

Status: Submitted  
Last Updated: 07/07/2010 3:09 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

**Reader #1:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 Points)	20	18
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 Points)	15	0
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 Points)	20	18
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	0
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 10 Points)	10	8
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	7
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	10
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With	1	0

Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students  
(0 or 1 Point)

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	62

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## Technical Review Form

**Validation 04: 84.396B**

**Reader #1:**

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary Statement

### Selection Criteria

#### 1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 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, and

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

(3) The extent to which the proposed project is consistent with the research evidence

**supporting the proposed project, taking into consideration any differences in context.**

### **Strengths**

The Children's Literacy Initiative project provided an extensive list of research, which strongly supports the need for the proposed project and highlights an extensive professional development project with detailed information regarding the teaching and student population to be served. The CLI has provided extensive background information regarding their purpose for increasing their professional development services for teachers. The goals of the project are clearly stated and provide a foundation, which will net the outcomes of the proposed project. Moreover, with the proposed project outcomes directly related to the research questions, the foundation is set to provide direct collection of data connecting the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

### **Weaknesses**

Additional goals directly related to students and/or principals would have strengthened the project design and research, which would relate back to the needs of the project, which mentioned the need to work with the principals who work with the indentified teachers within their schools.

**Reader's Score: 18**

## **2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 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 moderate evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that 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 likelihood that 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**

**Reader's Score: 0**

### **3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 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 complex 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 CLI is based on a model classroom concept, which has evidence of improving student achievement and increasing past performance in implementing complex projects and working with LEAs and subsequent schools within each LEA. The CLI has a record of playing a critical role in helping schools make significant improvement, impact teacher effectiveness, and is recognized as a leader in professional development of teachers in literacy instruction. A strong research base and backing from school personnel is included in the proposal.

**Weaknesses**

While the CLI is a literacy model presented promising outcomes (school improvement, teacher impact) within the geographic area of the proposed project city, as well as within various cities, there is no evidence of having implemented complex projects such as the proposed project within differing school districts across differing states simultaneously. No data demonstrating closing of the achievement gap is provided.

**Reader's Score: 18**

**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 well designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) 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.**
- (3) 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.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (5) 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**

**Reader's Score: 0**

**5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 10 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 State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other 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 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, 250,000, and 500,000 students.**

**(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project to support further development, expansion, or replication.**

**Strengths**

The CLI has provided information regarding the number of teachers and students to be reached by the proposed project and its capacity to reach the proposed number of teachers/students. There is considerable strong evidence of the qualification of personnel and management to carry out the proposed project through its partners. It is estimated that 456 teachers will be affected by the training, as well as 45,600 students during the proposed validation grant period.

The proposed scale up information (after the proposed grant period) shows promising data regarding the larger number of students to be reached as well as the possibility of the project to be replicated, especially the coaching model.

Considering that the results of the interventions are promising, it would

appear that the project may be able to be scaled up to a higher number of teachers and students.

#### **Weaknesses**

The number of students and teachers to be affected by the proposed project is low.

**Reader's Score: 8**

#### **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, as well as the support of stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions), to operate the project beyond the length of the Validation grant.**

**(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 Validation grant.**

#### **Strengths**

Through its letters of support and project partners, the CLI has demonstrated that it has the resources to operate the project within the proposed validation grant period. It uses model classroom, which is being used already in classrooms. Strong evidence that principals support CLI is provided.

#### **Weaknesses**

Without additional funds, there is not substantiated evidence that the CLI can replicate the project beyond the proposed validation grant period. However, CLI has proposed to leverage resources at the end of the proposed validation grant period. No evidence of resources to sustain the project was provided.

**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 complex 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 experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.**

**Strengths**

The CLI provides a detailed plan regarding the qualification, training, and experience of essential staff for the proposed project through curriculum vitas. Detailed information regarding staff responsibilities within and across the project is provided, while highlighting the project team, district teams, and leadership. Strong credentials of staff for implementing the project are provided.

**Weaknesses**

A possible weakness is the inability of CLI to sustain the same level of personnel after the validation grant period. No specific information regarding the duties of personnel is provided. No evidence is available of how the teacher evaluation is used/not used. Need evidence (chart) of how the project goals/objectives strengthen the management plan are needed.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Competitive Preference**

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

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

**(a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and**

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

**Strengths**

The CLI proposed project speaks directly to the school readiness of K-3 students and in preparing them to be able to read at or above grade level. Without the attainment of reading skills, the proposed project students will not be able to be successful (at or above grade level) in their academic subjects. The proposed project aligns appropriate outcomes and measures consistent with early learning programs for the proposed students.

**Weaknesses**

A possible weakness would be the lack of consideration for the interventions needed for students that are found to not be reading at or above grade level. No concessions are addressed for students who are found to be not progressing within the proposed project.

**Reader's Score: 1**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

Preference not identified or addressed in proposed project.

**Weaknesses**

Preference not identified or addressed in proposed project.

**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**

Preference not identified or addressed in proposed project.

**Weaknesses**

Preference not identified or addressed in proposed project.

**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**

Preference not identified or addressed in proposed project.

**Weaknesses**

Preference not identified or addressed in proposed project.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Last Updated:** 07/07/2010 3:09 PM

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

**Reader #2:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 Points)	20	20
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 Points)	20	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 10 Points)	10	7
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	5
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	6
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	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	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	54

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## Technical Review Form

**Validation 04: 84.396B**

**Reader #2:**

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary Statement

The proposed project provides for thorough professional development for teachers K-3 in literacy instruction. The plan for the project includes coaching in classrooms, small and large group professional development meetings for teachers and follow up over the grant period to insure student achievement is impacted. The project has been enacted in 135 classrooms and has the potential to be replicated in other settings.

### Selection Criteria

#### 1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 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, and**

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

**(3) The extent to which the proposed project is consistent with the research evidence supporting the proposed project, taking into consideration any differences in context.**

**Strengths**

1. The approach used for the project links assessment to teacher training. The strategies used are likely to have impact. p.5,6,7 The use of extensive, ongoing coaching to each K-3 teacher over three years is a strong project component that impacts teacher practice. p.6 The structure of meetings and small group coaching is likely to impact teacher practice. The sustained nature of the training and support make this effort an exceptional one. The needs of the target group are presented with evidence to support need. For example, in Newark 69.9% of the students qualify for free/reduced lunch program, and the city is behind the rest of the state in 3rd grade reading proficiency at 41% while the state average is 63%.p.12

2. Goals are clearly stated and strategies are detailed and well presented. The strategies align with the goals of the proposer to insure children are reading by the completion of the grade 3. p.5-12 The project should achieve expected outcomes with the high level support provided to teachers in each phase of the project.

3. The project is consistent with research evidence in that the approach, CLI, has had statistical and substantial effect on improving student achievement. p.13 For example, in a 2007-08 model classroom 75% of the students performed at benchmarks compared to 68% in comparison schools. p.14

**Weaknesses**

None.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 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 moderate evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that 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 likelihood that 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 20 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 complex projects.**

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

1. The applicant has 22 years of experience with implementation of complex projects and improving student achievement. Data is presented demonstrating improved student performance in settings using CLI. For example, the Philadelphia Kindergarten Literacy Intervention Program, a precursor to the Model Classroom is presented with impacts described. p.16-18

2. Data is presented for the Gotwals Elementary school in PA. indicating that 3rd grade student proficiency on the state reading test grew from 20% to 69% in 2009. p.17

3. The development of employed teachers in instruction in literacy is an outcome of the model classroom model used in this project. p.17

**Weaknesses**

2. Data demonstrating the closing of the achievement gap is not presented for some of the several projects identified in the proposal using the model classroom. For example, the Wachovia Foundations TTI Project and the Philadelphia schools project are not presented with student achievement gains identified. p.18-20

3. Data is not presented supporting recruitment and placement of high quality teachers in schools.

**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 well designed quasi-experimental study.**

**(2) 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.**

**(3) 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.

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

**(5) 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 10 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 State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other 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 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, 250,000, and 500,000 students.**

**(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project to support further development, expansion, or replication.**

**Strengths**

1. The project will increase the number of highly effective teachers by 456
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and will directly reach 45,600 students during the period of the project. p.26  
The applicant has the ability to achieve these goals. The process provided to deliver these services is one that has been successful in 135 classrooms to date. p.26

3. Replication is possible since the model has already been replicated in 135 classrooms and there has been high level user satisfaction reported in several instances. p.26

4. The cost of the project is \$374.04 per child. The network cost drops in year 5 to \$25-50 per child annually and so it is expected that with such low cost the project can be continued. p.27

5. Dissemination is planned through conference presentations, published articles and shared through the project web site. p.27

#### **Weaknesses**

2. It is not clear how funding will be secured to bring the project to scale since the federal funding is a high level.

5. Additional dissemination plans could be developed to insure expansion of the project on a national level. p27

**Reader's Score: 7**

#### **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, as well as the support of stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions), to operate the project beyond the length of the Validation grant.**

**(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 Validation grant.**

#### **Strengths**

1. The system of meetings used in the Model Classroom approach is described to suggest that the model can continue to operate and increase

teacher effectiveness and student outcomes. p.29,30 The school Principals have expressed confidence in the model and it may be possible for trained teachers to continue their instructional changes learned in the project training. The costs of the Model Classroom may appear low to some districts for continuation. The cost of sustaining the project is estimated at \$5000.00 per school. Discussion of efforts to seek out funders is provided. p.30

### **Weaknesses**

1. No evidence of resources to sustain the project are identified. p.29,30 Specific funding providing for the continuation of the project should be identified and described to insure sustainability.
2. No evidence is provided showing planning for the incorporation of project activities into the ongoing work of the applicant. The cost of \$5000 per year per school to continue the project is estimated. p.30,31

**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 complex 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 experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.**

### **Strengths**

1. The management plan is well developed. The project should be completed on time and within budget. The project team is identified with members listed. The role of the Director and that of other key staff is described. The staff are identified and their tasks described. The role of the district literacy experts employed by the district to support the project is described and significant. p.31,32

2. Staff are qualified for the responsibilities of their positions. Their backgrounds are identified. For example, the person providing fiscal oversight has an MBA degree and the Project Director has background in professional development service providing. Managers are required to have a masters degree and extensive literacy experience. p.32 Overall, the team has strong credentials.

### **Weaknesses**

1. A chart linking project goals and objectives to the implementation plan with activities listed and staff identified as responsible for task completion would strengthen the proposal. p.31,32
2. Experience of staff in managing complex projects is not clearly presented. p.31,32
3. There is no evidence provided that the project director and the evaluator have experience in experimental and quasi experimental assessment. p. 31.

**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**

The applicant addressed the transition from Kindergarten to grade 1. Transition in the elementary school was addressed to serve student needs.

p.1-3

**Weaknesses**

The proposed project does not link pre school with kindergarten to improve the child's readiness for school. Instead, the project is focused on teacher development in reading instruction for grades K-3. p.1-3

**Reader's Score: 1**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

The applicant does not specifically address this priority.

**Weaknesses**

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities, including those who are assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, or the linguistic and academic needs of limited English proficient students. To meet this priority, applications must provide for the implementation of particular practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve academic outcomes, close achievement gaps, and increase

college- and career-readiness, including increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice), for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

**Strengths**

The applicant does not specifically address this priority.

**Weaknesses**

**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 applicant does not specifically address this priority.

**Weaknesses**

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 06/30/2010 8:40 AM

[show names](#)

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Status: Submitted  
Last Updated: 07/10/2010 8:35 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

**Reader #3:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 Points)	20	20
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 Points)	20	15
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 10 Points)	10	10
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	9
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	7
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	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	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	62

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## Technical Review Form

**Validation 04: 84.396B**

**Reader #3:**

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary Statement

The Children's Literacy Institute is a mature organization with a defined K-3 focus on literacy. It has three components: use seasoned teacher mentors, learn and employ best practices in literacy promotion with students, and job imbedded professional development using in-class observations and follow-up discussions. It has a history of influencing literacy awareness among K-3 teachers. It has proven methods and a history of sustained successful practice. It assists schools with succession planning in K-3 classrooms. It has highly qualified literacy specialists in charge of its operation. It also has strong evidence of succeeding with students in need.

### Selection Criteria

#### 1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 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, and

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

(3) The extent to which the proposed project is consistent with the research evidence supporting the proposed project, taking into consideration any differences in context.

#### Strengths

This project fills a gap in the teaching of reading/writing/speaking and language manipulation, in that most teacher preparation programs do not teach these disciplines.

This project provides mentoring by experts and "just-in-time" training for K-3 teachers

The project model is in use in Chicago, Newark, Camden and Philadelphia

There are clear goals described for the project(pg 11.)

There is evidence that this approach benefits low-income, minority student achievement (pg 12).

The project plan includes principals in the work, has a handbook for administrators and uses an assessment, similar to DIBELS.

#### Weaknesses

None Noted

**Reader's Score: 20**

### **2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 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 moderate evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that 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 likelihood that 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 20 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 complex 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 project model has an established research base.

It has strong backing from school district personnel.

The project has 22 years of experience improving student achievement and increasing the number of highly effective teachers K-3.

A Title I school third grade, using the project model had a pass rate in reading increased from 20% to 69%.

The organization has received prestigious awards and grants from businesses and philanthropic organizations.

#### **Weaknesses**

There is little data provided about readiness of potential students to fully benefit from this innovation.

The proposal does not deal with the issue of teacher turnover

**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 well designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) 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.**
- (3) 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.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (5) 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 10 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 State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other 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 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, 250,000, and 500,000 students.**

**(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project to support further development, expansion, or replication.**

**Strengths**

The organization has increased the number of effective K-3 teachers in its client districts to 456.

The project model's strategies have been affirmed by research conducted by the American Institute for Research.

Its intervention strategy in an ongoing school is tiered to maximize effect in grades K-3 (i.e. grades 3 first year; K second year 2nd grade third year),

capturing moving cohorts of K-3 students.

The design of the project can be replicated in any diverse school district in the USA.

The project components are standardized and consistent in their methods of delivery(pg 26), using a coaching model with standardized materials, methods, metrics and assessments.

The cost per student begins (year I) at \$ 375 per student, but goes down to \$25/30 per student by year 3.

#### **Weaknesses**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 10**

#### **6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)**

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

**(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources, as well as the support of stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions), to operate the project beyond the length of the Validation grant.**

**(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 Validation grant.**

#### **Strengths**

The applicant uses model classroom (already in operation in client districts) as a focus to disseminate and share results with other districts.

The project builds internal capacity by increasing teacher effectiveness (built in incentive/re-enforcer to see improved achievement in students).

There is strong evidence that principals express confidence in the CLI approach and that it has changed the way they think about and approach literacy capacity building in their locations (pg 26).

There is a modest cost (in later phases) of \$ 5000.00 per school annually.

### **Weaknesses**

Little data is provided about funding beyond possible philanthropic contributions.

**Reader's Score: 9**

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

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

- (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.**
- (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing complex 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 experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.**

### **Strengths**

The management team has strong credentials in business management; grant management and literacy. The organization has assigned various responsibilities to responsible members of its staff, according to the macro management plan.

The program is built into the institutional arrangements of its partner schools.

### **Weaknesses**

There is no mention of district's teacher evaluation form or process and how it is used (or not used) in the development of more effective K-3 literacy teachers.

No specific duties are assigned in the milestone chart.(pg's 34/35)

**Reader's Score: 7**

**Competitive Preference**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

The entire project is focused on improving literacy among K-3 students.

The districts already in the program are urban districts replete with under served and low income students.

**Weaknesses**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 1**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

**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**

**Weaknesses**

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/10/2010 8:35 AM

[show names](#)

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Status: Submitted  
Last Updated: 06/28/2010 10:30 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

**Reader #4:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 Points)	15	9
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	12
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	_____

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

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	21

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## Technical Review Form

**Validation 04: 84.396B**

**Reader #4:**

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary Statement

### Selection Criteria

#### 1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 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, and**

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

**(3) The extent to which the proposed project is consistent with the research evidence supporting the proposed project, taking into consideration any differences in context.**

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

**2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 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 moderate evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that 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 likelihood that 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**

**STRENGTHS:** The proposal offers moderate evidence of the intervention on improving student outcomes. A recent, 2009, quasi-experimental evaluation is described to support the CLI model. Equivalent matched comparison groups of treatment and non-treatment student outcomes were tested using standardized instruments based on pre/post tests. The results indicated an increase in student gains for both majority and minority students. Effect sizes indicated a moderate magnitude of effect on the participants in comparison to the non-participating students. The proposed

project will expand on the research with Kindergartners to include K-3 grade students and also investigate the cumulative impact of the project over two years through grade 1. Other research of the CLI model impact are briefly discussed in the applicant experience section which could be included in this section to further support the model.

### **Weaknesses**

**WEAKNESSES:** The proposal includes only one previous evaluation which does not include grades other than kindergarten. The proposal would be strengthened if further studies on the treatment impact were discussed and it addressed the proposed model components. The proposal also included a small number of classrooms, expanding to a larger number of classrooms and hence, students would improve the generalizability of the findings. It is also not clear if the findings listed on the top of page 15 are statistically significant. The spillover effect is mentioned for the previous study but the proposal does not discuss the anticipation of a spillover effect for the proposed project. The implications for such a phenomenon should be addressed and potential for control (either statistically or otherwise) should be indicated.

**Reader's Score: 9**

### **3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 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 complex 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 well designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) 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.**
- (3) 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.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (5) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.**

**Strengths**

The evaluation model is based on a randomized control trial to determine project outcomes/impact. The use of year one for piloting the evaluation measures is a good idea and will improve the quality of the instrumentation and assist in administering the tools in an efficient manner. The staggering of the phase in between outcome measurements, survey administration and observations increases the efficiency of the evaluation plan. Use of a standardized classroom assessment rubric will increase the reliability of the results. The amount budgeted for the evaluation based on the evaluation scope of work appears to be sufficient to conduct a thorough & effective evaluation. Offering a delayed treatment to the control group is an ethical alternative for the randomization. The evaluation methods provide explicit description of human subjects review and protection of human subjects including informed consent, assent and protections against risk/confidentiality assurances. The discussion of the sample size needed to achieve statistical power on page 22 clearly demonstrates thoughtfulness in methods to increase the power to detect program effects. Both formative and summative evaluation components are discussed. The proposed analytical method to determine project impact is HLM using the pretest as a covariate.

## **Weaknesses**

**WEAKNESSES:** It is not clear if there will be training on using the TELP and other instruments for the data collectors so consistency and inter-rater reliability will be achieved. The validity and reliability of the instruments are not discussed for each of the instruments in the quality of project evaluation section. Only one of the tools predictive validity is described and the other instruments' description does not address reliability or validity. The number of teacher observations is not indicated, so it is unclear if this component will be measured sufficiently to test/document the model. Interim reporting for continuous quality improvement is not discussed although use of interim reports for progress toward achieving intended outcomes in the third and fourth years is indicated on page 25. It would be helpful to include the reporting mechanisms and schedules for years one and two and to ensure program fidelity as well as a feedback loop for continuous quality improvement. The HLM model description on page 25 does not include other variables beyond level structure and pretest that will be included in the models to determine differential impact for participants. It would be helpful to include a summary table that indicates the number of students per year in each of the groups and the number that will be tested using the various instruments. Likewise, an evaluation plan with the evaluation question, instruments, person responsible, and analyses would be helpful. It is unclear who will be doing the data collection for the project.

**Reader's Score: 12**

### **5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 10 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 State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other 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 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, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project to support further development, expansion, or 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, as well as the support of stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions), to operate the project beyond the length of the Validation grant.

(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 Validation 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 complex 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 experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

### **Competitive Preference**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 06/28/2010 10:30 AM

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

**Reader #5:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 Points)	15	8
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	11
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address	1	_____

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

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	19

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## Technical Review Form

**Validation 04: 84.396B**

**Reader #5:**

**Applicant:** Children's Literacy Initiative -- , - , (U396B100030)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary Statement

### Selection Criteria

#### 1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 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, and**

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

**(3) The extent to which the proposed project is consistent with the research evidence supporting the proposed project, taking into consideration any differences in context.**

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

**2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 15 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 moderate evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that 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 likelihood that 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**

A research study by the William Penn Foundation produced moderate evidence that a CLI intervention similar to the one in this proposal had a significant effect in improving student performance.  
The evidence of the magnitude of the effect (0.29 SD) was provided.

**Weaknesses**

Only one study was cited and it was with a relatively small sample size.

The evidence of a causal link between DIBELS scores and the acquisition of reading comprehension may be tenuous.  
The research cited was only on Kindergarten students whereas the proposed project is K-3.

**Reader's Score: 8**

### **3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 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 complex 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 well designed quasi-experimental study.**
- (2) 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.**
- (3) 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.

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

**(5) 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**

They have a well designed experiment, with seemingly sufficient data to allow permit periodic assessment of progress toward intended outcomes. There appears to be adequate resources. Neither the program developer nor the program implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.

#### **Weaknesses**

They only describe providing preliminary implementation data and formative performance feedback during the planning year (Year 1). No further formative feedback is promised or described.

**Reader's Score: 11**

### **5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 10 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 State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other 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 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, 250,000, and 500,000 students.**

**(5) The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project to support further development, expansion, or 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, as well as the support of stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions), to operate the project beyond the length of the Validation grant.**

**(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 Validation 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 complex 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 experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.**

**Strengths**

## **Weaknesses**

### **Competitive Preference**

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

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

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

#### **Strengths**

#### **Weaknesses**

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

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

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

#### **Strengths**

#### **Weaknesses**

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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