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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

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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

Status: Submitted

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

Status: Submitted**Last Updated:** 07/07/2010 10:55 AM

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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

