates, those individuals who have qualities that we have found are predictive of success teaching in high-need schools. For 20 years, Teach For America has studied program participants who have had the most success in advancing student achievement and, working with experts from higher education and business, used these analyses to build a set of selection criteria

based on qualities that we have found are predictive of success teaching in low-income communities:

- Leadership and achievement in academic, professional, or extracurricular settings
- Perseverance in the face of challenges
- Strong critical thinking skills: making accurate linkages between cause and effect, analyzing and utilizing data, and generating relevant solutions to problems
- The ability to influence and motivate others
- Organizational ability: planning well, meeting deadlines, and working efficiently
- Respect for students and families in low-income communities
- An understanding of Teach For America's vision and the desire to work relentlessly

Highly trained selectors evaluate applicants against these criteria at each stage of the admissions process – online application, phone interview, and daylong in-person interview, including sample teaching – advancing only those who increasingly provide evidence that they have the personal characteristics and demonstrated capabilities that would lead to success as a teacher in a high-need school.

Since 2005, we also have used statistical modeling to help evaluate candidates. We analyze historical recruitment, selection, and student achievement data to identify which observable personal characteristics and behaviors are most predictive of success, adding new data each year to test and refine our understanding. Starting with assessments of our teachers when they are in the classroom, we look backwards at their traits and rankings during the admissions process and adjust our selection model to make it more predictive. We use data collected throughout the admissions process to rank candidates based on this model, accepting those who are most likely to lead students to dramatic academic progress.

Experience scaling recruitment and selection: Since 2000, we have increased applications from 4,000 to 46,000, increased our selectivity, and enrolled the overwhelming majority of admitted applicants (approximately 75% of accepted applicants matriculated in 2009, on par with Harvard College’s matriculation rate³³). Between 2000 and 2005, we climbed a steep learning curve on the recruitment front, quadrupling the number of applications while fielding a larger and larger teacher corps that was consistently more diverse than the student population on the campuses where we primarily recruited.³⁴ Since then, we have continued to grow in scale and diversity while maintaining quality – in 2009, our corps members had an average GPA of 3.6 and average SAT of 1344, with nearly one-third people of color and approximately one-quarter from families with low-socioeconomic status. Additionally, 89% held a position of leadership in college, and 70% graduated from “very competitive” schools. As we have grown, we have also increased efficiency, cutting the average recruitment cost per applicant in half over the last three years (from \$533 in 2008 to \$252 in 2010).

Teacher training and support and measures of effectiveness. Teach For America trains and develops individuals with little to no formal teaching training or experience to become highly effective teachers in low-income schools. We set expectations that all teachers, even in

³³ Jillian K. Kushner, “Yield Holds Steady For 2013,” The Harvard Crimson, May 8, 2009.

³⁴ Among 2009 corps members, 29% are people of color (of which 9% are African American and 7% are Hispanic) and 25% are from low-income backgrounds. In comparison, among the students enrolling at the 340 most selective colleges, 5.2% are African American, 6% are Hispanic, and 17.3% are from low socioeconomic backgrounds, according to the U.S. Department’s National Center for Education Statistics’ Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

their first year, will lead their students to significant academic gains, which we define as 1.5 years of growth. We provide our teachers and those who coach them with a roadmap for how to become highly effective teachers in our context, and we measure teacher effectiveness through corps members' demonstrated ability to make progress with their students according to rigorous assessments of student learning, utilizing a transparent system for setting, managing, and measuring classroom goals.

Through a professional development curriculum centered on experiential classroom learning; core instructional, classroom management, content, and pedagogical knowledge; robust performance support tools; and observations of excellent teaching, we help corps members develop the knowledge, skills, and mindsets to teach successfully. Our Teaching As Leadership framework, rigorous summer training, standardized and tailored ongoing support, and transparent measurement system form the foundation of our training and support program:

- **Teaching As Leadership framework and rubric:** Through observation and analysis of around 25,000 corps members across multiple urban and rural settings over the last 20 years, Teach For America has developed a framework that isolates the approaches that distinguish teachers achieving exceptional outcomes from their peers. Developed by program leaders, who are former Teach For America corps members, in consultation with teachers, program directors, and academics, the framework is based on six key principles, and the accompanying rubric breaks out these principles into 28 discrete teacher actions which are differentiated across five levels of proficiency – pre-novice to exemplary – essentially creating a roadmap for leading students to success in the classroom.³⁵

³⁵ Please see Appendix H for an example of a teacher action across the levels of proficiency.

- **Pre-service summer training:** We provide novice teachers with critical foundational knowledge and tools through an intensive, experiential, and outcome-oriented pre-service summer program. Operated in partnership with school districts and university hosts, Teach For America runs five-week summer institutes for new corps members, scheduling 14-hour days that result in the equivalent of approximately nine to 10 weeks of learning. Prior to attending institute, corps members complete 30 to 40 hours of independent work. During institute, corps members:
 - Teach summer school students under the supervision of experienced teachers
 - Receive extensive support and written and oral feedback on their teaching from advisors and a faculty of Teach For America alumni and other veteran teachers
 - Participate in interactive courses, rehearsal and reflection sessions, and lesson planning and curriculum clinics led primarily by Teach For America’s highest-performing alumni

Throughout institute, corps members work towards measurably increasing the academic performance of their summer school students. Following summer institute, one-to-two week induction programs familiarize corps members with their placement school and district-specific policies and curricula, reinforce institute learning, and provide planning time for the school year.

- **Ongoing support and development:** Teach For America supports corps members throughout their two years in the classroom by providing each of them with a well-trained instructional coach (called a program director), access to high-quality online resources, and a local learning community.

- Program directors: Every corps member works closely with a program director who observes, evaluates, coaches and supports them in becoming effective teachers. Program directors work with cohorts of approximately 34 teachers. Program directors also work closely with school principals to align professional development resources with school-based support.
- Online tools and resources: We provide teachers and program directors with “on demand” assistance, trainings, and tools, including video examples of model classrooms and teachers performing at all levels of proficiency on the Teaching As Leadership rubric; a resource exchange containing over 26,000 assessments, lessons plans, and curricula, each rated for quality and usefulness³⁶; and expert blogs, communities, and online courses specifically designed to meet the needs of our teachers.
- Learning teams: Corps members meet regularly in content and/or grade-level specific learning teams led by experienced teachers. These meetings are venues for sharing best practices and materials, modeling exemplary teaching, and collaborating around student progress and data.
- **Evaluation system for measuring teacher effectiveness and student growth**: Over the last decade, Teach For America has developed an internal “significant gains” system that enables us to measure academic progress on an ongoing basis as consistently as possible across our 35 regions, all subject areas (more than 40, plus special education, bilingual

³⁶ Since we launched the resource exchange, 94% of corps members have downloaded at least one document; in total we have had more than one million downloads.

education, and early childhood education), and grade levels (pre-Kindergarten through 12).

This unique, transparent system simultaneously supports classroom learning by helping corps members and program directors set and manage toward ambitious yet feasible and measurable goals for their students while providing the necessary data to drive program improvements.

Over time, with significant input from our teachers, program staff, and principals, we have developed three categories of internal metrics for articulating what “narrowing the achievement gap” looks like on classroom level assessments: growth, mastery of content, and gap closure (e.g., closing the performance gap between our students and students in well-served schools on the same assessment). Our measurement system currently has four performance categories – significant gains (the equivalent of “highly effective” under the i3 criteria), solid gains (“effective”), limited gains, and undetermined gains – to enable standardization across the different assessments and metrics used to measure student achievement:

Table 2: Measurement System

	Significant Gains	Solid Gains	Limited Gains	Undetermined Gains
Growth measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5+ yrs (at the elementary level) or the equivalent growth on a rubric • 2+ yrs (at the secondary level) or equivalent growth on a rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-1.4 years (at the elementary level) or the equivalent growth on a rubric • 1-2 years (at the secondary level) or equivalent growth on a rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-0.9 years or the equivalent growth on a rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient evidence to categorize a CM with strong confidence
Mastery measure	80% proficiency in prioritized standards or the equivalent proficiency level on a rubric	70-79% proficiency in prioritized standards or the equivalent proficiency level on a rubric	<70% proficiency in prioritized standards or the equivalent proficiency level on a rubric	

Gap closure measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24%+ of gap closed (elementary level) • 20%+ of gap closed (secondary level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-23% of gap closed (elementary level) • 10-19% of gap closed (secondary level) 	<10% of gap closed	
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Throughout the recruitment and selection process, applicants are made aware of our emphasis on measurable student achievement and expectations that our teachers will achieve significant gains with their students. Corps members are introduced to the significant gains measurement system and the Teaching As Leadership framework and rubric during summer institute. It is made clear to them that student achievement is the primary factor for determining their overall effectiveness, that Teaching As Leadership is the central approach for ensuring students achieve, and that our rubric and associated resources are foundational supports for managing and developing them into highly effective teachers.

Experience scaling teacher training, support, and effectiveness: As we have grown, we have also increased our corps members’ impact on student achievement – increasing the percentage of teachers achieving significant gains from 13% in 2001 to a projected 48% in 2010, even as we have increased the rigor of the underlying assessments and standards for achieving significant gains. To effectively train and support our growing corps, we have opened five new summer institutes between 2005 and 2010, dramatically increased the number of program directors, and created new performance management tools, training programs, and a layer of management for program directors – enabling us to scale the program director model while improving quality. Additionally, we have built, and continuously refined and improved, data systems, rubrics, and processes designed to increase our impact and productivity at scale – including our selection model and evaluation rubric as well as our significant gains measurement

system and Teaching As Leadership rubric. These models and systems provide a common language and understanding across the organization, which is especially critical in times of rapid growth, while allowing us to ground decisions in data that can be used to inform current strategies, manage complexity, and drive long-term improvement.

Teacher placement and retention. Teach For America places highly effective teachers in the highest-need schools and retains approximately 90% of them through a two-year commitment, with most teachers staying in the classroom beyond that time (and around two-thirds of alumni staying in education as a long-term career). We place teachers in 35 urban and rural regions, within more 2,500 schools across the country. Once corps members are placed, we work aggressively to help our LEA partners (who are the actual employers of our teachers) retain their corps members through two years of teaching, and 90% of Teach For America corps members completed at least two years of teaching.

To achieve our placement goals, we build strong relationships with district and school leaders, match the geographic and teaching interests and qualifications of our pool of teachers with the needs and certification requirements of our district partners, and expand into new geographies and districts each year based on demonstrated need and community support. We measure need according to the number and percent of students who receive free and reduced-price lunch as well as non-graduation rates, ensuring that we continue to prioritize the highest need schools.

Experience scaling teacher placements and retention. Teach For America placed nearly 4,100 new teachers for the 2009-10 school year, 500 more than the previous year and more than 2.5 times the number of new Teach For America teachers placed just five years ago (our total corps of first- and second-year teachers is now 7,300). We now place more new teachers

annually than we placed cumulatively over our entire first decade from 1990 to 2000. As we have grown, we have also improved second-year retention from 84% in 2004-05 to 90% last year, significantly surpassing both the national average of 86% and the national average for high poverty schools of 82%.³⁷ Notably, even in an environment of state and district budget cuts, we are continuing to grow and place and retain teachers because we are filling a clear need for dedicated, effective teachers in hard-to-staff schools and in high-need subject areas. Moreover, we have built a nationally monitored but highly decentralized system for managing district relationships at the regional level, such that we have systems in place to add new regions and grow in existing ones that can be replicated across the country.

Alumni teachers and leaders. Today, over 5,000 Teach For America alumni, nearly one-third of the total alumni population (dating back to 1990), remain in the classroom as teachers, the vast majority serving high-need students. According to a 2008 Harvard study, 61% of Teach For America corps members continue to teach beyond their two-year corps

³⁷ The 86 percent figure comes from the 2003 report “No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America’s Children” published by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF). The 82 percent figure is derived from the NCTAF report, which uses analysis by Richard M. Ingersoll on annual teacher turnover and attrition rates of beginning teachers. In that analysis, the proportion of “leavers” – i.e., those who leave the profession altogether (vs. those who “migrate” to other schools) – is about 20 percent higher in high-poverty schools than it is in public schools overall.

commitment, which is similar to retention estimates for other new teachers in low-income communities.³⁸

In addition to our alumni teachers, about 460 alumni serve as school principals or district leaders and another one-third of our alumni work or study full-time in education. Through our education leadership initiatives, we build a community of support for our alumni teachers and work to promote teacher leadership and accelerate the path to school and district leadership by partnering with districts, charters, and graduate schools on both the national and regional levels. These relationships offer alumni ready access to teacher-leader, school management, and professional development opportunities. At the same time, we collaborate with our district and charter partners to share best practices regarding recruiting, developing, and retaining highly effective teachers and to ensure we are helping them meet their broad needs for talent.

Experience scaling support of alumni teachers and leaders: We first set explicit goals for alumni leadership in 2005, when we knew of fewer than 160 alumni in school leader positions. Since then, we have built the infrastructure and partnerships necessary to significantly accelerate the path to school leadership and elected office for our alumni, resulting in about 460 school leaders and 40 elected officials (predominantly school board members) today. Additionally, we launched a Teacher Leadership Initiative, through which we are piloting a national board certification partnership as well as projects in New Orleans and Houston to test strategies around identifying and retaining the most effective new teachers.

³⁸ Morgaen L. Donaldson, “Teach for America Teachers’ Careers: Whether, When and Why They Leave Low-Income Schools and the Teaching Profession,” The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2008.

Executing growth plans: experience with rapid and sustainable growth. Teach For America has successfully implemented two large-scale, multi-year growth plans over the last decade, growing the organization from 1,200 teachers in 15 regions to 7,300 teachers in 35 regions. In 2000, we secured \$24 million from private foundations to launch a plan to grow from 900 to 2000 new teachers annually by 2005. In 2005, having successfully achieved the major underlying goals of this plan, we developed another five-year plan to grow from 2,200 new teachers per year to at least 4,000, raising an additional \$65 million in growth funding to pursue that vision. As described above, in executing both growth plans, we have been able to grow the number of interested applicants, the number of district and school partners and placements, and the impact of our teachers as measured by internal and external studies, while accelerating the leadership and impact of an ever-expanding alumni community.

Table 3: Historical growth data

	Applicants	Incoming Teachers Selected	Total Teachers in Schools	Regions
FY2000	4,000	870	1,300	15
FY2005	17,000	2,100	3,000	22
FY2010	46,000	4,400-4,500	7,300	39

To support the rapid expansion and effectiveness of our program, we have increased the strength and stability of our organization by growing our annual operating revenues while improving our infrastructure and fostering the development and engagement of our staff and alumni. Teach For America is currently on track to raise \$189 million this fiscal year – more than four times our \$40 million in operating revenues in 2005 and 17 times the \$10.5 million we raised in 2000, when we were preparing to launch our first growth plan. At the same time, we have maintained an operating reserve of 25% of our annual budget, and secured \$100 million in long-term endowment funds pledged or received. And our staff has grown from 390 individuals

in 2005 to about 1,300 in 2010, yet our fundraising and administrative costs remain at or below national nonprofit averages, resulting in a four-star rating for efficiency by Charity Navigator.³⁹

Thus, we have ensured that we were not only growing, but growing sustainably.

With a strong foundation and base of experience, we believe we are sitting on the cusp of an historic opportunity to grow again and achieve the kind of scale that will have a truly catalytic impact on the schools and communities we serve.

C(2) Compelling evidence of impact on student achievement

Despite the challenging contexts in which our teachers teach, there is substantial evidence of the positive impact that our teachers are having on their students and the effectiveness of our program model. As described above, Teach For America has achieved the following outcomes through our work over the last 20 years:

- **Partnered with the highest-need LEAs and schools in the country:** Mathematica's 2004 study showed that students of our teachers enter the year, on average, at the 14th percentile, and 80% of our students receive free or reduced-price lunch. We currently have 148 LEA partners for this i3 project, with whom we work to place our teachers in the highest-need settings.
- **Developed teachers that show significant impact on internal metrics including:**
 - Nearly 50% of first- and second-year teachers achieving significant gains (“highly effective”) with students, with the vast majority achieving the equivalent of at least one year of gains with their students (“effective”)

³⁹ Teach For America's fundraising costs as a percentage of dollars raised are 10.1% while the national average is 9.6%. Administrative costs as a percentage of total costs are 7%, compared to the median of all charities of 11%.

- Two-year retention rate of more than 90%, exceeding national norms
- **Provided teachers that significantly improve student achievement as demonstrated through extensive external studies:**
 - Experimental study finding Teach For America teachers effect greater gains than other teachers including veteran and certified teachers⁴⁰
 - Quasi-experimental studies (Urban Institute, 2009; New York, 2009) showing significant impact on student growth compared to other teachers⁴¹
 - Pipeline studies (Louisiana 2009, North Carolina 2010) showing Teach For America is at the top of teacher preparation programs in preparing new teachers to advance student achievement⁴²
- **Met our LEA partners’ need for effective new teachers, as evidenced by principal responses to a survey administered by Policy Study Associates⁴³ every two years:**
 - Nearly two-thirds of principals rated our teachers as more effective than other beginning teachers, and 95% considered them at least as effective
 - 97% expressed overall satisfaction with Teach For America teachers

⁴⁰ Decker, Mayer, and Glazerman.

⁴¹ Xu, Hannaway, and Taylor; Boyd, Grossman, Hammerness, Lankford, Loeb, Ronfeldt, and Wyckoff.

⁴² Noell and Gansle; Henry and Thompson.

⁴³ Policy Studies Associates, “Teach For America 2009 National Principal Survey,” 2009.

D. Quality of the Project Evaluation

Teach For America will contract Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. to conduct a \$5 million, large-scale study to evaluate the Innovation Fund project. The evaluation will address two key research questions: 1) what are the features of the scale-up implementation and was it successful in increasing the number of Teach For America teachers during the grant period; and 2) are the corps members brought on as part of the scale-up more effective than their non-Teach For America counterparts. An implementation analysis will address the first question and an experimental analysis will address the second question, focusing on impact on student achievement in grades pre-K through five. The evaluation design can flexibly incorporate additional evaluation elements for comparison across projects funded by i3 and will cover all requirements of the grant.

Table 4: Relationship of grant criteria to evaluation design

Grant criterion	Evaluation design
D(1): The well-designed experimental study and evaluation are rigorous and independent	Random assignment of students to Teach For America and non-Teach For America teachers will be independently executed by Mathematica
D(2): The studies of the practice, strategy, or program will be conducted at scale	The evaluation will occur across multiple regions and multiple years as the teacher corps scales from serving 450,000 students to 850,000 students
D(3): Methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes	Implementation analysis will provide annual feedback following the end of each school year on scale-up implementation to assess whether target numbers of teachers and students are being reached
	Experimental analysis will also provide annual feedback on teacher performance to gauge potential changes in student achievement
D(4): The evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings	Implementation analyses will describe in detail the scaled-up model and the processes involved in the scale-up

D(1) Well-designed experimental study

A multi-year, multi-site experimental analysis is the core of the project evaluation. This study will assess both the effectiveness of Teach For America teachers recruited and trained as a result of the scale-up effort and the comparative question of whether these teachers are more effective at increasing student achievement than their non-Teach For America counterparts. Mathematica will recruit districts to participate in the study from a variety of Teach For America regions and for a range of grade levels. The experimental design builds on Mathematica's experience with the Evaluation of the Impact on Secondary Student Math Achievement of Highly Selective Routes to Alternative Certification (HSAC), which is currently underway to examine the effectiveness of Teach For America math teachers in middle and high schools, and on the 2004 impact evaluation Mathematica conducted on Teach For America teachers in elementary school.

Mathematica will examine the student achievement impacts of a pooled sample of Teach For America teachers recruited and trained under the scale-up compared to their non-Teach For America counterparts. Specifically, researchers will examine the combined impacts of Teach For America teachers in both their first and second years. The study sample will include the subset of Teach For America and control teachers in the implementation sample in grades pre-K through five. For each Teach For America teacher, all non-Teach For America teachers in the same school and grade will be selected to serve as controls. The control group will include both relatively experienced and novice teachers because, in the absence of Teach For America, the students would be taught by a mix of veteran and novice teachers.

In schools and grades for which there is a Teach For America -non- Teach For America teacher "block" (which may be composed of more than two teachers), students will be randomly

assigned to these teachers' classrooms at the beginning of the 2012-13 school year. This year represents the second year for the first cohort of Teach For America teachers recruited as part of the scale-up and the first year for the second cohort of Teach For America teachers. At the end of the school year, pooled impacts on achievement will be examined for the students of all Teach For America teachers versus their non-Teach For America controls.

The impact analysis will focus on grades pre-K through five for several reasons. First, there is limited research on the effectiveness of Teach For America at the pre-K level.⁴⁴ Second, research on the effectiveness of Teach For America at the elementary level is based on a much earlier program model from the mid 1990s, as opposed to the more mature model that will be scaled up during the grant period. Third, the HSAC study currently underway examines impacts of Teach For America on student math achievement at grades six through 12. Mathematica will aggregate data across all the grades in order to obtain a large enough sample for desirable statistical power.

The experimental evaluation will use existing state and district assessment data where possible, as described in Table 5. Mathematica anticipates that this data will be available in reading and math for grades three through five in most participating districts; they will collect it for science as well when possible.

Since grades pre-K through two are not tested in most districts, the study team will administer standardized assessments of study students in those grades in the spring of 2013. The specific assessments to be used are still under consideration, but they might include the Peabody

⁴⁴ The exception is a non-experimental study conducted by Nicholas Zill, "Achievement Levels and Growth in D.C. Preschool and Pre-K Classes Taught By Teach For America Teachers," Westat, Inc., 2008.

Picture Vocabulary Test or Woodcock Johnson Letter Word Identification and Applied Problems.

Additionally, the experimental evaluation will include teacher self-reports of classroom practices. The study team will collect teacher-reported classroom practices, attitudes and expectations about students in spring of 2012 and 2013 from Teach For America and control teachers in the experiment via surveys. A comparison of classroom practices, attitudes and expectations between Teach For America and non-Teach For America teachers will be used to supplement the first-year impact analysis of teacher effectiveness. It will also be used to provide intermediate feedback on performance to Teach For America teachers.

The target sample sizes are 108 schools and 5,804 students in grades pre-K through five; this assumes one Teach For America and one non-Teach For America teacher per school in grades pre-K through two and 1.5 Teach For America and 1.5 non-Teach For America teachers per school in grades three through five, similar to the Mathematica study conducted in 2004. The sample sizes were chosen to ensure that a statistically significant impact of about two months of learning (an effect size of 0.15) could be detected.

Table 5: Experimental Evaluation Component, Data, and Uses for Data

Data	Data will inform understanding of:
State/district student records data (spring test scores as available in math, reading and science) for the subset of implementation sample in grades 3-5	Teach For America scale-up impact on student achievement compared to non- Teach For America teachers
Mathematica-administered standardized student assessments (spring test scores) for the subset of implementation sample in pre-K through grade two	Teach For America scale-up impact on student achievement compared to non-Teach For America teachers
Teacher survey of Teach For America and control teachers for the subset of implementation sample in elementary grades	Classroom practices, attitudes and expectations about students

D(2) Experimental study of the practice at scale

The experimental component of the study will be conducted throughout the 2012-13 school year. This will be in the third year of the four-year i3 project, providing assessment of the effectiveness of Teach For America's corps at a significantly larger scale than today. While the current cohort is approximately 7,300 teachers across 35 regions, in 2012-13 the corps will be over 11,000 teachers across 46 to 47 regions. Additionally, Teach For America at that point will be implementing all of the scaled practices in recruitment, training and support contemplated in the project design. As such, the experimental study will answer the question of the effectiveness of Teach For America teachers when brought in through the project at a much larger scale.

D(3) Implementation data and periodic feedback

The implementation analysis will describe in detail the outcomes related to the new corps of Teach For America teachers recruited and trained through the scale-up. This information will be used to provide feedback to Teach For America after each year following the scale-up, helping us assess our progress to goals and providing analysis to facilitate replication and expansion of our project in future years. In particular, Mathematica will examine and share annual information on the following outcomes of the scale-up, using data described in Table 6:

- **Scale:** The number of new Teach For America teachers accepted, trained, and placed in classrooms in the fall of 2011 and the fall of 2012, and the number of students they teach.
- **Teacher characteristics:** Characteristics of Teach For America teachers after the scale-up and how they compare to the characteristics of previous cohorts of Teach For America teachers. This analysis will provide information on whether the scale-up process resulted in a change in Teach For America teacher characteristics. Mathematica will also compare a sample of Teach For America teachers to a control group of non- Teach For America

teachers in the same grades and schools (together the “implementation sample”) to examine how new Teach For America teachers compare to the types of teachers students would have had in the absence of Teach For America.

- **Placements:** Where Teach For America teachers are placed (in terms of region and school characteristics) and what they teach (grade and subject) after scale-up, and how this compares to placements of previous cohorts of Teach For America teachers
- **Retention:** The percentage of Teach For America teachers returning to the classroom after one and two years and the number of students being served by these continuing teachers. They will also examine the characteristics of Teach For America teachers who left the profession, as well as retention outcomes in the third year for Teach For America teachers in the first cohort recruited as part of the scale-up.

Table 6: Implementation Study Component, Data, and Uses for Data

Data	Data will inform understanding of:
Teach For America staff surveys/interviews	Recruitment, training, and support procedures, any changes to these as result of scale-up
Observations of pre-service training institutes	Pre-service training content
Teach For America-collected data	Number of teachers accepted, trained, placed; characteristics, placement, and retention of current and former Teach For America teachers; number of students served by current and former Teach For America teachers
Survey of Teach For America and non-Teach For America teachers in the implementation sample	Participation in professional development and support activities, background characteristics, education

D(4) Information pertinent to replication and testing

Mathematica’s proposed analysis of the Teach For America i3 project will provide extensive data useful for LEAs or programs seeking to learn from or replicate components of this program. Implementation analyses will describe in detail the scaled-up model, the processes

involved in the scale-up, and the characteristics of Teach For America’s teachers, placements, and teachers who leave the program early. Objective and broad insights into Teach For America’s approach to teacher recruitment and selection, placement procedures, pre-service training, and ongoing support, as well as changes to these processes made as part of the scale-up effort, will be invaluable to others in the field seeking to learn from Teach For America’s experience, and possibly adopt or adapt any of our practices. Additionally, information gained through surveys, interviews, and observations will inform improvements to our model and facilitate even higher quality replication and expansion of Teach For America.

Most importantly, Mathematica’s study will analyze the outputs of Teach For America’s cohort in comparison to other teachers in the same school. By providing unbiased, experimental design data, the researchers will provide information that allows others to assess the effectiveness of Teach For America’s project in terms of student achievement. This will be a critical tool for others in assessing the viability of replication or testing of this model.

D(5) Sufficient resources for the study

If Teach For America is awarded this grant, Mathematica Policy Research – a leading expert in experimental studies in education – has committed to carry out the implementation and experimental design study described above for \$5 million, which is included in the project budget.

D(6) Independence of the evaluator

Mathematica Policy Research is a well-respected independent evaluator with extensive experience managing large-scale independent experiment studies. Mathematica will run the project evaluation as a “Purchased Services Contractor,” with results determined independently of Teach For America. The above descriptions of the proposed evaluation demonstrate the rigor

of the project design and the capacity for the evaluation to generate key data for both Teach For America, but also for a broader audience interested in replication or testing of the project.

Through innovative analysis of public programs and policies, Mathematica has established itself as a leader in the research and policymaking communities. For nearly 30 years, the company has directed major experiments and demonstrations that have tested existing and proposed social programs, and it has conducted quick-turnaround assessments of policy initiatives in response to client needs.

Mathematica pioneered the use of rigorous random assignment studies in the field of education. Its researchers have extensive expertise in all aspects of large experiments, including study design, execution, and management. As administrators of the federal What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), Mathematica is intimately familiar with the qualities of a well-implemented educational experiment and designs studies to meet WWC standards.

Dr. Melissa Clark will serve as the Project Director and will be assisted by Dr. Eric Isenberg as deputy Project Director and Ms. Kathryn Sonnenfeld as Survey Director. Dr. Clark is an economist with extensive experience designing and conducting experimental evaluations and serves as Principal Investigator of the HSAC study. Dr. Isenberg has served as researcher, principal investigator, and project director on a number of studies of educational interventions and specializes in estimation of value-added models. Ms. Sonnenfeld has directed or had a key role on survey operations for numerous large-scale education studies, including HSAC, the Impact Evaluation of Teacher Preparation Models, the 2004 Teach For America impact study, and the First 5 LA/Los Angeles Universal Preschool Child Outcomes Study.

E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale

In conjunction with our 148 LEA partners, Teach For America has the experience, capacity, and broad base of support to execute the proposed i3 project and ensure that over 13,000 exceptional teachers reach 850,000 children in low-income communities across America by the 2014-15 school year, while growing the pipeline of educational leaders. We will build upon the foundation developed in executing past growth plans, during which we ultimately grew more quickly than originally planned. At the end of our first plan (from 2000-2005), we exceeded our initial goal of teachers placed by 10%. Over the course of our 2006-2010 plan, we will have recruited, trained, and placed more than 17,500 new teachers, 1,150 more than originally envisioned. We have built and demonstrated the capacity to implement scale-up projects successfully, reaching and often exceeding our targets for numbers of teachers while increasing their impact on high-needs students nationwide.

E(1) Number of students reached

Teach For America will grow from an estimated 450,000 students reached in the 2009-10 school year to 850,000 in the 2014-15 school year. By the end of the grant period in fall 2014, 13,500 Teach For America teachers will begin the year teaching 850,000 students. If able to continue on our planned growth trajectory, we will directly reach over 1,000,000 students by the 2016-17 school year.⁴⁵

We will reach these students initially through partnering with 148 LEAs from all across the country, representing high-need urban and rural school districts and charters that qualify as LEAs. The full list of LEA partners can be found in Appendix D, along with the i3 agreements

⁴⁵ Calculated based on data from our annual “End-of-Year Survey,” which asks corps members to report how many students they have, on average, in each class.

they have signed expressing their intent to partner with us for the purpose of this grant proposal.

As we expand into new districts and regions of the country, we will increase our LEA partners to over 200. Following is a sampling of our current partner LEAs:

- **Major Urban Districts:** Atlanta Public Schools, Baltimore City Public Schools, Charlotte-Mecklenberg Schools, Chicago Public Schools, Denver Public Schools, District of Columbia Public Schools, Hartford Public Schools, Houston Public Schools, Indianapolis Public Schools, Los Angeles Unified School District, Louisiana Recovery School District, Miami-Dade Public Schools, Memphis Public Schools, Milwaukee Public Schools, Minneapolis Public Schools, New York City Department of Education, Newark Public Schools, Providence Public Schools, School District of Philadelphia, and St. Louis Public Schools
- **Rural Districts:** American Horse School in South Dakota, Bertie and Warren County Schools in Eastern North Carolina, East Feliciana Parish Schools in South Louisiana, Hawai'i Department of Education School District, Gallup-McKinley Public Schools in New Mexico, and West Tallahatchie School District in the Mississippi Delta
- **Charter Schools:** Achievement First, IDEA Public Schools, KIPP Schools in seven communities, Uncommon Schools, Lighthouse Academies, Yes College Prep

To accomplish our growth goals, we will need to successfully execute our recruitment and placement strategies as previously described in sections A and C while growing the organizational capacity and resources needed to support our scale-up project.

E(2) Capacity to scale

With a 20-year track record of growth and success, Teach For America has the management and organizational capacity, and the scalable fundraising plan, necessary to reach the project's goals and to ensure that the project will continue beyond the term of the grant.

Staff and management capacity. Our chief executive officer and the project director of this Innovation Fund grant is Wendy Kopp, who founded the organization 20 years ago and has overseen its growth and management. Matt Kramer, our president, has managed all programmatic and financial operations during the most recent multi-year growth plan. They are surrounded by an operating committee of seven experienced executive vice presidents of program; regional operations; growth strategy and development; public affairs; marketing; finance, technology, and administration; and human assets. As the senior leadership team for the organization, which is responsible for Teach For America's performance, operations, effectiveness, and long-term strategy, the operating committee members will support the chief executive officer and president in managing the execution of the scale-up project, leading their teams in pursuing the project goals.

As we grow our staff capacity to recruit, train and support a larger teacher corps and alumni force, our management model is scalable. The primary constraint will be hiring new staff members and developing the necessary pipeline of talent within the organization. In this area, we benefit greatly from the recent growth of our alumni force, which provides over 50% of our full-time staff; the vast majority of program, seasonal and part-time staff; and a talented source of volunteers as we seek to leverage them more effectively in our program operations. We have 17,000 alumni across the country, and will have over 30,000 alumni by 2014. This group is sufficient to meet most of our anticipated hiring needs as we scale.

Additionally, over the course of the past five years, we have made deep investments in the human resources capacity necessary to fuel our growth. We have built a talent recruitment team to source candidates for our full-time staff and summer faculty roles; developed a competency model to serve as a foundation for staff evaluation, professional development and career path planning; and begun investing in providing staff with developmental opportunities necessary to move from one stage of leadership to the next.

Board capacity. Teach For America is governed by a national board of directors (see Appendix H for the full list). The board, chaired by Aspen Institute Chief Executive Officer Walter Isaacson, meets four times annually to perform its fiduciary functions, including reviewing the organization's performance against goals and ensuring proper fiscal controls, increasing the organization's access to resources and support, and advising on Teach For America's strategy.

Additionally, almost all regional sites have advisory boards (the only exceptions are some remote rural regions and some new regions where boards are still in formation). These boards help ensure that on a region-by-region basis, Teach For America builds strong relationships with LEA partners, raises sufficient financial resources to continue to grow and sustain its program, and reaches key performance goals. Moreover, the chairs of each regional advisory board sit on our National Council, which meets with the national board twice a year to report on regional needs and performance.

Financial resources. Teach For America has grown its annual operating revenue by more than 20% each year of the past decade, growing in all from \$10.5 million in revenue in fiscal year 2000 to \$149 million in fiscal year 2009. Because more than 75% of Teach For America's revenue is raised in our 35 regions and the vast majority is from private funders, the funding is

extremely diversified. Last year, more than 11,000 private donors (individuals, corporations and foundations) made contributions to Teach For America. Notably, over the last three years, despite the economic downturn, Teach For America's revenues have continued to grow from \$114 million in 2008 to a projected \$189 million in 2010. We have sufficient revenue to launch the i3 project plan, a track record of growing our funding base, and a comprehensive fundraising plan to reach our goals. This plan is explained in more detail in section F of this proposal.

E(3) Replicating the project

Teach For America is a national 501c3 organization with offices supporting teachers and alumni in 35 geographic regions in 28 states and Washington, D.C. Each region has an executive director and program staff, and most also have development staff and local advisory boards. Each region is responsible for setting and meeting its own program, placement, and fundraising goals within the framework of our national priorities and practices. National operations, program, and development teams provide coaching and support to help them achieve their goals, create efficiencies, and share best practices nationwide. This organizational model ensures that our program is implemented with fidelity across the country.

In addition to executing our program across multiple regions, Teach For America corps members teach across all subjects (more than 40, plus special education, bilingual education, and early childhood education) and grade levels (pre-Kindergarten through 12). Regions themselves place corps members in a mix of rural schools, as well as small, medium, and large urban districts. We place teachers not only in traditional public schools, but also in charters (22% of 2009 placements). Thus, our corps members operate in a wide range of settings serving students with a diversity of needs, supports, and expectations, but all of whom are high-needs students.

Rigorous studies evaluating the impact of corps members on student achievement across multiple settings – rural, urban, elementary, secondary – have consistently found statistically significant effects that are similar in magnitude (see Section B). Additionally, principal satisfaction is uniformly high across our regions – 97% express overall satisfaction with Teach For America teachers⁴⁶, and we will continue to have independent evaluators survey principals every other year to understand our partners’ satisfaction with the teachers we are providing. Our demonstrated results across multiple contexts, and high levels of principal satisfaction, have led to continued, increasing demand from new districts and charter schools, and we have shown we have the capacity and resources to meet that demand effectively.

E(4) Start-up and operating costs per student per year

Teach For America is requesting \$50 million from the Innovation Fund to support our growth plan. With significant growth experience and a strong infrastructure and foundation to build upon, we do not have any direct start-up costs for this project, though we will be making additional investments in program innovations and impact as we grow. Even so, our budget growth is roughly proportional to the growth in our teacher corps and alumni populations.

During the scale-up, we will continue to expand our infrastructure to support a growing corps and alumni base while investing in four priority program areas that will allow us to increase our productivity and the level of impact we generate through our corps members and alumni. We expect that Teach For America’s total budget will grow by around 18% annually between 2010-2015 (including 3% assumed annual inflation), driven primarily by the 12% annual growth in our corps and 18% annual growth in our alumni. Under this plan, our cost per

⁴⁶ Policy Studies Associates.

teacher will grow by approximately 1% plus inflation, with additional program investments being offset in part by some efficiencies and scale economies.

By 2015, our operating budget will be \$419 million, including \$303 million of costs directly funding corps member programming and \$37 million of costs related to alumni programming. In 2015, we will spend approximately 9.8% of our budget on development and 9.2% on operating infrastructure to ensure our corps members and program staff have access to a robust, efficient support system. National averages for fundraising and administrative costs are 9.6% and 11% respectively, so we will remain at or below national nonprofit averages. Teach For America has received a four-star rating for fiscal efficiency from Charity Navigator for eight years in a row⁴⁷, and Worth Magazine ranked Teach For America in the top five on its list of nonprofit organizations demonstrating excellence in financial stewardship⁴⁸.

Table 7: Budgeted Expenses

Budgeted Expenses by Year (in millions)	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015
Recruitment and Selection	\$26.90	\$30.80	\$36.10	\$41.90	\$48.00	\$54.50
Institute and New Teacher Training	\$32.90	\$39.60	\$46.90	\$55.10	\$63.80	\$73.30
Ongoing Teacher Support	\$62.90	\$76.40	\$91.80	\$109.00	\$127.90	\$148.30
Alumni Leadership and Engagement	\$15.50	\$18.80	\$22.50	\$26.50	\$31.30	\$36.70
Local Program Support	\$10.20	\$12.80	\$15.80	\$19.20	\$23.00	\$27.10
Development	\$17.70	\$21.30	\$25.40	\$30.00	\$35.40	\$41.20
National Management & General	\$18.70	\$22.30	\$25.10	\$28.90	\$33.40	\$38.40
Total	\$184.80	\$222.00	\$263.50	\$310.50	\$362.80	\$419.60
Cost per Student (Dollars)	\$356	\$378	\$389	\$402	\$418	\$430

⁴⁷ Charity Navigator.

⁴⁸ Worth Magazine, “Elite List: 10 Most Fiscally Responsible Charities,” January 2010.

Serving 515,000 students next year, while recruiting selecting and training the next cohort of teachers, will cost an estimated \$378 per student. By the time we reach 750,000 students, we project costs of \$418 per student. Continuing on a similar growth trajectory with respect to costs, number of teachers, and number of students served, we estimate that serving over 1,000,000 students will cost approximately \$458 per student, or \$372 in 2010 dollars; projected inflation accounts for the majority of the increase.⁴⁹

Table 8: Cost per student

Number of students	500,000	750,000	1,000,000
Estimated total corps member-related costs	\$189 million	\$313 million	\$458 million
Cost per student	\$378	\$418	\$458
Inflation-adjusted cost per student	\$367	\$371	\$372

E(5) Disseminating knowledge and best practices

Teach For America has significant assets that position us well to broadly disseminate lessons learned through this project in order to support its replication. At the conclusion of the i3 project these assets will include:

- A footprint into more than 50 of the highest-need urban and rural communities across the country, including partnerships with over 3,000 schools and principals, and with over 200 LEAs and district leaders

⁴⁹ To calculate our cost per student, we subtract from our total budget all spending on alumni programming and associated operating costs, which will constitute 13% to 15% of our total budget over the next five years. We then divide that number by the number of unique students our corps members will reach per year (an average of 64 students per corps member, which we derived based on data from our End-of-Year survey).

- An alumni force that will consist of over 30,000. Of these, around 10,000 will be classroom teachers, 1,000 will be school leaders, 170 will be elected officials, and 125 will be education policy advisors to federal, state, or local elected officials
- Recent experience marketing the book *Teaching as Leadership: the Highly Effective Teacher's Guide to Closing the Achievement Gap*, which summarizes the lessons Teach For America learned about effective teaching over the last 20 years
- A public website (www.teachforamerica.org) that gets 2.6 million unique visitors each year; and a second public website (www.teachingasleadership.org) that focuses on conveying lessons about the methods and mindsets of effective teachers in a user-friendly, engaging and interactive way
- A recently launched partnership with the Arizona State University School of Education to pilot adoption of Teach For America's approach to teacher recruitment, selection, pre-service, and ongoing professional development within a campus-based teacher education program with potential for replication in other universities

We will use our assets to execute a robust dissemination strategy that ranges from one-on-one touchpoints to large-scale presentations to maximize awareness of the project and convey the key lessons that emerge from the project about recruiting, selecting, training, supporting, and retaining effective teachers at the project's inception; at critical junctures along the way; after the project evaluation is completed. Individual strands of the strategy will include:

- One-on-one annual meetings and appropriate follow-up with leaders from our 148 LEA partners around the country to discuss the project and its lessons

- One-on-one annual meetings and appropriate follow-up with the 71 schools of education with which we partner to share the lessons we have learned about preparing effective teachers and discuss how we could collaborate to impact more prospective teachers
- If awarded, e-mail notification of receipt of grant award, regular progress towards goals, and key findings of evaluation to our network of alumni and national supporters, including policy leaders, advocates, researchers, and elected officials, along with announcement on our public website
- Presentations about the project by senior staff members and Mathematica researchers at conferences and think tanks, such as the Center for American Progress, American Educational Research Association, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, Education Trust, the New America Foundation, the National Council of Teacher Quality
- Participation in U.S. Department of Education communities of practice.

F. Sustainability

F(1) Sustaining growth through 2015 and beyond

Teach For America's i3 project will provide a critical launching pad for a comprehensive national growth plan we have developed with extensive input from our staff, national and regional boards, and major funders. The financial component of this growth plan is designed with the same underlying philosophy of our last plan: secure significant upfront, multi-year funding to launch the plan (the i3 grant); and leverage this to build highly diversified and renewable local funding bases that will sustain the organization at a much larger scale and continue to generate new prospects when the grant funding finishes.

Financial model and sustainability plan. To support the proposed i3 project, Teach For America will need to more than double annual operating revenues over the next five years. Our plan to ensure sustainability beyond the i3 scale-up grant includes four key strategies: 1) continue to deepen and diversify regional funding bases in line with growth of teacher corps in existing regions; 2) open at least 12 new regions with diversified funding bases that completely cover operating costs and the incremental reserve requirement; 3) build a robust national operating campaign through new partnerships with national foundations and corporations; and 4) continue to secure annual federal support from the Department of Education and NASA along with continued AmeriCorps support.

Table 9: Forecast Revenue

Forecast Revenue by Year (\$million)	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15
Regional	147	184	220	260	303	350
Existing sites (launched by 2010)	147	180	212	245	279	313
Expansion sites (launched after 2010)	0	4	8	15	24	36
National Private	18	23	24	26	27	29
Federal Appropriation and AmeriCorps	25	30	36	42	48	53
Federal: Investing in Innovation		12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
Total	\$189	\$249	\$292	\$340	\$391	\$432

1. Regional revenue campaigns: Regional revenue currently accounts for 75% of Teach For America's annual operating revenues and forms the cornerstone of our plan for sustainability. Regional corps sizes, which drive our budgets, are closely connected to development progress and we require that any growing region increase its fundraising targets to support a larger corps. Our regional sites have clear fundraising goals, and milestones by which they must hit them, in order to secure their desired number of corps members for the coming year. Thus, when we grow in existing regions, we secure additional local private, district, or state funding to support that growth. Perhaps surprisingly, we have found that some of our most under-resourced sites have been able to use this approach to attract the necessary support; at the same time, we have national resources available for sustaining our presence in regions where sufficient philanthropic resources truly do not exist. Through our systematic approach to regional fundraising, Teach For America's regional revenues have grown from \$30 million in 2005 to over \$114 million in 2009, fueled primarily by the following local fundraising strategies:

- **A successful annual individual giving campaign, called Sponsor A Teacher.** Regions match individual donors who contribute \$5,000 to \$100,000 annually with a local corps member(s). Gifts from these campaigns have grown from less than \$3 million in 2004 to \$16 million in 2009 and are our most reliable and renewable source of funding; consistently 70% to 80% of gifts repeat each year. Perhaps most significantly, the Sponsor A Teacher campaign has built a community of civic leaders and philanthropists who are willing to help solicit new and increased funding and who themselves form a pool of major donor prospects. Individuals giving at least \$100,000 annually to Teach For America have grown from nine to 99 over the last five years.

- **Major gifts for regional growth plans.** These are gifts from well-known foundations and wealthy individuals, including over \$21 million to seven regions in the last three years from the Walton Foundation, Broad Foundation, and Arnold Family Foundation
- **Fees from our district partners.** These, generally around \$2,500 per corps member, help offset Teach For America's costs in recruiting, training and supporting the new teachers. These grow in line with corps growth and form the second-largest revenue source for most regions.
- **State appropriations.** State funding accounted for 9% of regional revenues in 2009 and grew at an annual rate of 47% between 2006 and 2009 and, due to groundwork laid in the last few years, we are positioned to continue to grow this source at a similar rate in the next plan.

Overall, we will grow regional revenues by approximately 20% annually over the next five years by executing our proven local fundraising model. While this growth rate will be challenging, it is significantly slower growth than we have attained annually over the past decade.

2. **New sites:** Teach For America will open 3 to 4 new sites each year over the next four years, ultimately opening around 15 new sites accounting for \$36 million in 2015. Prior to opening new regions, we secure enough funding to cover the operating costs of the region for three years as well as the required incremental reserves. We are purposeful in our fundraising, ensuring that we are highly diversified across funding streams and include investments from key civic and philanthropic leaders in the community whose championship is essential for long-term success.

In the last three years, we have opened 10 new sites with full local funding amounting to \$14 million that includes investments from some of the most prominent civic leaders and philanthropists in each community. Currently more than 20 cities and rural regions have expressed strong interest in supporting a new Teach For America site. Teach For America selects new regions each year through a process based on student academic needs, strength of district commitment and partnership, and local funding commitments. Teach For America's new site development team will ensure that we secure sufficient revenues each year to open sites that are fully funded and meet or exceed revenue targets in a way that is sustainable beyond the grant.

3. National operating campaign: National private revenue is a stabilizing component of Teach For America's growth strategy that allows Teach For America to test and invest in large-scale program innovations, to provide short- and long-term subsidy to regions that are not fully funded, and to readily seize unanticipated growth opportunities. Across all campaigns – annual operating, growth funding to provide working capital and grow operating reserves, and endowment funds – we raised over \$685 million in contributions and pledged multi-year commitments from national private donors between 2005 and 2009.

We will continue to pursue national support for our growth plan as well as targeted support for special initiatives, including those related to improving teacher effectiveness, early childhood and special education, STEM education, rural expansion, and alumni leadership. Finally, we will continue to deepen relationships with current and new corporate partners, who have provided a steady stream of \$7 to \$8 million in national revenues for the last several years.

4. Federal grants: Teach For America has secured annual federal grants from AmeriCorps (since 1994) and from the Department of Education (since 2002) that set ambitious targets for growth and performance, cover national and regional costs related to recruiting and

training a new corps of teachers each year, and help subsidize regional operations, especially those in rural areas without a strong base of philanthropic dollars. We have been an AmeriCorps partner since its inception and we dedicate the necessary resources to ensuring we are well-positioned to renew those grants every three years. Additionally, while the federal appropriations process can be unreliable, we have grown our support modestly over the last several years, and continue to expand our strong base of support in the U.S. Congress.

For the sustainability of this grant, we are projecting growth in federal funding (outside of i3 funding) that is slower than our federal funding growth rate over the last ten years. At the same time, if we are able to secure faster growth in annual federal funding, we will be able to grow at a faster rate and reach one million students more quickly.

Evidence of broad support from stakeholders. We are proud to have strong support for this project from all of the key stakeholders who make our work possible. Our most critical stakeholders as we embark on this effort to grow to scale are the LEAs that will contract with us to hire our teachers. This application includes agreements between Teach For America and 148 LEA partners spanning 29 states and Washington, D.C., expressing their commitment to hiring our teachers throughout the project period. These LEAs serve over four million children across the country and represent a large portion of the highest-need students in America's public schools.

Due to the longstanding partnerships we have shared with many of the districts we serve, the high levels of satisfaction with our corps members expressed by principals, and the magnitude of the challenge we are addressing, we fully expect these partnerships to continue well beyond the project period. In the last decade, Teach For America has opened 20 new

regional sites and built dozens of new LEA partnerships; over the same time, we have only been forced to pull out of one region, Detroit, which we are re-entering this coming school year.

Because of the changing nature of LEA needs, Teach For America meets with school district and charter school leaders annually to discuss hiring needs for the following year. In these meetings, we decide the number of new teachers and the subject areas and grade levels that districts need for the following year. This leads to annual professional services agreements (PSAs), which are contracts between Teach For America and LEAs detailing our placement plans and mutual obligations for the following school year. We have attached in Appendix H a sample annual PSA and a list of current LEAs with signed PSAs for the school year. Through this project period we expect to work with our LEA partners, in accordance with the Innovation Fund agreements, and reach annual agreements on the number and distribution of teacher placements for the following school year.

Beyond our LEA partners, Teach For America's success requires the support of a wide range of partner institutions. Schools of education provide alternative certification pathways for our corps members and help validate our model. College presidents will serve as critical champions for our campus recruitment efforts, encouraging our nation's most promising future leaders to apply to Teach For America. National education organizations will serve as key influencers, increasing awareness about our impact and supporting our efforts to place more teachers. And our early childhood champions will help grow our ECE teacher presence and provide leadership pathways for our alumni. Additionally, we will rely heavily on our national foundation investors who have all committed substantial funds to fueling our growth to scale. The list below is a sampling of the deep and broad support that Teach For America currently has, letters of support from every organization and individual listed here can be found in Appendix D:

- **School Districts:** 148 LEAs in 29 states
- **Organizations of State and Local Superintendents:** The Council of Chief State School Officers representing every state school officer nationwide, the Council of Great City Schools representing the nation's largest urban school districts
- **National Foundations and Funders:** The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Don and Doris Fisher Fund, the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, Rainwater Charitable Foundation, the Robertson Foundation, the Walton Family Foundation
- **College Presidents:** Amherst College, Duke University, Louisiana State University, The University of California, Berkeley, The University of Maryland Baltimore County, The University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Spelman College, Tulane University
- **Deans of Colleges of Education:** Arizona State University, Boston University, Georgia State University, Johns Hopkins University, Loyola Marymount University, The University of Pennsylvania, and The University of Washington
- **Education and Civil Rights Organizations:** Breakthrough Collaborative, Golden Key International Honour Society, Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity, The Education Commission of the States, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, The National Society of Collegiate Scholars
- **Early Childhood Leaders:** The National Head Start Association, Libby Doggett

F(2) Impact beyond the scale-up grant

Beyond the term of this four-year project, Teach For America will maintain its larger-scale work with our district and school partners through continuing to build a broad base of public and private support, generating revenues based on the demonstrated impact of our corps members and alumni in the communities we serve. As we deepen and expand our presence, our teachers will become woven into the fabric of these communities, and we will have built a sustainable base of local philanthropic and district support such that we will no longer need the i3 scale-up funds after four years. In essence, we will have leveraged i3 funds each year to attract the necessary long-term supporters to sustain, and potentially continue to grow, Teach For America for many years.

For our district partners, we will have increased the steady supply of highly effective new teachers from around the country – providing them with access to exceptional talent that is a scarce resource and costly to attract. And our alumni will contribute to district pipelines not only of highly effective teachers, but also of administrators and leaders with the experience, skills, and conviction to create truly exceptional schools and schools systems for high-need students. Finally, we will have deepened our relationships with our myriad LEA partners, offering them not only our teachers, but also our experience base as we share our best practices and provide them with access to professional development and support materials that develop highly effective teachers for low-income schools.

At the conclusion of the scale-up grant, over 13,000 corps members will be reaching more than 850,000 of our nation's most disadvantaged students, on the path to reaching one million high-need students in the 2016-17 school year. These corps members will consistently advance their students' achievement at the level of our nation's most effective teachers. They

will account for approximately 20% of new teachers in the highest-need schools across more than 50 regions of the country, providing a steady supply of highly effective teachers to the schools and districts where they are needed most. Their efforts will change students' lives and produce a new pipeline of diverse students for college campuses and for our nation at large.

At the same time, an ever-expanding force of over 30,000 Teach For America alumni will provide critical leadership in classrooms, schools and districts, and in the broader non-profit, policy and business community. We anticipate that this group will include around 10,000 additional teachers, which means that corps members and alumni together will be teaching between one and two million of the 14 million children growing up in poverty⁵⁰ in America. Our alumni will lead over 5% of the 10,000 urban schools serving majority low-income students, including around 5% in the nation's three largest districts – Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York – and over 15% in Washington, D.C., and New Orleans. And still other alumni will drive innovations from inside and outside the education system – as superintendents, political leaders and policymakers, social entrepreneurs, journalists, advocates, and civic leaders in all sectors. As a group, our alumni will be moving the needle in closing the achievement gap, changing the conversation about what is possible and how to achieve it, and helping – with the other teachers and leaders in our 148 LEA partners and with the support of our many other partners – to move our nation toward the tipping point at which the movement to end educational inequity becomes unstoppable.

⁵⁰ U.S. Census Bureau.

G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

G(1) Management plan

Teach For America’s senior operating committee team, led by Wendy Kopp and Matthew Kramer and comprised of senior leaders of each functional area, meets every month to review progress to goals, discuss critical programmatic or operational needs, monitor organizational efficiency and effectiveness, prioritize and plan for the future.

Within each program area, Teach For America has a management plan and staffing structure that enables the team to monitor and make progress toward clearly defined goals (descriptions below). To monitor expenses, each team has at least one budget manager to set budgetary needs and monitor expenditures, and a budget tracker to track spending for each department.

Recruitment. All recruitment staff members use data “dashboards” to track progress in moving candidates through the pipeline and to monitor the relationship between recruitment activities and number of applications. Dashboards are customizable for management level, i.e., recruitment directors can see campus-by-campus activity; senior staff can monitor progress and activity across cohorts of recruitment directors, and so on.

Admissions. Given the multiple deadlines and thousands of interviews happening simultaneously, the admissions team must ensure flawless execution of a tight admissions calendar. We use an online application process, linked to our constituent database. This system enables the operations team to track the progress of each applicant through the stages of the interview, matriculation and placement process, and to obtain and manage data on applicants for analysis so that we can continuously improve our selection process.

Teacher training and support. During Teach For America’s summer training institute, staff monitor teacher development against the Teaching As Leadership proficiency rubric; student academic growth against standards-aligned learning objectives; and operational efficiency in order to maximize pre-service teachers’ time spent training. Throughout the year, Teach For America staff record performance information at not only the teacher level (using Teaching As Leadership), but also aggregated student results at the class level, to measure and maximize each teacher’s contribution towards student learning.

Growth strategy. Our growth strategy team utilizes a corps member placement system that relies on clear milestones and benchmarks throughout the year for securing placements and funding to make decisions on whether to grow, maintain, or contract regional corps size according to demand on the ground. This system allows us to manage toward overall national growth goals, and seize new opportunities for placements as they arise, while mitigating the risk associated with volatile district budgets.

Key Project Objectives:

Table 10: Project objectives, owners, and timelines

Objective	Owner	Responsibilities	Milestones	Timeline*
Ensure key milestones and project benchmarks are met and board is invested in the project	Wendy Kopp and Matt Kramer	Ensure project is conducted on time and within budget	Operating Team Meetings	Every month
		Ensure key personnel report on their progress regularly and that problems are identified early and addressed immediately	Program Team Meetings	Every two months
		Keep National Board informed of project progress and receive guidance and feedback	Report to National Board	Bi-annually

		from them		
Recruit exceptional incoming corps members	Elissa Clapp	Efficiently grow the number of applicants to Teach For America by 2014	Recruitment data analysis of prior season and development of strategy for next season	Summer
		Maintain applicant quality while increasing diversity	Execute new strategies, cultivate additional campus champions, and grow stakeholders	August to February
Select incoming corps members with greatest potential to increase student achievement	Joshua Griggs	Evaluate every application through a rigorous, data-driven process	5 application deadlines, 3 steps to each deadline (initial screen, phone interview, day-long in-person interview)	August, September, October, January, February
		Ensure selection bar is applied consistently as applicant pool grows in size	Matriculate at least 75% of accepted applicants	After each application deadline
		Assign corps members to teaching placements that match their preferences and qualifications	Upgrade admissions model with fresh student achievement data	June-July annually
Train and support corps members	Jeff Wetzler and Aylon Samouha	Grow the training infrastructure and support system to accommodate increased corps size	Launch new training institutes in 2012 and 2014; renegotiate training institute contracts annually	December-January annually
		Ensure successful execution of existing summer training institutes	Run effective training institutes	June - August
		Develop new university partnerships to certify corps members in expansion sites	Partner with additional Schools of Education to provide pathways to certification	March prior to launch of new site
		Ensure the continuous improvement of our training and support approach so that the overall effectiveness of the corps members	Examine student achievement results and corps member surveys and refine and improve program design	August – October (end of institute); Feb – Mar (mid-year); June-August (end of year)

		increases every year over the course of the grant	Provide ongoing support for corps members	August – May annually
Identify and launch 3 to 4 expansion sites each year	Eric Scroggins	Ensure alignment between Teach For America’s mission and geographic presence by identifying regions for expansion with significant need and a clear vision for how Teach For America fits in with their plan to address local educational inequity Cultivate key stakeholders and raise private and local support in prospective sites	Identify prospective sites that meet Teach For America’s expansion criteria	September through November
			Secure support from key stakeholders	February
			Host public new site launch event	Spring
Optimize growth in corps size across existing regions	Elisa Villanueva Beard and Eric Scroggins	Manage the intersection of applicant numbers and preferences with the local teacher hiring landscape Determine overall distribution of corps by region, grade level and subject	Meet with regional partners (LEAs) to discuss their demand for corps members	Spring
			Allocate corps member distribution by grade level, subject and region	Completed by April
Ensure project evaluation is implemented smoothly and provides the field with applicable, and replicable information about supporting effective teachers	Heather Harding	Liaison with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. and partner regions to ensure the project evaluation is carried out on time, within budget and with full cooperation and assistance	Identify regions and schools	Fall of 2010
			Assign teachers using random assignment	August of 2011, 2012, and 2013
			Administer student assessments	September, April of each year
			Analyze results and finalize report	2015
			Share findings with education community	2015/2016

**occurs throughout project period*

G(2) Qualifications of Teach For America staff

Teach For America's chief executive officer and founder, Wendy Kopp, and our president, Matthew Kramer, will oversee the management of this project. Wendy will serve as project director and Matt will oversee the senior vice president of recruitment, the vice president of admissions, the senior vice presidents of teacher preparation and support, chief operating officer, and executive vice president of growth strategy and development. Brief biographies of key staff include (see Appendix C for full resumes):

Wendy Kopp, Chief Executive Officer and Founder – Wendy proposed the creation of Teach For America in her undergraduate senior thesis in 1989 and has spent the last 20 years working to nurture and grow the organization – which has successfully grown from a 500-member corps to a 7,300-member corps, with an alumni base that is 17,000 strong. Under Wendy's leadership, Teach For America is in the midst of an effort to grow to scale while maximizing the impact of teachers and alumni as a force for immediate and long-term change.

Matthew Kramer, President – Matt serves as Teach For America's president. He formerly oversaw the program continuum, including recruitment, selection and placement, teacher preparation, teacher support, and alumni affairs throughout the last major growth effort. Matt joined Teach For America after working at the management consulting firm, McKinsey & Company, where he was a partner and consulted with insurers and asset managers, and also served nonprofit institutions focused on K-12 education.

Elisa Villanueva Beard, Chief Operating Officer – Elisa has served as senior vice president for regional operations and chief operating officer since 2005. In that capacity, she has overseen massive growth, from 130 staff regional staff members to approximately 700. Elisa joined the staff as executive director of the organization's Rio Grande Valley site. During her

four years as executive director, she grew the region's funding base 17 times over, created a functioning community advisory board, and oversaw a corps of teachers that more than doubled.

Elissa Clapp, Senior Vice President, Recruitment – Elissa has managed the recruitment team since 1999, and in the last seven years has produced 30% compound annual growth in the applicant pool – from 3,000 applicants in 1999 to 46,000 applicants in 2010. Through her stewardship, Teach For America increased the incoming teacher class from 770 teachers per year to over 4,000 teachers per year.

Dr. Heather Harding, Vice President, Research and Policy – Prior to joining Teach For America's staff, Heather served as a principal associate at the Annenberg Institute for School Reform and taught in the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Teacher Education Program. She earned her master's and doctoral degrees in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where her thesis considered the intersection of race and pedagogy for four successful white urban middle school teachers. Heather also previously served as executive director of the Eastern North Carolina region.

Dr. Robert Lundin, Vice President, University Partnerships – In his capacity as vice president for university partnerships, Robert oversees Teach For America's network of over 70 higher education training partners across the nation. He is a graduate of Rice University who also holds a master's degree in bilingual education from the University of Saint Thomas and a doctorate in educational leadership from Vanderbilt University.

Eric Scroggins, Executive Vice President, Growth Strategy and Development – Eric is responsible for developing and executing our growth strategy and ensuring that we have the resources to achieve our goals. Eric has served on Teach For America's staff since 2003. He has created new models connecting growth and development that helped nearly double both overall

revenue and the percentage of regions supporting their work fully through local funding. Additionally, Eric has overseen the opening of ten new regions. Eric previously served as executive director of both the Bay Area region and the St. Louis region..

Jeff Wetzler and Aylon Samouha, Co-Senior Vice Presidents, Teacher Preparation Support and Development – Jeff and Aylon, along with their teams, led our efforts to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our training model since 2006. Since Jeff and Aylon assumed their current roles, the number of first year corps members attaining significant gains grew by 117%, the number of second year corps members attaining significant gains grew by 56% and the number of new training institutes grew by 60%, from five to eight institutes. Jeff previously served as a management consultant and product developer at Monitor Group and earned his M.A. in Adult Learning and Leadership at Teacher’s College at Columbia University. Aylon was previously vice president of East operations at Score! Educational Centers, where he helped lead the rapid expansion of the organization from 20 to 160-plus centers nationally.

Joshua Griggs, Vice President, Admissions – Joshua has worked on Teach For America’s admissions team since 2006. As vice president, he has led business process innovation, revision, and scaling in response to 90% growth in applications and Teach For America’s expansion into 10 new regions. He also implemented alumni interviewer recruitment and engagement plan that quadrupled the number of alumni conducting phone interviews.

The full resumes of the staff members listed above and the researchers listed below can be found in Appendix C.

G(3) Qualifications of Project Evaluation Staff: Mathematica Policy Research

Melissa Clark (Ph.D., Economics, Princeton University), a senior researcher at Mathematica, will be the project director of the Teach For America evaluation. Dr. Clark is one of Mathematica's strongest econometricians and design experts, and has demonstrated expertise in conducting rigorous evaluations and estimating impacts through her work on several major, multi-site impact evaluations of education programs. As principal investigator on the National Evaluation of Charter Schools, Dr. Clark helped develop the analysis plan and is leading the impact estimation. This large-scale random assignment study will estimate the impact of charter schools on middle school student achievement in math and reading using test score data from school records from over 30 school districts. Dr. Clark devised innovative solutions to several complex design challenges for this evaluation, including the pooling of scores from different tests across districts, high rates of missing test score data, and high rates of control group crossover.

Eric Isenberg (Ph.D., Economics, Washington University), a researcher at Mathematica, will be the deputy project director. Dr. Isenberg has worked on a number of education studies and is an expert in value-added analyses. As the co-principal investigator of the Impact Evaluation of Teacher Induction, a large-scale, multi-site, randomized controlled trial for the Institute of Education Sciences, Dr. Isenberg led the analysis of the impact of comprehensive induction on student achievement, using the same growth modeling techniques required in value-added estimation. He is the principal author of "Impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction: Results from the Second Year of a Randomized Controlled Study."⁵¹ As the deputy project director of the District of Columbia Value Added project, Dr. Isenberg developed and

⁵¹ Isenberg, Glazerman, Bleeker, Johnson, Lugo-Gil, Grider, Dolfen and Britton.

implemented value-added measures for teachers and schools in the District of Columbia Public Schools.

Kathryn Sonnenfeld (B.A., Art Therapy and Psychology, The College of New Jersey), a senior survey researcher at Mathematica with 20 years of experience, will be the evaluation's survey director. Ms. Sonnenfeld has played a leadership role on several large-scale studies that called for student assessments and has extensive experience in designing data collection systems that involve random assignment. As deputy survey director for the Impact Evaluation of Teacher Preparation Models and the 2004 TFA impact study, Ms. Sonnenfeld was responsible for designing the school records data collection efforts, helping develop teacher surveys, and designing and maintaining databases for tracking student random assignment. For the First 5 LA/Los Angeles Universal Preschool Child Outcomes Study, Ms. Sonnenfeld developed instruments (child, teacher, and parent), obtained copyright permissions, and developed materials for and conducted field staff training.

Competitive Priorities

Competitive Preference Priority 5 – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes

Teach For America launched an early childhood education (ECE) initiative in 2006 to recruit more outstanding educators and future leaders into Head Start, pre-K, and early elementary school classrooms and provide them with tailored training and support.

An i3 award would enable us to significantly expand the number of ECE corps members from 1,700 teachers serving in 35 sites in the 2009-10 school year to 3,360 teachers – 24% of our total corps – in 54 sites in the 2014-15 school year. These efforts will provide tens of thousands of low-income children with highly enriching and engaging teachers who use a developmentally appropriate outcomes-based approach to teaching young children.

Table 11: Early childhood education corps members

School year	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
ECE Corps Members	1,770	2,010	2,330	2,680	3,000	3,360
ECE Placement Regions	35	39	44	47	50	54

Evidence of Improved School Readiness

Teach For America’s early childhood cohort has a significant impact on low-income youth. A 2008 Westat study comparing Teach For America’s early childhood initiative with teachers teaching comparable populations of low-income students concluded:

- Where 4-year-old Head Start students knew an average of 10 letters at the end of the year, Teach For America corps members’ students knew an average of 24 letters;
- Head Start students were at the 34th percentile in letter word knowledge, Teach For America corps members’ students were at the 82nd percentile.⁵²

Improving Developmental Milestones and Aligning them with Outcome Measures

⁵² Zill.

To prepare ECE corps members to ensure that every child they teach meets developmental milestones and high standards of learning across all domains, Teach For America maintains a central, dedicated program design staff that examines resources from all areas of the country and devises training materials that are aligned with high standards. Throughout the project period, we will focus on further improving the following areas of training and ongoing support:

- Providing inquiry-based instruction that promotes critical thinking, sustained dialogue and meaningful connections
- Promoting mature play through intentional center development and implementation
- Teaching our youngest learners essential problem-solving skills; how to approach, navigate and solve social and academic challenges
- Implementing small-groups based on regular formal and informal assessment; and
- Building and utilizing important family relationships; equipping parents with tools and knowledge to promote learning at home and become involved in the classroom

Evidence of Improving Alignment, Collaboration, and Transitions

Teach For America is uniquely well positioned to improve alignment and support transitions among ECE grades and with the higher level grades. The program places corps members in a variety of ECE settings that serve children from low-income families, including pre-school community-based organizations, Head Start community-based organizations for three and four-year olds, Head Start school-based programs for three and four-year olds, pre-K programs in elementary schools, and the early elementary grades in all public schools.

Teach For America works with districts to cluster corps members in the same schools or feeder schools/programs in order to maximize the ability of our corps members to collaborate,

align their instruction and approach with each other. In addition, our corps members share a specific, outcomes-based orientation – rooted in the pre-service training and ongoing instructional support – that provides cohesion for students who are taught by multiple corps members. Finally, corps members are part of the broader Teach For America community and as a result, have the ability to share resources, such as curricula and lessons plans, and best practices, such as strategies for working with families and helping students transition to higher grade levels with their peers all across the country.

We also maintain a formal partnership with the National Head Start Association, have an Early Childhood Education Advisory Board composed of experts in the field (see Appendix H for a list), and are funded by some of the nation’s leading philanthropists with an interest in early childhood education. These strong relationships amplify our impact by providing us with avenues to channel what our corps members are learning on the ground into the broader policy conversation. This allows us to share learnings across the spectrum of ECE groups including those serving birth to age three, preschools and Head Start, and our LEA partners serving kindergarten through third grade.

Competitive Preference Priority 7 – Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students

Teach For America’s overarching approach and accountability system has led corps members across the country to become pioneers in implementing data-driven approaches to teaching special needs and Limited English Proficient (LEP) students.

Almost 900 Teach For America corps members teach in one of the three primary special education settings (self-contained, inclusion, and resource) and an additional 390 teach LEP students in four different types of settings (bilingual Spanish, ESL-pull out, ESL-push in, and ESL self-contained). An i3 award would allow us to place, in the 2014-15 school year, 1,640 special education teachers, who would impact more than 24,000 students, and 600 LEP teachers, who would impact 13,000 students. Throughout the project period, 10% of Teach For America’s total corps will teach special education. Both placement areas would fill a vital gap for the under-resourced school districts that we serve that struggle to find qualified teachers.

Table 12: Special education and LEP corps members

School year	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Corps Members teaching Special Education	880	985	1,140	1,315	1,470	1,640
Corps Members teaching LEP Students	295	390	450	520	580	650

Evidence of Improved Academic Outcomes

In recent years we have improved our training and support systems for corps members teaching special education and LEP students. As a result, we have significantly grown the percentage of highly effective teachers in these areas:

- In the 2008-09 school year, 40% of first-year special education teachers and 49% of second-year teachers effected “significant gains” (i.e. were highly effective) with their students.
- 48% of first-year teachers working with LEP students and 62.5% of second-year teachers were highly effective. These numbers will continue to increase as we implement additional training and support help.

Specific Strategies and Practices designed to Improve Student Achievement

Throughout the grant project, Teach For America will implement a number of strategies, building off of our already strong foundation for, and commitment to, ensuring our teachers bring the same high expectations and level of preparedness and support to teaching special education students as they do students at all levels. These strategies include:

- Pre-service training enhancements in how to:
 - Set goals that are feasible and ambitious along with real-life applications of such goals
 - Use assessments appropriately and hold general education expectations for special education and LEP students
 - Choose and apply appropriate accommodations and modifications
 - Differentiate instruction, co-teach, and provide remediation
 - Invest parents, family members, and other key influencers in meeting educational goals
- Providing resources and ongoing support including:

- Sample IEP goals for students with the most common disabilities represented in special education placements (specific learning disabilities, behavioral/emotional disabilities, mental disabilities, and autism)
- Model assessments with modifications and accommodations for special education and LEP students
- Specialized tools for tracking individual student progress for each population
- Innovative online solutions, such as advice forums that connect special educators and LEP educators across the country and provide them with a community of support, best-practice and resource sharing, and a range of quality, tailored resources.

Competitive Preference Priority 8 – Innovations that Serve Schools in Rural LEAs

Teach For America has a proven record of attracting exceptional young people to teach in under-resourced rural communities going back to 1990 when we opened with three rural sites among our six initial launch sites (Eastern North Carolina, South Louisiana and rural Georgia). Today, approximately 590 Teach For America first- and second-year corps members teach in rural LEAs (as defined in the i3 notice), and an additional 180 serve Native American and Native Hawaiian populations in federal schools on reservations or in rural schools in Hawai'i that are part of the statewide LEA.⁵³ In the words of South Dakota Secretary of Education Dr. Rick Melmer, "In a rural state like South Dakota, finding high-quality teachers for all of our districts is a real challenge. Teach For America has been a terrific answer to that challenge. As a result, we have been able to fill over 50 positions this year in some of the most critical need areas in South Dakota. Furthermore, we are seeing excellent achievement results in their classrooms. Honestly, I am not sure what we would have done without Teach For America over the past three years."

Through this i3 project, we will grow to place approximately 1,000 corps members in rural LEAs, providing a critical source of teachers who will help address many of the unique challenges facing rural communities.

⁵³ Corps members in New Mexico and South Dakota teach in federal schools on reservations and are not included in the definition of rural schools here; Hawaii is a state-wide LEA, though all Teach For America placements are rural serving native Hawaiian students.

Table 13: Rural corps members

School Year	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Corps Members teaching in Rural Sites	590	681	782	880	922	966
Rural sites	6	7	8	8	8	8
Students served	40,000	50,000	55,000	60,000	65,000	70,000

Our core practices and strategies are described in the grant narrative, but for rural communities, the following are of particular importance:

- **Attracting talented teachers.** Rural LEAs do not have a sufficient pool of candidates for teacher or administrator positions. Today, Teach For America places and supports more than 590 teachers in rural LEAs each year, teachers who have been recruited nationally from top colleges and universities that typically would not be reached by rural schools.
- **Hiring teachers in hard-to-staff subjects.** Rural LEAs have more challenges than other districts in hiring teachers for STEM, special education, and other hard to staff subject areas. By the 2014-15 school year, Teach For America will bring in 338 STEM and 116 special teachers to schools in rural LEAs.
- **Providing exceptional professional development to teachers in remote areas.** Rural LEAs have more challenges than urban and suburban districts in providing exceptional professional development because of the distances between schools. Teach For America will provide exceptional professional development through our program staff to the more than 950 first- and second-year teachers in rural LEAs by the 2014-15 school year.

Additionally, through our TALON website, we are able to provide access to highly rated

lesson plans, tools for improved teaching, and an annotated video library for professional development – all of particular importance to teachers in rural communities.

- **Building a leadership pipeline.** Teach For America currently has approximately 30 alumni serving as school leaders in rural communities. Alumni are also founding school leaders of Gaston College Prep and IDEA, two models of exemplary rural schools. We anticipate by the project’s conclusion almost 60 principals and assistant principals who are alumni of Teach For America will be working in rural areas.

Evidence of Improving Student Achievement in Rural Communities

Teach For America is committed to comprehensive external evaluations of our teachers’ impact. The two most rigorous external studies include data from rural regions.

- A 2008-09 study using data from North Carolina, including the rural Eastern part of the state where we place 170 corps members, found that impact on student achievement of having a Teach For America corps member was at least twice that of having a teacher with three or more years of experience relative to a new teacher.⁵⁴
- A 2004 randomized control study by Mathematica looked at Teach For America corps members across five regions, including the rural Mississippi Delta, and concluded that students taught by Teach For America corps members attained statistically significant greater gains compared to our teachers.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Xu, Hannaway, and Taylor.

⁵⁵ Decker, Mayer, and Glazerman.

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/06/2010 9:29 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Reader #1:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	14
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	13
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With	1	_____

Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students
(0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve
Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points) 2 _____

TOTAL 105 27

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #1:

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20

Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

The applicant's discussion of the research cites two studies that meet the criteria for strong evidence in the Notice Inviting Applications. These include one experimental study at the elementary school level and one quasi-experimental study at the high school level. The quasi-experimental study is a matched comparison group design that was deemed by the What Works Clearinghouse to meet its evidentiary standards with reservations. Those reservations are explained by the applicant and claimed actually to result in an underestimate of the effectiveness of its programs (pp. 19-20). These two studies have large samples -- though of different school grades -- that reflect most of the population that will be studied in the scale-up project.

Several other studies, which do not meet the criteria for strong evidence, are also included in support of the applicant's program. In the aggregate, the studies show that Teach for America has a statistically significant impact on students' mathematics achievement. The magnitude of the impact was generally small to moderate, but the studies nevertheless provide good

evidence that a fast-track program like TFA can produce teachers who are generally as effective or more effective than teachers produced by other pathways, including veteran teachers in some cases.

Weaknesses

The most serious weakness of the research cited is that the two studies are of different school age populations, one K-5 and one high school, meaning that there is evidence from only one of the two studies for each school level. The study on elementary school is a randomized controlled trial, and thus it meets the evidence criteria for that school level as a single study. There is not sufficiently strong evidence provided for the effectiveness of the applicant's program at the high school level, however. And neither of the studies focuses on middle school. Likewise, a strong emphasis in the applicant's scale-up is at the Pre-K-5 level, and while the experimental study cited provides support of the impact of the applicant's program at the elementary level, none of the studies cited in support of the applicant's program provides evidence of effectiveness at the Pre-K level. The studies thus are somewhat deficient in external validity related to the teacher population that be involved in the scale up.

The applicant was only required to adduce studies that support the efficacy of its program and not studies that are less supportive, but the applicant's interpretation of the studies it cites in its support is somewhat selective. Several of the studies actually show that although the impact of TFA teachers in comparison with others is striking -- especially after the first year or two in the classroom -- the overall impact of TFA teachers is somewhat diminished by the fact that two-year TFA "veterans" are generally replaced by novice TFA teachers with no full-time teaching experience because the standard TFA tenure is two years. The impact of novice teachers is generally smaller than that of more experienced TFA teachers, so that the average contribution of a TFA teaching position in a school is lower than that for individual TFA teachers. (See, for example, the Boyd et al. (2009) study cited.) The attrition rate of TFA teachers thus is a weakness of the TFA system -- in terms of impact on student learning, stability of the school culture, and the additional turnover costs.

Finally, although the comparison of effect sizes between Teach for America and other kinds of interventions is interesting, the simple comparison of studies given in the narrative lacks rigor and would require a methodologically sound meta-analysis in order to be interpreted validly.

Reader's Score: 14

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in

other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

The key research questions for the evaluation are on-target, and answers from the research -- which is directed at the scale-up sites -- should yield important information both about the success of the implementation in the scale-up sites and the impact of the recruited TFA teachers on student achievement as compared to that of their non-TFA counterparts.

The evaluation involves an experimental study with random assignment of students to teachers in the schools in which TFA teachers are present. It is a study of the TFA program at larger scale and will help answer questions about the ability of TFA to retain the quality of its program and replicate the effects of its teachers at a scale that is 50% larger than at present. This also should provide insight about the ability of the TFA program to be expanded even more. The study sample is large, and it appears to be representative of the population of the scale-up study, as a whole.

The study's inclusion of classroom practices, as well as student achievement data, will illuminate the role of specific characteristics of TFA teachers on student performance and teacher effectiveness, as well as provide information to TFA about the success of its professional development efforts.

The fact that the evaluation will include teacher retention outcomes is a strength.

The evaluation will be conducted by an independent evaluator with a strong national reputation. Because the staff assigned to the evaluation were not principal researchers for the evaluating organization's previous TFA study (Decker et al., 2004), there should be no concern about researcher bias.

The \$5 million allocated for the evaluation is approximately 8 percent of the total project budget and should be adequate to carry out the work described.

Weaknesses

Although the validity and reliability of student achievement results seems

strong, there is a concern about the reliability of the self-report data from teachers about their classroom practices, attitudes, and expectations (p. 45).

Similarly, although retention outcomes may be valid and reliable measures, there are likely to be confounding variables affecting teacher retention that must be accounted for in the study design but are not discussed in the application.

Somewhat more detailed information that includes a timetable for the evaluation (especially in relationship to the progress of project implementation) and some elaboration of instruments and methods to be used (perhaps in the appendices) would have been useful to affirm the adequacy of the evaluation proposed. This could include some discussion of methodological and logistical challenges for the evaluation and how the evaluator anticipates meeting them.

Reader's Score: 13

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.**
- (2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.**
- (3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.**
- (4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.**

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

Weaknesses

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Weaknesses

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;**
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and**
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based

on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2010 9:29 AM

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/03/2010 8:03 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Reader #2:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	13
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	13
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	10
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	9
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	1

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	2
TOTAL	105	63

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #2:

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

- (a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,**
- (b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.**

Strengths

Schools in high need and rural areas have difficulty recruiting teachers in

mathematics, science, special education, and working with limited English proficient students. This is a service that this applicant can provide. Children in high poverty areas do not always have highly effective teachers and the teachers from Teach for America have proven to raise student performance.

Eleven of the 17 top Race to the Top finalists mentioned the use of Teach for America in meeting their goals. The scale-up is necessary to meet this need as well as the current need for teachers in rural and urban areas with high poverty.

The need for quality teachers and ultimately school leaders continues to require constant recruiting, training, and supporting the new recruits. Teach for American has the experience and skills to fill this gap in providing quality educators for high poverty areas.

To date there has not been another entity that has the framework and mechanisms for providing a large number of high quality professionals that are dedicated to working in high poverty or rural areas.

Teach for America has a very specific set of goals and strategies to reach its outcomes in the timeline specified in its application. The plan to reach 850,000 students by the end of the grant period is supported by a strong recruitment, placement, training/support, measurement of teacher impact on student achievement, and the development of a growing base of alumni to move these individuals into leadership roles.

Twenty regions have expressed an interest in being a part of the Teach for America process and meet the criteria of serving high poverty students.

Teach for America has used its strategies for the past 20 years and has experience in scaling the model to impact more students.

Through the use of regional centers, Teach for America is poised to add new regions or increase existing ones for replication of quality programs.

Weaknesses

The aspect of the proposal regarding increasing the number of Program Directors did not elaborate on how these individuals will be trained in the short amount of time in order to support the growing number of recruits. Increasing the number of college recruiters from 60 to 80 will require depleting some of the alumni and require extensive training. Elaborating on the plan as to how the training would be structured would strengthen the proposal.

The number of projects: "expand and enhance online Teaching and Learning Center"; "develop, refine, and roll out a new approach to measuring and managing effectiveness of teachers"; "more tailored planning and instructional tools"; "provide a full suite of rigorous tests"; etc. appears to be a focus of the application but it was not clear who will be responsible for the work and the timeline associated with each stage. An explanation of how the

development of the above projects will be accomplished in addition to the other aspects of the project would strengthen the proposal.

Reader's Score: 13

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

Teach for America has experience in scaling its model from 15 regions to 35 regions(p.27). At the same time this entity has continued to raise funds from partners to achieve growth.

During the past 20 years of growth, Teach for America has refined its model based on lessons learned and has received accolades for its work from numerous sources.

The use of statistical modeling has helped to ensure quality candidates are a part of the applicant pool.

Teach for America has also reduced the cost of recruiting teachers over the years which will assist in accomplishing the goals of this proposal.

Fifty percent of the teachers achieve significant gains with students from high poverty in urban or rural settings.

Three external studies were provided that demonstrated that Teach for America teachers have a greater impact on student achievement than other teachers. (p.41)

In the research studies cited, Teach for America teachers were as effective as or more effective than certified teachers at all grade levels. This effectiveness is measured with students in high poverty areas that enter the classroom at the 14th percentile on average.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 15

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.**
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.**
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.**
- (2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.**
- (3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated**

success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

The goal of this application is to reach 850,000 students and prepare 13,000 teachers to work with high poverty students in urban/rural areas across America. Teach for America has documented its growth and exceeded goals set for a five year period by 10% (p.50). In addition, during the second five year plan, they again exceeded the goals set.

The regional centers established by Teach for America are central to the success of this scale-up project. The use of advisory boards in each region provides for local implementation of the plan, as well as ongoing support of the project. The chairs of these boards then sit on the National Council. This provides for oversight as well as ongoing communication for success of the project.

The founder of Teach for America will be the Project Director for this grant. She will be assisted by an individual who has excellent credentials and has been responsible for the oversight of the current multi-year growth plan. His background and experience in other organizations have provided him with the skills to support this effort.

Teach for American has shown its ability to increase its revenue by 20% per year for the last 10 years. The diversification of donors assures the revenue stream will continue whether certain markets decline or level off in terms of funding.

The revenue-generating history of Teach for America substantiates the statement that this group has "sufficient revenue to launch the I3 grant" (p. 54).

Teach for America has replicated its model on a smaller scale for the past 20 years. The framework the applicant utilizes from the home office provides support, coaching, fund raising, and sharing of best practices. This model is clear, concise, and has been used in past growth areas of the nonprofit.

Satisfaction with the work of Teach for American has been at 97% across all regions. The continual need and support by the LEAs indicates that the level of satisfaction is high.

There is no start up costs for this application as the model will be expanded

through the regional concept to new sites.
The costs for the levels of students reached in the application shows an increase in cost for the three distinct categories. The rationale for the increase is that the applicant included inflationary costs to the totals. Operating costs are at or below the national average for non-profits and the applicant has received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator for eight years in a row(p.56).
The plan for disseminating the information on this grant is far-reaching. The work the applicant does in 50 of the highest need urban/rural areas will be proof of the success of the project and shared on a daily basis.
The variety of dissemination activities include one-on -one meetings with LEAs; websites; personal testimony (alumni); meeting with 71 schools of education; presentations at national meetings; and providing key findings to policy makers and leaders in the community.

Weaknesses

The applicant clearly states that a constraint will be hiring new staff within the organization. Although the applicant states it has a large alumni force, a response regarding the knowledge and skills of the alumni to fill these positions would strengthen the application.
The applicant states that the alumni will provide most of the hiring needs but calls to question what the plan will be for the positions not filled. Addressing this area would strengthen the application.
Ease of use was not addressed in the application for teacher training or the model implemented at the region level.

Reader's Score: 13

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Teach for America is following the model used in the past: secure funding for a multi-year plan and use this money to attract other funding sources. This strategy has worked well in the past for the TFA organization and is the substance of the plan.

The four step plan for sustainability involves diversification at the regional level; open new sites with new funding opportunities; obtain new foundation/corporation support; and continue to pursue federal support.

The Sponsor a Teacher campaign has grown in the last 5 years and seems to be a positive revenue source. In addition, Teach for America has some well-known foundations contributing to the effort, e.g., Walton Foundation, Broad Foundation, and Arnold Foundation(p.62).

Partnerships with LEAs have continued to grow and only once has the TFA organization removed a LEA from the program.

Fees from districts and states have grown annually since the inception of the program.

Teach for America utilizes contracts and professional services agreements to cement the funding based on services rendered.

Colleges and universities support the model and serve as advocates and spokespersons for ongoing growth of the project.

Weaknesses

The reliance on federal funding for one aspect of sustainability may prove to be an issue in difficult economic times. A description of alternate funding should the federal dollars be redirected would be a positive aspect of the application.

Reader's Score: 10

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and

conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

Monthly monitoring by the Project Director and senior staff will provide for oversight and opportunity to make changes at any juncture.

A management plan has been developed for each team to follow, monitor, and budget appropriately for in the process.

Technology is utilized for ease of use and budgetary reasons. The data "dashboards" for recruitment, the online application process, and online support assist in capitalizing on the effective use of funding.

The management plan includes objectives, owner, responsibilities, milestones, and specific timelines.

All of the members of the senior leadership team have experience either in the organization or outside TFA regarding scaling up of projects.

The senior management team includes individuals with strengths in varying areas aligned to the application which contributes to the quality and breadth of knowledge necessary to implementation of the project.

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. is the group responsible for the evaluation. The project director has extensive experience in serving as the Principal Investigator and currently serves on 3 research projects funded by the federal government.

The Deputy Project Director for the evaluation has experience as a Project Director and Co-Principal Investigator. He is currently serving on 4 research projects in an evaluative capacity.

The survey researcher has worked in this field for 20 years and has worked on 7 studies as the survey researcher. Currently she is involved in two major research studies as a survey researcher.

Weaknesses

The management plan lists the names of individuals responsible for the completion of specific aspects of the project. Providing the titles as well as the names allows for an understanding of the role versus the individual listed.

Reader's Score: 9

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve

educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

Strengths

Teach for America creates a community of learners in the early childhood programs through collaboration of pre-kindergarten through the elementary grades by clustering their TFA teachers in the same or feeder schools.

Weaknesses

The data compared TFA early childhood cohort (4 year olds) with Head Start and indicated that letter recognition and letter word knowledge scores were higher for TFA. Comparing a program with teachers who have a college degree and extensive training by TFA with teachers in Head Start is not as strong as comparing TFA with preschools using certified teachers. The focus of the information provided in this section was on preschool and would be strengthened by references to the primary grades as well.

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;**
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and**
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

Priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Teach for America is increasing the number of teachers in special education and LEP at a time when the shortages in these areas are increasing. The 10% level of TFA teachers in special education is a start in providing quality educators in these classrooms versus long term substitutes.

Impacting 24,000 special education students and 13,000 LEP students is a phenomenal aspect of this application.

The percent of special education students who experienced significant gains was almost at 50%.

The number of LEP students who showed significant gains with second year teachers was 62.5% which is due primarily to the support provided these teachers by TFA.

Weaknesses

The mention of "specialized tools for tracking individual student progress" would be strengthened by listing the specific tools(p.83).

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in

this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Currently 590 TFA teachers work in rural LEAs and another 180 work with Native populations. This number would increase to 1000 with i3 funding. TFA provides a much needed service to rural areas where attracting quality candidates, providing professional development, and developing leaders has historically been a challenge. The two studies listed provide support for the impact TFA corps members had in rural communities on student achievement.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 8:03 AM

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/02/2010 8:58 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Reader #3:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	14
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	14
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	10
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	10
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	1

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	2
TOTAL	105	67

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #3:

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

(1): The need for every child to have an effective teacher is critical. Teach for America focuses on the highest-need students in this country.

(2): This proposal has specified a clear set of goals and strategies to scale up the applicant's current efforts to expand significantly.

(a): The approach defined in this application is a unique combination of methodology, experience, and capacity to build the numbers of effective teachers and leaders in our schools.

(b) Teach for America puts an emphasis on the importance of teaching and there is an expectation based on past performance, that it will reach the identified goals and objectives.

Weaknesses

(1): No weakness identified with respect to this factor.

(2): While TFA provides teachers to schools that have great difficulty finding effective teachers, a concern is the two- year commitment of the corps member.

Reader's Score: 14

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

(1): Teach for America's application demonstrates its 20 year history and capacity to manage rapid growth. There are 7,300 teachers in 35 regions providing instruction to the most high-need populations. TFA corps members are top students in their content area recruited as exceptional graduates. The process for selecting candidates has been studied for 20 years to identify participants who have had the most success in advancing student achievement. Selection criteria have been developed based on qualities found to be predictive of success in teaching in low-income communities.

TFA applications have increased from 4,000 to 46,000. The evidence is clear that TFA has demonstrated the past performance to implement large, complex, high quality, and rapidly growing projects.

(2b):The applicant focuses on a college graduate population that has high content knowledge that can translate into effective classroom practice for the most needy students and schools. These high-need schools may never be able to attract the level of professional that Teach for America can bring to high poverty and particularly rural areas.

(b)TFA's measurement system has developed metrics for defining progress toward narrowing the achievement gap. Most TFA corps members achieve the equivalent gain of one year for each of their students. Ongoing reviews attest to increases in student achievement, effective teaching, and retention with partnering LEAs.

Weaknesses

(1): No weakness noted

Reader's Score: 15

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

(1): Teach for America's plan is engineered for scale-up and will grow from 450,000 students in 2009-2010 to 850,000 students and 13,500 TFA teachers in 2014-15, with a trajectory to reach 1 million high-need youth in 2016-17.

(2): TFA demonstrated the capacity to scale-up and to address urban, rural, and charter schools in the most high-need areas (page e52). The TFA CEO Wendy Kopp founded TFA 20 years ago and Matt

Kramer, TFA president have surrounded themselves with a senior management team which is responsible for TFA's performance. Their roles are dedicated to TFA along with a governing board chaired by Aspen Institute CEO Walter Isaacson. TFA has grown its annual operating budget to \$149 million in 2009. One hundred and forty-eight LEAs have signed agreements with TFA.

(3): The application presents a clearly defined process to replicate in rural, urban and charter school settings. Each region has an executive director and program staff. The program model ensures replication with fidelity across high-need urban and rural communities.

(4): The applicant's estimate of costs is well-defined broken down by specific areas. The cost per student is \$458 with \$485 million dollar budget to achieve the proposed goal of 1 million students.

(5): A clearly defined process for broad dissemination includes: alumni, web site, the book Teaching as Leadership: The Highly Effective Teacher's Guide to Closing the Achievement Gap, and a footprint that crosses 200 LEAs presents a TFA's ability to disseminate information to support replication.

Weaknesses

(1): No weakness noted.

(2): No weakness noted

(3): The ability, with fidelity, to meet all of the goals and objectives over time with only a two-year commitment of corps members is a concern.

(4): No weakness noted

(5): No weakness noted

Reader's Score: 14

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from

stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

(1): TFA raised \$114 million in 2009 and has in place a solid process to open and finance new sites beyond the scope of the Scale-Up grant. It is clear that the program will be sustained beyond the length of the Scale-Up grant and could have far reaching implications for teacher education nationally and internationally.

(2): TFA has documented its ability to transcend the traditional teacher education process with good success as demonstrated in the proposal. While not yet embraced by the teacher unions, the state agencies are looking at the potential for its underachieving and high-needs schools. Establishing partnerships with college presidents, deans of education, LEAs, and others strengthens the work and builds a solid working relationship. In addition to the multitude of other partnerships that have been developed or are in the planning stages, continued financing assures continuity of design. The long term commitment from stakeholders has grown and deepened over the last 20 years.

Like the Peace Corps, TFA as a national service model holds interesting promise to fill classrooms with effective teachers in the most rural and poor schools. A purposeful fundraising and financial plan is in place.

Weaknesses

(1): No weakness noted with regard to this factor.

(2): No weakness noted with regard to this factor.

Reader's Score: 10

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

(1): The well-developed management plan covers every aspect of the design clearly and succinctly. Table 10 on page e71 delineates each role and who is responsible to meet goals, timelines, and tasks related to sustainability and scalability.

(2): Wendy Kopp, CEO and Founder has spent 20 years polishing the work and growing the program with a careful eye for detail and quality learning. The qualifications of all personnel are well documented with years of commitment and excellence to TFA.

(3): The three evaluators have significant experience with large scale program review and teacher quality. Their experiences combine research, teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

Weaknesses

2. No weakness noted regarding this factor.

3. No weakness noted regarding this factor.

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

(a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and

cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);
(b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and
(c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Pages e79 to e81 articulate a clear picture of steps TFA has addressed to meet this preference.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted regarding this preference.

Reader's Score: 1

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Weaknesses

The applicant did not address this preference.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based

on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

TFA focuses on the needs of children with disabilities and limited English proficiency students. There are 880 Corps members working as special education teachers and 295 working as LEP teachers in under-resourced schools that struggle to find qualified teachers.

Specific strategies are applied that include goal setting, real life applications, using assessment to guide instruction, differentiating instruction, applying modifications and accommodations, as well as investing in parents and their learning.

Weaknesses

TFA has supplied a critical need to the most needy areas, however, a concern is the length of time corps members remain in the school and steps taken to assure continuity of learning as corps members change.

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

TFA is dedicated to attracting exceptional corps members to work in rural areas that have extreme difficulty finding effective teachers to fill classrooms and learning environments.

In 2009-2010, 590 corps members taught in 6 rural sites.

Areas that are difficult to fill that corps members serve include special education, science, math, and technology. They also provide good solid professional development to in-service teachers to increase the professional development in the schools.

High quality lesson plans are provided for the whole school in rural areas.

Weaknesses

The only area that can be defined as a weakness would be the changes in corps members after their two-year commitment is up. However, it appears, there is a commitment to the site and therefore the transition is scheduled and accounted.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/02/2010 8:58 AM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/06/2010 11:57 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Reader #4:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	14
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	15
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	_____

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
TOTAL	105	29

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #4:

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

There are two studies that present strong evidence that meet the WWC criteria. One was experimental and one was quasi-experimental study that met the WWC Standards of reporting positive effect sizes. One of the studies (elementary level) represented an experimental design that yielded an effect size of low to moderate size of .15 (page 16), when comparing Teach for America teachers' student achievement to non-Teach for America students. The effect size increased to .26 (moderate) when only the math achievement scores were compared for the two groups. The studies also indicated the amount of growth in months or the equivalent in reducing class size (pages 16-17). Students were randomly assigned to classes before the beginning of the school year in which the study was conducted to ensure equivalent classes for comparisons. The study was a two-stage study, with the first stage in one region and the full-scale study done in six regions on the east coast, west coast, the southeast and southwest regions of the country; this diversity of geographic regions lends itself to greater generalizability

(page 18). Evidence is presented that indicates that many educational studies do not generate effect sizes this large (page 25-27).

The quasi-experimental study conducted at the high school level found strong results and effect sizes of .10 and .18 across eight subjects and for science respectively. The findings were similar to the experimental studies. This study was conducted and then updated with similar results. The study met the WWC standards with reservations.

Another study of one middle school in New York City, schools in Louisiana, and North Carolina reported statistically significant findings or findings similar to the experimental and other studies that TFA teachers' impact was greater relative to all other teachers. Other studies of alternative teacher preparation have found TFA teachers are among the strongest teachers in this group (pages 20-23).

Studies presented indicate the TFA scale-up would have an important impact on improving student achievement for at risk minority students and students from low-income homes.

Weaknesses

The North Carolina study, although discussed in terms of positive findings for TFA, seemed contradictory when discussing the 99 separate comparisons of non-traditional pathways to teaching with teachers from traditional pathways. The non-traditionally prepared teachers had a greater impact on student achievement on 8 of the 99 analyses, and the TFA teachers performed the best on five of those eight analyses. This was not as strong an endorsement of greater effectiveness of TFA teachers when compared to the other studies presented. There were no statistical significance levels or effect sizes reported for the North Carolina study or the New York City middle school study. The evidence provided does not address all the grade levels proposed in the scale up process. Middle schools are not addressed in the research provided and although the experimental study addresses elementary school it does not discuss the Pre-K level specifically. This lack of research on the proposed grade levels raises questions about external validity regarding teachers who may be recruited during the scale up process. The statement regarding effect sizes of the research on TFA compared to other educational studies does not make their evidence stronger without further rigorous statistical comparisons made between the effects of such studies.

Reader's Score: 14

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in

other settings.

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

(6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

Strengths

The evaluator, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. has proposed a multiyear experimental design where students will be randomly assigned to TFA teachers and non-TFA teachers to determine the differences in student achievement. The individual students will be the unit of analysis which creates a stronger outcome and eliminates potential error based on clusters as the unit of analysis.

The sample sizes for students and schools were selected to ensure a statistically significant effect size of .15, which is similar to the studies presented in section B (page 45). Qualitative data regarding teacher attitudes, practice and expectations will also be collected to provide a context for the student achievement findings and to provide feedback on performance (page 45). They will also assess the difference in effectiveness of TFA teachers who joined during scale up phase and those teachers who are veterans of TFA. This information will be used to determine the impact of modifications made to the TFA model as it is scaled up. This evaluation will provide a larger sample size than previous studies (page 46).

The evaluation will provide specific information on the scaled up program's progress the implementation process, teacher characteristics, retention rate of teachers, and placement regionally and by grade level. This type of information can inform replication and implementation of the model.

The evaluation will be conducted by an organization with the resources and 30 year reputation for conducting such an evaluation. The project includes an allocation of \$5 million dollars which is sufficient to implement this rigorous study. Their involvement throughout the length of the grant will build on previous research and evaluation studies in related areas and on the TFA corps (pages 49-50). The company has conducted and is in the process of conducting a related large scale multiyear analysis of alternative certification programs on achievement scores (page 1).

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 15

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

Weaknesses

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the

project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

Weaknesses

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

(a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);

(b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and

(c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.

Strengths

Weaknesses

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;**
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and**
- (c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Weaknesses

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in

this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Weaknesses

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 6:11 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Reader #5:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	15
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	12
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	8
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	10
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	1

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	1
TOTAL	105	62

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A

Reader #5:

Applicant: Teach For America -- , - , (U396A100015)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

The Teach for America proposal request scale-up funds to accelerate the pace to add more TFA-prepared teachers to many high needs schools around the country. Building on previous successful experience, including data on student achievement gains, the proposal presents a solid case for the funds requested.

The application is extremely strong- goals and objectives are laid out in concrete, specific detail, and the applicant builds the grant proposal around extremely positive previous results. The strength of this proposal is the level of specificity and the quality of the management team to scale-up to reach schools nation-wide.

It is a very impressive proposal to help education in the country.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)

In determining the need for the project and quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (i.e., addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with actions that are

(a) aligned with the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet,

(b) expected to result in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Strengths

Teach for America is an organization with a great deal of credibility for the work being done to upgrade and improve the teaching profession via an alternative approach. The proposed project is to expand the applicant's teaching corps in the US by more than 80% by 2014. The need for such an effort is well laid out in the proposal and the approach to expand by 80% represents an exceptional approach to the grant priorities.

The proposal has very clear goals and objectives with expected outcomes, aligned with an explicit strategy that is comprehensive in nature. The overall proposal is credible and based on the TFA model that has worked successfully in the past.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 15

2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

In determining the strength of the existing research evidence, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there is strong evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that its implementation of

the proposed practice, strategy, or program will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

(2) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths

Weaknesses

3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)

In determining the experience of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that

(a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -

(i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and

(ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or

(b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

Strengths

The past performance of the applicant in implementing large, complex, and a rapidly growing project is evidenced by the growth of TFA, both in numbers of placements of teachers and the fundraising that is required. This clear demonstration of the ability to manage and implement growth is a strong

component of this application.

Student achievement under TFA teachers consistently outperforms traditional teachers, and thus meets the requirement of C (2)(b). Numerous charts and examples of comparison studies are provided to document historical data on the improvement of student achievement, closing of the achievement gap and improvement of college readiness and placement of high quality teachers.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 15

4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well designed experimental study or, if a well-designed experimental study of the project is not possible, the extent to which the methods of evaluation will include a well-designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.**
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.**
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to bring the proposed project to scale, the Secretary considers:

(1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.

(2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

(3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

(4) The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 500,000, and 1,000,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support replication.

Strengths

The number of students proposed to be reached totals 850,000 (an increase of 400,000 students over existing numbers) , and the number of new TFA teachers will grow to meet student projections. A total of 148 LEAs will partner with TFA , including urban, rural and charter districts and schools. The capacity of TFA is well documented based on a 20-year track record of growth and success, and the quality and credibility of leadership and the management team. One strategy proposed to ensure there are enough quality personnel to bring the project to scale is to tap the alumni force, which currently provides over 50% of staff. This growing group of TFA educators will help staff and manage the expansion proposed in this grant request.

The cost per student will range from \$356 to \$430 over the life of the grant. The request is for \$50 million and the budget lays out specific details as to how the funds would be used to grow the TFA teaching corps. Finally, the TFA organization has received a four-star rating for fiscal efficiency (from Charity Navigator) for eight years in a row. Fiscal management is clearly a strength of the organization. Dissemination strategies in the proposal are clear, comprehensive and credible, with numerous contacts, organizations and a support infrastructure cited to share the project's outcomes with a wide range of state and national sources.

Weaknesses

The discussion in the application about replication does not address factor E (3)- Little information is provided about the feasibility of the project to be replicated by others and in other settings.

Reader's Score: 12

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the Scale-up grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any other partners; and evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success.

(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

Strengths

The applicant has laid out a multi-step approach to secure the necessary resources to sustain the project after the grant period ends. These sources of revenue include the federal government, regional campaigns and support, individual and corporate fund raising, and foundation gifts. TFA points out that the success to date has been based primarily on these previously mentioned resources, and additional efforts to expand support attest to sustainability efforts.

Weaknesses

Information to address factor (2) does not adequately discuss planning for the incorporation of project purposes and activities. Instead a synopsis of what will happen as a result of the grant is the focus of this discussion. Further information is clearly needed in this area.

One additional area of concern is the strong reliance of TFA on federal funding.

Reader's Score: 8

7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)

In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant expertise and experience, of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator, especially in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

Strengths

The management plan is very clear in terms of budget, defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones.

The applicant appears to have developed a strong evaluation component, based on previous experiences with evaluation of the existing TFA program. The external evaluator appears credible, based on conducting similar evaluation protocols for other organizations. The overall evaluation plan is well defined and will provide information on TFA success in raising student achievement in high needs schools.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference

1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

- (a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**
- (b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**
- (c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

Strengths

Weaknesses

The applicant did not adequately address this competitive preference, as the focus of the TFA model is to develop K12 teachers for high needs students.

Reader's Score: 0

2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to enable kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students, particularly high school students, to successfully prepare for, enter, and graduate from a two- or four-year college. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs for K-12 students that

- (a) address students' preparedness and expectations related to college;**
- (b) help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; and**

(c) provide support to students from peers and knowledgeable adults.

Strengths

Weaknesses

The applicant did not address this competitive preference in the proposal.

Reader's Score: 0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Strengths

Students with disabilities and LEP students are a part of the high-needs focus of TFA, and there was evidence of the applicant's work and understanding of the unique challenges of these special needs students. The TFA model is designed to provide teachers in high needs areas, including most schools with LEP or special education students.

Weaknesses

While serving high needs LEP and special education students in many schools, there is little, if any, information provided in the proposal that discusses innovative strategies and practices designed to meet the unique needs of these high-needs students.

Reader's Score: 1

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to focus on the

unique challenges of high-need students in schools within a rural LEA (as defined in this notice) and address the particular challenges faced by students in these schools. To meet this priority, applications must include practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or improve teacher and principal effectiveness in one or more rural LEAs.

Strengths

Rural LEAs were mentioned, and there was evidence of the applicant's work and understanding of the unique challenges of rural students. The TFA model is designed to provide teachers in high needs areas, including many areas that are rural in nature.

Weaknesses

While serving high needs students in rural areas is a part of the model, there is little, if any, information provided in the proposal that discusses innovative strategies and practices designed to meet the unique needs of students in rural areas.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 6:11 PM