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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2010 4:15 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396C101038)

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 25 Points)	25	25
2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 Points)	25	25
3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)	5	5
4. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	10
5. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	10
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	0

Technical Review Form

Development 11: 84.396C

Reader #1:

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396C101038)

Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 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 the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project clearly specified and measurable and linked to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet.

Strengths

The applicant's plan proposes to train highly effective teachers to work in under-performing schools to improve student achievement. The applicant's plan is exceptional because it has a residency component. The plan meets requirements of priority 1.

The applicant's proposed plan has clearly defined goals, objectives, and

outcomes that are measurable. The applicant's plan to recruit, prepare, train and sustain excellent teachers for BPS is highly structured (pp. 8-10).

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 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 projects of the size and scope proposed by the eligible applicant.**
- (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 pioneered the residency plan to meet the needs of its district (BPS). The plan now serves as a national model. The applicant's program has grown from training 16 resident teachers to 235 (p. 24).

The applicant has provided data referencing the achievement that has been made since the implementation of the turnaround program. The applicant provides data to show that the average student percentile for BTR teachers is slightly higher than non-BTR graduates. (BTR 48.96% compared to non-BTR 48.3% p. 26). The applicant has provided data that illustrates

significant gains in English and Math (p. 29).

The applicant's plan has increased the rate of retention of its BTR graduates. After completing their three year commitment, 85% of BTR graduates remain in the BPS. Previously, BPS retention rates were reported at 53% (p. 27).

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 25

3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to further develop and bring to scale the proposed project, 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 further develop and bring to scale the proposed practice, strategy, or program, or to work with others (including other partners) to ensure that the proposed practice, strategy, or program can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(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 so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths

The applicant will reach 2,335 teaches in the first year of the grant period in three turn around schools (p. 35). The plan will add three schools per year reaching approximately 1,500 students per year. BTR estimates that a total of 8,935 students will be reached by the end of the grant period. BTR will place 235 teachers into its school at a rate of 65 graduates per year.

The applicant's plan provides evidence that it has financial resources, strategies, and personnel to reach the proposed number of students during the grant period. The applicant has established its success at training and recruiting graduates to work in turn around schools. BTR has private and public stake-holders that support the program. BPS will contribute 20% of operating costs (p. 39). There is additional evidence of support that can be found on pp. 38-39.

The applicant's program can and has been replicated. BTR's plan is a national model and the Department of Education has already distributed \$150,000,000 to replicate the program.

The applicant has estimated that the total cost of the five-year program will be \$4,855,618. The applicant lists the cost of serving 100,000 students as \$54,300,000; 250,000 students as \$271,500,00; and 500,000 students as \$543,000,000.

The applicant's plan will disseminate information about programs by distributing all information about the program and its results at no cost. Dissemination methods will include presentations at conferences, published results in the Harvard Center for Education and Research and the Journal of Teacher Education.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

4. 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 from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) to operate the project beyond the length of the Development 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 Development grant.

Strengths

The applicant has resources to sustain the project beyond the grant period that have been contributed by stakeholders, BPE private funds, and multi-year funding from a variety of foundations (pp. 38-39). BPS has gained highly effective teachers that have been placed in their low performing schools and the retention of those teachers has cut their cost of training teachers who leave the system. Therefore BPS will remain a partner and help to sustain the program.

The applicant has provided evidence that has the potential for planning to recruit and train highly effective teachers through its unique approach to placing its graduates in turn around schools.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

5. 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.

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

Strengths

The applicant has a management plan in place. The applicant's key personnel are capable of managing the project to include budget oversight, establishing and meeting deadlines, and specified tasks during the grant period and beyond.

The project director and key personnel are in place and have relevant training and experience. The duties and responsibilities of the management team and staff are clearly defined and align with the overall program goals.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted.

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

Priority 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

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

The plan addresses the unique needs of students with disabilities and has seen growth in the performance of ELL students and students with learning disabilities.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 1

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

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

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

Strengths

Priority not addressed

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/28/2010 12:48 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396C101038)

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 25 Points)	25	25
2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 Points)	25	25
3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)	5	5
4. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	10
5. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	8
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve	2	0

Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)

TOTAL 80

74

Technical Review Form

Development 11: 84.396C

Reader #2:

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396C101038)

Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement

This grant initiative is viewed as exceptional.

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 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 the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project clearly specified and measurable and linked to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet.

Strengths

The Boston Teacher Residency program recruits, prepares and supports
--

teachers in the highest need areas for the Boston Public Schools. The outcomes of this proposal are intended to prepare and place a total of 130 teachers for Boston's designated turnaround schools; at present there are twelve. Other areas of focus within the program address retention, student academic growth, and proficient teacher evaluations.

Weaknesses

No overall weakness was noted in this category of the project.

Reader's Score: 25

2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 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 projects of the size and scope proposed by the eligible applicant.**
- (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

Since its creation in 2003, BTR has prepared and supported more than 230 graduates, with a sizable number addressing ELL and students with disabilities. A partnership with the Academy of Urban School Leaders (AUSL) will render technical assistance and support toward the program. The U.S. Education Department has recently distributed a large sum of monies in the form of Teacher Quality Partnership grants that are

intended to replicate the residency model.

Weaknesses

No overall weakness was noted in this category of the project.

Reader's Score: 25

3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to further develop and bring to scale the proposed project, 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 further develop and bring to scale the proposed practice, strategy, or program, or to work with others (including other partners) to ensure that the proposed practice, strategy, or program can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(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 so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths

BTR is partnering with principals with an excellent record of increasing student achievement; the first three have been identified. BTR is planning to sub-contract its school based assessment work to Achievement Network. In addition, BTR will contract with the Harvard Center for Education Policy

Research to conduct a value-added study to examine the effects on student achievement of its graduates.

Weaknesses

No overall weakness was noted in this category of the project.

Reader's Score: 5

4. 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 from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) to operate the project beyond the length of the Development 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 Development grant.

Strengths

BPS is a joint initiative of the Boston Public Schools and the Boston Plan for Excellence (BPE). BPE has helped secure over \$74M in funding for the BPS. Though BPS' funding serves as a core of BTR's support, the Ford Foundation and Carnegie Foundation, in conjunction with BPE, have contributed significant funds to a school based inquiry project. There also exist other funding sources that currently support BTR.

Weaknesses

No overall weakness was noted in this category of the project.

Reader's Score: 10

5. 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.

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

Strengths

The structure of the BTR management plan appears to meet the needs of successfully implementing this program.

Weaknesses

The key staff identified in the Boston Teacher Residency program does not include a professional with applied principal experience within a public school setting. As leadership is one of the major three components that determine school success, the BTR staff does not reflect an individual with this background.

Reader's Score: 8

Competitive Preference

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

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

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

Strengths

Priority not addressed.

Weaknesses

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

The profiles within turnaround schools reflect a significant enrollment of students with disabilities and limited English proficiency. Therefore, the program would 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 for students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Weaknesses

No overall weakness was noted in this category of the project.

Reader's Score: 1

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

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

Strengths

Priority not addressed.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2010 5:04 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396C101038)

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 25 Points)	25	25
2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 Points)	25	25
3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)	5	5
4. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	10
5. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	10
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve	2	0

Technical Review Form

Development 11: 84.396C

Reader #3:

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396C101038)

Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement

Selection Criteria

1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 25 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 the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project clearly specified and measurable and linked to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet.

Strengths

<p>This application, on page 6, uniquely builds from previous years of this work by the applicant partnership. It presents an exceptional and innovative approach to tackling the challenge of failed schools by matching leaders in</p>
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"fresh start" schools with the new leaders in "turn around" school to support successful turn-around strategies. The project plan is grounded in a theory of change that has been demonstrated as successful both in the Boston area and in a handful of districts across the country. It combines experienced leadership and data collection, analysis, and support with a constant focus on student learning (p. 8 and forward). The plan includes an innovative, standardized system for measuring teacher effectiveness (p. 11) which includes value-added assessment and classroom observations. Measures are specific and defined. Another strength is that the project proposal lays out a plan to prepare future teachers individually for the specific school in which they will be placed and, simultaneously, it will work with partners to implement whole school improvements (p. 13). The plan stipulates teaching through inquiry and the use of continuous formative assessment as well as regular analysis of assessment data to guide continuing instructional intervention (p. 14).

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 25

2. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 25 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 projects of the size and scope proposed by the eligible applicant.**
- (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 experience on which this project is built is well-established and distinguished. BTR has a strong background of success in Boston Public Schools (P. 3 and pp. 15-19). A "Turnaround Coordinator" will be responsible for overseeing the tricky work using formative assessment to guide continual instructional adaptation to student needs(P. 14). The guiding TOC, together with the value-added assessment model, is grounded in emerging evidence about the research-based features of strong assessment systems (p. 16). BTR demonstrates that it has convened a diverse group of participants who will be in a good position to develop teachers' skills in serving students in the high needs academic fields of math, science,ESL, and special education. This proposal specifically identifies the school leaders who will direct the programs on the ground (p. 21), and proposes a set of successful non-profit partners that are staffed with a deep bench of experienced urban school leaders who have a strong track record of success (pp. 22-30). The BTR team is especially experienced and successful. The proposal presents concrete evidence of the partners' accomplishments, and their solid reputation for using analytic approaches successfully in very challenging school contexts. Letters of support attest to the widespread commitment to this project and interest in supporting its scaling up throughout Massachusetts.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 25

3. E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (up to 5 Points)

In determining the quality of the strategy and capacity to further develop and bring to scale the proposed project, 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 further develop and bring to scale the proposed practice, strategy, or program, or to work with others (including other partners) to ensure that the proposed practice, strategy, or program can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(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 so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths

A well-planned strategy for scaling the project is built on BTR's experience and track record of success. The scale-up plan (pp. 35-37) will be coordinated by the the multiple partner which comprise this project team. Each of these partners is a strong, well-funded organization (BPS; BPE, UTRU, & AUSL), which has successfully scaled projects of this nature in the past. Letters of support from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provide evidence of statewide institutional support that increases the likelihood of success of the scale-up. Cost estimates for large-scale scale ups are presented (p. 37). Dissemination is thoroughly addressed (p. 38).

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

4. 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 from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) to operate the project beyond the length of the Development 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 Development grant.

Strengths

The lead organization for this project is embedded within two organizations that have established histories and track records of successfully initiating school innovation and change with a focus on teacher development. The parent organization (BPE) has already demonstrated its capacity for sustainability and growth over a 25 year period. The organizations are well-funded and continue to attract new investors in their work (p. 39). The project's teacher residence and training strategies, combined with its embedded evaluation, and its organizational power, promise that the project will be sustained and will likely expand and grow during the grant period and beyond.

Weaknesses

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

5. 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.

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

Strengths

A detailed and comprehensive management plan envisions a multi-faceted organizational structure which is directed by leaders with a wealth of experience on the ground and working in partnerships (p. 42-50) to turn failing schools around. Timelines and milestones are explicit and carefully designed; experienced staff members were identified and are already working with the lead organization. The staff roles are uniquely specific for the work that lies ahead, including field directors, and directors to oversee induction, curriculum development, ESL, and special education programs. The proposed staff members also have strong backgrounds working in schools in crisis and have successfully demonstrated their capacity to redirect the educational programs of failing urban schools.

Weaknesses

Now weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference

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

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

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

Strengths

Preference not indicated.

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

Preference not indicated.

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

What makes this application especially strong for this competitive preference is that an experienced field director is identified to manage the focus on ESL and special education in the implementation of the project. The application lays out a plan that is designed explicitly to address this priority area.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 1

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

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

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

Strengths

Preference not specified in this area.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2010 5:04 PM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/25/2010 2:28 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396D101038)

Reader #1:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Evaluation Criteria		
1. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 10 Points)	10	10
2. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	14
	<i>SUB TOTAL</i>	<i>24</i>
	TOTAL	24

Technical Review Form

Development Tier 2 Panel 07: 84.396D

Reader #1:

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396D101038)

1. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 10 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including reported practice, theoretical considerations, and the significance and magnitude of

any 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 are research-based findings or reasonable hypotheses that support the proposed project, including related research in education and other sectors.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has been attempted previously, albeit on a limited scale or in a limited setting, with promising results that suggest that more formal and systematic study is warranted.

(3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the 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.

Strengths

The research cited on the BTR model is well-respected in the field. Linda Darling-Hammond, Sanders, Calkins, Duke, and others are cited for their work on the importance of teacher education. Each component of the model is identified, described and connected to research in the field or a theoretical position. After seven years of recruiting, training and retaining teachers, the district would now like to target the success of the general model to the specific task of preparing teachers to support chronically low performing, or turnaround schools. For this task, the model will draw on the work of professional learning communities in the area of formative assessment.

The research on formative assessment is generally accepted. Learning to review data and use it to guide instruction is recognized as an essential element of teacher effectiveness. To support the use of the data, BTR will add a data collection and reporting system to ensure quick turnaround and easy access to test results.

To test their success in this effort, the district will pull on the work of Sanders. Recently, the program commissioned CEPR to conduct a value-added study on the quality teacher value in low performing schools. The targeting of the BTR model to more specific types of schools will help to identify and prioritize the skill set needed to support a vital educational

problem.

Weaknesses

None Noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. 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 are appropriate to the size and scope of the proposed project.**
- (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 to facilitate further development, 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.**

Strengths

The evaluation design is well-organized and partitioned to focus appropriate research methods on specific educational objectives. Three overarching research questions are articulated and expanded with sub-questions. Then, the evaluation for that question is explained. The research questions, in general, address the impact of teacher quality on student achievement in low performing schools. The school district will share student level data on teachers and students to enable the most robust statistical value-add analysis. BTR teachers will be compared to non-BTR teachers to support causal interpretations of the findings. Teams of trained researchers will go into sets of classrooms to examine the nature of teacher effectiveness using a case study methodology. Their observations will be standardized by recording their findings on validated behavior checklists such as the CLASS. The observations will be conducted on four different occasions over the school year, which is generous given the time required to conduct the observations.

Another research focus will examine the support network of the teachers-in-

training and the factors the hinder and propel teacher empowerment. This research will be qualitative in nature and include observations of teachers in and outside of the classroom. Multiple methods of data collection will be applied to allow for a triangulation of the findings. The resources for the evaluation are sufficient with budgets applied that are proportional to evaluators' time and/or expertise required.

Weaknesses

The multiple evaluation efforts need to be well-coordinated to facilitate communication. Here doesnt appear to be anyone assigned to the task.

Reader's Score: 14

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/25/2010 2:28 PM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/23/2010 9:40 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396D101038)

Reader #2:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Evaluation Criteria		
1. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 10 Points)	10	10
2. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	12
<i>SUB TOTAL</i>	25	22
TOTAL	25	22

Technical Review Form

Development Tier 2 Panel 07: 84.396D

Reader #2:

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation -- , - ,
(U396D101038)

1. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 10 Points)

The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including reported practice, theoretical considerations, and the significance and magnitude of

any 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 are research-based findings or reasonable hypotheses that support the proposed project, including related research in education and other sectors.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has been attempted previously, albeit on a limited scale or in a limited setting, with promising results that suggest that more formal and systematic study is warranted.

(3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the 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.

Strengths

STRENGTHS: The proposal addresses Absolute Priority 1 and the hypothesis as stated on page 3 responds to the absolute priority. The proposed project is based on seven years of experience with teacher residency and expands the current residency to turnaround schools to change the school environments so that increased student achievement can be realized in those schools. Research results for the seven years that the project has been implemented demonstrate effectiveness in teacher recruitment, preparation, development and retention that warrant further systematic study to determine generalizability to various school settings and student populations. The project will further extend the validation of the value added study of teacher effectiveness that it piloted during the previous implementation phase. The magnitude of the impact of the proposed project discussed on page 21 appears to warrant further research to confirm the previous results of the model in retaining qualified teachers through reducing turnover. There is a thorough discussion of effect size and impact on student achievement based on teacher years of experience which supports the retention component of the proposed project (p.21-22). The project will also draw on insights from other projects that have had success with turnaround models and will enlist their mentorship to guide the current project (p.23) and employ the lessons learned in building effective turnaround capacity for schools. A discussion of the variation in models

offers opportunities to replicate the model while still being flexible to school and local contexts (p.25).

Weaknesses

WEAKNESSES: None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. 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 are appropriate to the size and scope of the proposed project.**
- (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 to facilitate further development, 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.**

Strengths

STRENGTHS: The evaluation is guided by three key research questions that align with the overarching hypothesis of the project (p.32). The evaluation includes three distinct components that address each of the key research questions. The value-added study will be used to determine student achievement and will use a standardized assessment to both predict current performance and actual performance of the students. This is a strong methodology to employ for determining program impacts. The table on page 33-34 clearly presents the evaluation questions and the timing of data collection and reporting which are timed to allow for project implementation feedback to inform decision making. The second evaluation question will be addressed through observations and the collection of qualitative data to capture the key components of the project. Instrumentation is discussed and observer training is mentioned to ensure inter-rater reliability of the data collection (p.35). Qualitative data will be used to address the third evaluation question and this approach appears to be reasonable based on the

nature of the evaluation question. Data collection instruments and time points are presented on page 36 and seem to be appropriate for capturing data on key elements of the approach that can be used to document project fidelity and the variation in the model contexts that can inform outcomes as well as replication. The evaluation team consists of academics from Harvard Center for Educational Policy Research which has worked with the project implementers for the past two years to create an outcomes database. The project budgeted sufficient financial resources to carry out the evaluation based on the expertise of the evaluation team, the scope of work and the complexity of the evaluation components? data collection and analysis.

Weaknesses

WEAKNESSES: Although the data analyses for the outcomes component of the evaluation are clearly discussed in the proposal, the data analysis for evaluation questions 2 and 3 are not clearly presented. The addition of discussion of data analysis to address these questions would improve the proposal. It is not clear who will coordinate all of the evaluation activities as it appears there will be three distinct components with three different evaluation teams conducting the evaluation research. Although the job descriptions include a Director of Teacher Effectiveness which will oversee the evaluation, this information should also be included in the narrative of the proposal in the evaluation section. There is also another position in the job descriptions for a Research Associate, but it is not clear if he/she will work with the evaluation team. Further discussion of the specific responsibilities of the internal and external research staff and the working relationships to coordinate the overall evaluation would improve the proposal.

Reader's Score: 12

Status: Submitted

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