

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/08/2010 10:15 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

Reader #1:

| | POINTS POSSIBLE | POINTS SCORED |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Summary Statement | | |
| 1. Summary Statement | N/A | N/A |
| Selection Criteria | | |
| 1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 Points) | 20 | 17 |
| 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 | 18 |
| 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 | 10 |
| 7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points) | 10 | 8 |
| Competitive Preference | | |
| 1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point) | 1 | 0 |
| 2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point) | 1 | 0 |
| 3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With | 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 |
| TOTAL | 105 | 63 |

Technical Review Form

Validation 18: 84.396B

Reader #1:

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

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

In an environment of creating high quality CMO's to operate charter schools, the applicant has identified a strong need for this project.

Rubric used to select charter operators appears to be well developed. (appendix H) This is important because the select of the potential charter operators is essential to the long-term success of the project. The rubric indicates the selection criteria is quantifiable.

Personnel Chart located on page e0 in the budget narrative section is comprehensive and provides scale up personnel by category, position and location. This type of pre-planning indicates a high level degree of strategic thought and planning occurred, with seemingly, buy-in by all stakeholders.

The concept of re-starting charter schools and placing them under the management of a high quality management organization is extremely relevant and timely. It is commonly accepted that low performing charters need to be closed. This project, allowing for a re-start, will keep students in place in the school they have chosen to attend. This minimizes further educational disruption for these students and address the educational needs of the student and the educational goals of the school.

Weaknesses

Applicant has described two tiered goals; each quite lofty (develop permanent infrastructure to turn around 5% of low performing schools AND replicate the model in two additional cities out of state). The goals should be split and each goal should be a separate project. (page e7)

Reader's Score: 17

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

Applicant has been working in New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina so the applicant is aware of cultural issues and barriers to achievement, and political landscapes within New Orleans (page e16)

Applicant appropriately discussed the ability of the partners (RSD and T ASD) to manage large scale projects. (page e21,22). RSD, of course, has made its mark on educational reform, even under the most gravest of educational conditions this country has ever seen. In spite of the devastating after effects of Katrina and very deep and broad challenges facing the school district during the recovery efforts, RSD has managed to experience laudable achievement data and educational outcomes for its students. According to the project design, T ASD is interested in replicating RSD's model and, hopefully, outcomes. RSD will play a major part in helping T ASD to close its persistently failing schools and re-open them under a stronger and more unified system with high expectations and goals. RSD has proven they are capable of a task of this magnitude.

Weaknesses

Applicant does not demonstrate any experience in working with large scale projects outside of New Orleans. New Orleans was an aberration. With the large scale destruction of Katrina the district had to rebuild and restart. This reader believes the applicant may have minimized the resistance to institutional change on the part of the local community of T ASD. Despite T ASD having committed to the project the district may find itself receiving resistance from stakeholders. T ASD, thankfully, does not find itself in the emergency relief situation New Orleans was in. The application would have been strengthened if this potential resistance to change were acknowledged.

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

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

Applicant has described an organizational infrastructure designed to address the high number of students impacted by the project as well as the personnel requirements. (page e31)

Newly formed schools will have an organic pipeline of teachers and school leaders through the applicant's partnership with Teach for America, New Teachers for New Orleans etc. (page e34)

The plan calls for and describes broad and deep dissemination of project results.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

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

Applicant has secured the support of critical stakeholders that will allow for support throughout the duration of the project. (page e 37).

Applicant has financial resources to implement the project (page e 37)

Applicant has a significant amount of funders to assist with sustainability efforts (page e38)

The project requires systemic infrastructure and doesn't heavily rely on critical personnel to sustain the project. This supports the potential that the project can continue beyond the grant timeline.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

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

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

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing 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 applicant planned for dedicated managers to oversee the management of the project. (page e41)

Applicant provided detail of a management plan which demonstrates the applicant has a deep grasp of the tasks and activities associated with the project. (page e43)

Identified key management is qualified. The identified key management brings relevant experience, both in educational planning and in business

operations) to the project.

Timelines, tasks, and milestones have been identified for key management. This is instrumental to the project success by outlining accountability as well as offering support and on-going communication between all project personnel.

Weaknesses

Applicant does not appear to have management representation from the office of the State Director of Charter Schools. This reader would not have expected to see active participation from the State level but this project is designed to directly, and longitudinally, impact the charter schools of the New Orleans area. Even though RSD is involved and is a major influence on the project, this reader would have expected to see the buy-in from the state level. State level participation, albeit third party, would strengthen the project outcomes and help pave the way for any barriers that may arise during project implementation.

Reader's Score: 8

Competitive Preference

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

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

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

Strengths

Applicant did not address.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

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

Strengths

Applicant did not address.

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

Applicant did not address.

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

Applicant did not address.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

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Last Updated: 07/06/2010 7:30 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

Reader #2:

| | POINTS POSSIBLE | POINTS SCORED |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Summary Statement | | |
| 1. Summary Statement | N/A | N/A |
| Selection Criteria | | |
| 1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 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 | 20 |
| 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 | 10 |
| 7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points) | 10 | 10 |
| Competitive Preference | | |
| 1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point) | 1 | 0 |
| 2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point) | 1 | 0 |
| 3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address | 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 |
| TOTAL | 105 | 70 |

Technical Review Form

Validation 18: 84.396B

Reader #2:

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement

This is a courageous application that seeks to take NSNO's drastic, proven model of school turnaround, expand it in its city, state, with its neighbors, and nationally. The applicant and its partners, have extraordinary records of student achievement in their schools, where the charter restart model has been allowed through the tragedy of a natural disaster to pilot, incubate, and grow. The objectives of the proposal are strong and measurable.

The model is based on achievement and what is right for children, NOT on the comfort of adults. Students get only one chance at K-12, so educators running schools under this proposal get only one chance to get it right; if they don't, they're out, which is as it should be.

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 project's goals and objectives are strong, measurable, and attainable, especially in light of the extraordinary experience of the applicant.

The plan is exceptional: it does not allow for vacillation, but takes the urgency of the educational crises in which Louisiana's children are living very seriously, by closing down the failing schools and reopening them with expert management, only.

The proposal seeks to truly validate the charter restart model as directed as a turnaround option by USED, which, although seriously underutilized, has been very successful in the 1% of schools where it has been used.

Under this model, failing school operators, whether district, charter, non-profit, or university, are not allowed to continue to operate failing schools. The model is based on achievement and what is right for children, NOT on the comfort of adults. This exceptional plan acknowledges that students get only one chance at K-12, so educators get only one chance to get it right; if they don't, they're out, which is as it should be.

The populations served by this proposal, in New Orleans, Nashville, and Memphis, are almost wholly at-risk and educationally underserved.

The competitive process for choosing charter operators under this proposal is truly innovative, and the history of and plan for continued stakeholder involvement in the process is imperative to its success.

Weaknesses

None Found

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 applicant has demonstrated important experience with complex projects: After the horror of Katrina, courageous educators in New Orleans jumped in and changed the failing educational system of the city. New Schools for New Orleans recruited experts from across the country to develop a restart model that has given New Orleans students a chance at success.

The NSNO restart schools are in the top quartile of LA's recovery school district schools

Partner Recovery School District of LA manages a yearly \$180M budget and directly runs 33 schools, and has a record of closing underperforming schools, and not allowing them to languish, because that is the easy way out.

RSD has experience managing both charter and district operators

RSD's schools have shown student success ranging from 11 to 26 times the state average growth in different grades and subjects

As an arm of the TN Dept of Education, T ASD is directly involved in the management of statewide projects

Weaknesses

None Found

Reader's Score: 20

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 applicants have a realistic projection for the number of schools and students to be affected by the proposal

This is a stimulating proposal that will finally bring to scale the RTTT and SIG restart turnaround model, using a well researched, evaluated, and carefully planned system that does not discriminate against private or public charter school operators, but only discriminates in terms of quality and results.

The dissemination plan, using the resources of the Broad Institute to train a cadre of turnaround/restart specialists is efficient on many levels

The NSNO program is already nationally known and has already garnered much interest from other LEA's and SEA's

The project personnel are time and talent-tested stars on the education reform scene, whose experience, passion, and abilities are beyond qualified

The strategy will support a system of quality. Qualified CMO's in cities in need of restart

The strategy for scaling efforts in Tennessee is well organized and supported

Because so many roadblocks had to be overcome in New Orleans when NSNO was begun, the organization knows how to overcome adversity when commencing projects.

The comprehensive "How to Guide" that will be published and made available in tandem with the program (by the Broad Foundation) is incredibly important to the program's replication and dissemination

Weaknesses

None Found

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

Sustainability of future restart models for NSNO, RSD, and TASD has all been calculated as part of government per pupil costs and government charter start-up fees

NSNO has presented evidence of very broad national foundation support, as well as support from the legislatures and DOE's of Louisiana, Tennessee, and the cities in which the programs will be implemented

Weaknesses

None Found

Reader's Score: 10

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

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

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

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

Numerous full-time personnel are dedicated to managing and monitoring the project by each of the partners

Partners have also dedicated full-time personnel to the scale-up of the program

A detailed and reasonable timeline, milestones, and partner responsibilities have been included in the proposal

Extremely and exceptionally qualified key project personnel are attached to the program

Weaknesses

None Found

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference

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

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

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

Strengths

Applicant does not address this priority

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

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

Strengths

Priority not addressed

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

Priority not addressed

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

Priority Not Addressed

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2010 7:30 PM

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/07/2010 2:26 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

Reader #3:

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

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

| | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| 4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points) | 2 | _____ |
| TOTAL | 105 | 29 |

Technical Review Form

Validation 18: 84.396B

Reader #3:

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

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

The applicant provides evidence of moderate evidence (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications) that the proposed strategy will have a statistically significant, substantial, and important effect on improving student achievement.

The description of the magnitude of the effect size - moving students from the 37th percentile to the 67th percentile in four years would measurably improve student achievement over the course of the grant.

According to the proposal, the project will only invite schools with positive effect sizes with students of high needs populations. This is a strength of the project in that it will increase the likelihood of overall project success by replicating systems and methods that have a record of success.

Weaknesses

None found.

Reader's Score: 15

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

This is a well-thought out and well-planned evaluation plan that takes into consideration the implementation variables that support successful implementation and outcomes variables that will provide information about which variables have the greatest impact in charter school implementation.

The project plan includes a quasi-experimental pre- and post-test design with a matched sample - meeting the requirement that the evaluation is a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

The plan to provide the project team and individual charter schools with information based on the quantitative data and the results of the Performance Management Rubric meet the requirement to provide performance feedback that will measure progress towards achieving intended outcomes.

The elements under study in the planned evaluation - effectiveness of government agencies in facilitating turnarounds, effectiveness of nonprofits in supporting turnarounds, and effectiveness of charter schools in executing turnarounds - will identify the elements that affected effective and ineffective implementation to inform replication efforts.

The budget for the evaluation plan is large and should be sufficient to complete the proposed plan. The general estimate of 10% - 20% of the budget for evaluation is generous in this case, as the project budget is so large. It is possible that an evaluation with the level of rigor described in this proposal can be completed for a lesser amount.

The proposal indicates that an independent evaluator will be chosen to conduct the evaluation.

Weaknesses

Although the proposal identifies a process by which an independent evaluator will be chosen, there is the likelihood that the evaluation plan will not be implemented as planned. The chosen evaluator may suggest changes to the evaluation plan. The plan would have been strengthened with the identification of an evaluation provider with the skills and capacity to implement the proposed plan.

Reader's Score: 14

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/07/2010 2:26 PM

Status: Submitted
 Last Updated: 07/07/2010 11:53 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

Reader #4:

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

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

| | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| 4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points) | 2 | _____ |
| TOTAL | 105 | 30 |

Technical Review Form

Validation 18: 84.396B

Reader #4:

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

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

The applicant's research base for the proposed program is robust in that the research base is a quasi-experimental study of student achievement outcomes in New Orleans schools reported in 2010. Results from the study produced moderate internal validity and moderate external validity. This research base is directly related to the applicant's proposed program, providing significant support for the proposed program. Moreover, the research base demonstrates significant effect on the achievement of students who attended the study's charter schools in New Orleans.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

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 applicant's proposed evaluation is well designed as it is a quasi-experimental design using a matched longitudinal sample, the same evaluative design as was used in the study described in Section B for the applicant's research base. The proposed evaluation is a thorough examination of its program as it addresses student outcomes, organizational outcomes, and replication outcomes through measures of student performance, government structure, accountability and effectiveness, and project expansion to other cities. Moreover, the evaluation is particularly strong in assessing replication as data collection will include information about school context and school conditions, as well as school operations and leadership.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/07/2010 11:53 AM

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/06/2010 2:40 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

Reader #5:

| | POINTS POSSIBLE | POINTS SCORED |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Summary Statement | | |
| 1. Summary Statement | N/A | N/A |
| Selection Criteria | | |
| 1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 20 Points) | 20 | 18 |
| 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 | 18 |
| 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 | 9 |
| 6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points) | 10 | 8 |
| 7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points) | 10 | 8 |
| Competitive Preference | | |
| 1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point) | 1 | 0 |
| 2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point) | 1 | 0 |
| 3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address | 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 |
| TOTAL | 105 | 61 |

Technical Review Form

Validation 18: 84.396B

Reader #5:

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , - , (U396B100118)

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 applicant proposes an innovative approach to improving consistently low achieving schools as well as providing important support to build the capacity and effectiveness of charter schools.

The applicant provides clear goals and objectives that are based on their experiences in one district that is now expanding to an additional state. The project goal of turning around 27 schools and creating 3 new charter management teams is ambitious, especially the expansion of the project to two additional school districts.

The project has an explicit strategy to build the capacity of charter school management teams which addresses a largely unmet need.

Weaknesses

The weakest element in the proposed strategy is the selection of Charter Operators. While the applicant has provided clear selection criteria with student achievement as the governing criteria, the applicant does not address the potential size of the pool operators.

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

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 eligible applicant - New Schools for New Orleans (NSNO) - is experienced in managing the scale-up in one district and working closely and effectively with its partner there.
The achievement results cited in the application are impressive.

Weaknesses

The one important possible weakness is whether or not the original cite is so unique that the experience gained will not translate to another location. The

questions surrounding whether or not the original site was so unique and so needy that the results may have come from any intervention needs to be accounted for as the project moves to TN. This possible weakness has called some of the achievement gains into question.

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

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 applicant has an ambitious plan to reach approximately 15,000 students in 27 schools in New Orleans and Tennessee. The majority of the students will be in New Orleans. The target population is the bottom 5% of schools in the three target LEAs: New Orleans, Memphis, and Nashville. While this might be a test of the applicant, they have the partners and resources in place to meet it. The applicant has been very clear on the length of time and resources it will take to bring the project to scale.

The project has great potential to be replicated, if successful given the interest in and need for turnaround models.

The applicant has an appropriate dissemination plan.

Weaknesses

The cost of building this type of capacity with low-performing districts may be the only difficult aspect of bringing the project to scale.

The applicant will need to be aware of the costs as interest in this project grows.

Reader's Score: 9

6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)

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

(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources,

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 support for the project in New Orleans is evident in the application as are the resources to continue the project with local and foundation dollars. The applicant has identified numerous avenues to continue (and Expand) the program. Because of the success of the project, it has been incorporated into the work not only of the applicant but at the state level as well.

Weaknesses

The only weakness in this section is the issue of stakeholder support in Tennessee. While a letter from the Chief State School Officer is included, there is little indication if stakeholders in Memphis and Nashville support the project. Without public support at the local level, the project may have a difficult time.

Reader's Score: 8

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

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

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks, as well as tasks related to the sustainability and scalability of the proposed project.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing 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 plan is organized by Goal areas and includes activities/responsibilities that support the Goals, timelines, and more

importantly milestones that can be used to track progress. This level of detail will be important to track activities at two distant sites ensuring that the project operates on-time and within budget.

The oversight team is very qualified to manage this work. The team in New Orleans is very experienced not only in starting-up complex projects but also managing them with positive results. The guidance (and credibility) of Paul Vallas will be especially important during the start-up in TN.

Weaknesses

The applicant proposes to hire a director for the Tennessee project as well as the external evaluator. While this is appropriate at this time in the possible funding cycle, the selection criteria for these two positions needed to be made more explicit in the application.

Reader's Score: 8

Competitive Preference

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

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

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

Strengths

The priority is not addressed

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

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

Strengths

The priority is not addressed.

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 priority is not addressed.

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 priority is not addressed.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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