

Status: Submitted  
 Last Updated: 07/02/2010 12:05 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, - Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

**Reader #1:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	5
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	_____
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	4
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	1
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	1
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	1
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
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
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	12

---

## Technical Review Form

**Scale Up 2: 84.396A**

**Reader #1:**

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, - Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary State

### Selection Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

The proposal details a fairly comprehensive set of interventions that align with their goal of closing achievement gaps at the middle school level. The social support programs described on pages 7-11 are a solid attempt to address the needs of the whole child and comport with best practice for addressing school climate, parent involvement, and behavioral health issues.

The teacher supports described on pages 18, 19, and 25 are also in alignment with best practices. The strong focus on the use of student data to structure teacher planning and to evaluate teacher effectiveness seemed well thought out and described in the application. The supports for teachers in the form of classroom embedded professional development and a seemingly high level of access to teacher coaches is a strong element to this proposal.

### **Weaknesses**

The application does not explicitly state the unmet need this program is designed to meet.

None of the strategies described are particularly innovative. All are in the realm of established best practice and many districts with high risk populations deploy all or most of these strategies. The issue, typically, is that districts do not implement these interventions with fidelity. There is little information in the proposal on how fidelity would be monitored and ensured in scale-up, particularly beyond their district.

While the intervention strategies discussed are aligned with the stated goals, there is no discussion of how these interventions would be linked and made seamless at the school level.

The discussion on the data system does not provide adequate detail on the variables being monitored by teachers and principals. It would have strengthened the proposal if they used some type of early warning indicators, such as those developed by Johns Hopkins University.

Not enough detail was provided on how, if at all, the District was utilizing the resources of the community, such as developing a close working relationship with town or county run social services agencies to provide holistic supports to agency involved youth and families, or other non-profits in their area delivering youth development programming. Such relationship will be important to supporting the applicant's goal of addressing the "whole child" through this model.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Strengths**

Amador County Office of Education (ACOE) provides some information on its efforts to close achievement gaps for socio-economically disadvantaged middle school students (pp. 13, 22).

ACOE has secured concessions from their union (pp. 23-24) to remove ineffective teachers fairly quickly through an expedited performance review process, which has allowed them to improve the overall quality of teachers in the district, per criterion 2.a.ii.

#### **Weaknesses**

This District and the program manager lack experience in implementing large and rapidly growing projects. The scale of the pilot effort completed to date is very small and the District has not even tried to scale it yet to its other middle schools.

The rate of improvement described on page 22 in closing achievement gaps and improving achievement for all groups is weak due to small sample size and non-experimental study design.

**Reader's Score: 4**

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

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

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

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

implemented at scale.

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

The application provides in the budget narrative a strategy (and budget) for scale-up that attends to cost control and efficiency.

**Weaknesses**

The proposed plan for scale up is inadequate in several ways. First, it is very unlikely 2 technical assistance providers and a half time data person could serve the needs of more than maybe a few additional districts each year, much less the entire state of California. Secondly, there is no articulation of how administrators would be trained and supported. Administrators, particularly principals, will play a critical role in ensuring fidelity to the model.

Finally, there is no on-site quality control personnel described in the budget. This is a serious flaw in the dissemination plan, since written guides and virtual technical assistance are weak strategies for supporting good implementation of any program, much less one with as many moving parts as Excellence for All has.

It is not clear that the applicant has the capacity to even scale this project to all its middle schools, much less the proposed number of students (the whole state of California), as evidenced by the limited size of the described pilot effort (e.g., one fairly small middle school).

No estimate is provided of the costs for the applicant or others to reach 100,000, 500,000, or 1,000,000 students.

**Reader's Score: 1**

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

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

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

**(2) The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities,**

or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Scale-Up grant.

#### Strengths

The application addressed the topic of sustainability.

#### Weaknesses

The applicant does not provide adequate information on how the project will be sustained beyond the grant period. The assumption that program fidelity can be achieved through the train-the-trainer model briefly described on page 49, with only two trainers and one data person to support and monitor rollout is not realistic, even for Amador County alone, much less statewide.

No information is provided regarding a multi-year financial plan.

The fact that the applicant indicates a lack of resources to scale Excellence for All beyond the pilot school suggests very limited capacity to sustain this work beyond the grant period.

No substantive partners are named to assist with either the complexity of statewide scale-up or financial sustainability beyond this grant.

**Reader's Score: 1**

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

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

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

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

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

#### Strengths

The application provided some information that is responsive to this selection criterion. For example, information is provided regarding the management of the project and qualifications of key personnel.

### **Weaknesses**

There is only one resume included in the application, and that individual's experience is in smaller districts. Further, this individual is presumably the evaluator and the program manager, which is not sustainable, or in alignment with the guidelines on having an independent evaluation for these grants.

There is no discussion in the proposal of the management aspects of the roll-out. For instance, no timeline is provided or clearly defined responsibilities for the individuals to be assigned to this project.

The budgeting is inadequate for the proposed scale because it does not provide for the technical assistance and data management demands that scaling to the state level would require.

**Reader's Score: 1**

### **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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

The pilot described is for middle grades. No evidence of effectiveness with children in the early grades is described.

**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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

This program was only piloted on middle school students. While some data on high school GPA's is provided, the evidence is not there to suggest this program targets college transition or persistence. The applicant also states that they are only now working with the College Board to develop this part of the program.

**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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

The interventions described for these subgroups are the same ones being used for the general population with no modification to address the particular needs of students with disabilities or limited English proficiency: and there is no independent analysis of impact for these sub-groups.

**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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

The innovations described in this proposal are widely used by urban and suburban districts and no evidence is provided by the applicant that it has modified them for rural schools.

**Reader's Score: 0**

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/02/2010 12:05 PM

Status: Submitted  
Last Updated: 07/06/2010 10:40 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, - Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

**Reader #2:**

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

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

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

---

## Technical Review Form

**Scale Up 2: 84.396A**

**Reader #2:**

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, - Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary State

### Selection Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

## Weaknesses

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Strengths**

In the section labeled Research (Proposal pages 26-46), information is provided on the improvements in scores on California Standards tests and district algebra tests, decreases in suspension rates, and decreases in discipline referrals. Data that is presented is related to various Amador District programs.

In addition, some tables are provided showing growth of students in LEADS over four years, in CORE classrooms and for the MATH Star program. Student growth information presented for participating (more experienced) and non-participating (less experienced) teachers shows higher performance levels for students of program participating teachers.

### **Weaknesses**

No specific research is provided that would be considered as strong evidence (See Factor 1). Research presented using quasi-experimental methods and non-random groups is presented. Effect sizes are not reported (See Factor 2).

- 1) Test score information is drawn from a limited sample of students and may not be meaningfully generalized to the proposed in the program expansion.
- 2) Student attrition is not taken into account.
- 3) Research is not clearly linked to each of the planned program elements.
- 4) It is not always clear what treatment was provided to students in the various research studies. Some elements do not appear to be represented such as the use of data by teachers and students, Character Education, Life Skills purple binders, and Service Learning.

**Reader's Score: 8**

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

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

- (1) The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.**
- (2) The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that**
  - (a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has -**
    - (i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and**
    - (ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or**
  - (b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.**

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

No strengths noted.

**Weaknesses**

The applicant did not include any information in its application that is responsive to this selection criterion.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

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

- (1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed**

number of students during the course of the grant period.

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

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

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

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

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

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

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

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

### **Competitive Preference**

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

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

**(a) improving young children's school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive readiness) so that children are prepared for success in core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101(11) of the ESEA);**

**(b) improving developmental milestones and standards and aligning them with appropriate outcome measures; and**

**(c) improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade.**

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/06/2010 10:40 AM

Status: Submitted  
 Last Updated: 07/03/2010 0:21 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, - Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

**Reader #3:**

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

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

4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	5

---

## Technical Review Form

**Scale Up 2: 84.396A**

**Reader #3:**

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, - Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary State

### Selection Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

## Weaknesses

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

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

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

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

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

#### Strengths

In one quasi-experimental study comparing 132 students going through the intervention against a control group, several positive academic outcomes were demonstrated for the intervention group.

#### Weaknesses

No effect sizes were presented. The elements of the intervention were presented as a package with little attention to what elements of the "package" are critical to success, except an indication that teacher quality is important, which is hardly an innovation.

This research base is very limited, more in line with what might be anticipated for a development grant. A scale-up grant requires strong

evidence and effect sizes to warrant the large scaling of the intervention. What is presented is suggestive that this one junior high school is doing some things appropriate to improve achievement and behavior but there is insufficient evidence that it is generalizable or of significant magnitude to meet the high evidence requirements of this grant program.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

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

- (2) The extent to which, for either an experimental study or a quasi-experimental study, the study will be conducted of the practice, strategy, or program as implemented at scale.**
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.**
- (5) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**
- (6) The extent to which the proposed evaluation is rigorous, independent, and neither the program developer nor the project implementer will evaluate the impact of the project.**

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

The applicant did not include any information in its application that is responsive to this selection criterion.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

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

- (1) The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.**
- (2) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national, regional, or State level working directly, or through partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.**
- (3) The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the proposed project's demonstrated success in multiple settings and with different types of students, the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the**

proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.

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

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

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

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

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

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

### **Competitive Preference**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

### **Weaknesses**

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

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

### **Strengths**

### **Weaknesses**

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

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

### **Strengths**

### **Weaknesses**

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/03/2010 0:21 AM

Status: Submitted  
Last Updated: 07/07/2010 10:31 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, - Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

**Reader #4:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	5
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	0
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	6
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	3
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	3
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	3
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
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	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	21

---

## Technical Review Form

**Scale Up 2: 84.396A**

**Reader #4:**

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, - Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary State

### Selection Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

A credible set of core practices for meeting the needs of middle school students is included by the applicant. These practices do address an unmet need for middle school students to engage more fully and actively in school activities.

Service learning projects, a program component, address another unmet need - offering students an opportunity to apply knowledge, gained through rigorous standards-based instruction, in the context of real world problems and situations and to demonstrate skills not easily measured by paper and pencil tests. In addition, service learning projects fill another unmet need - offering alternative ways to assess student growth and progress in addition to academic achievement.

### **Weaknesses**

Expectations for this criterion are that the project uses an exceptional approach and strategies that are not widely adopted. This project is extremely derivative. For example, components such as anti-bullying and training for high school students to develop conflict resolution skills and engage in peer mediation with middle school students are not new. Similarly, the 14-day skills component reintroduces a program the school previously offered but dismantled due to budget cuts.

The goals for the project are vague; objectives and outcomes are not tightly coupled with priorities; and links and alignment between program components and the stated goals of the project are not well articulated. For example, one stated goal of the project is to "prioritize the achievement and providing (sic) the support to achieve." However, no concrete strategy other than a listing of program components is outlined.

Another of the applicant's goals - to achieve a five percent reduction in the achievement gap per year between socio-economically disadvantaged and other students - is too modest to reach the 50 percent reduction predicted by 2014 - 2015. This reduces expectations that the applicant will achieve the goals outlined.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

**The Secretary considers the strength of the existing research evidence, including the internal validity (strength of causal conclusions) and external validity (generalizability) of the effects reported in prior research, on whether the proposed project will improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement**

gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. Eligible applicants may also demonstrate success through an intermediate variable that is strongly correlated with improving these outcomes, such as teacher or principal effectiveness.

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

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

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

**Strengths**

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion B.

**Weaknesses**

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Strengths**

The data presented in the application narrative indicate some apparent successes in significantly closing the achievement gap based on two subgroups - socio-economically disadvantaged students and white students. As evidence, the applicant reports an increase of 69 points on California's API ranking for socio-economically disadvantaged students from 2007 to 2008 compared to a 35 point increase for white students. In addition, there were modest achievement gains in district algebra and English language arts tests for all students and reductions in suspensions and referrals for special education services. Since these factors are often correlated with higher graduation rates, the inclusion of this data is meaningful.

#### **Weaknesses**

The applicant's experience is with one school in one small school district of 4500 students. This is insufficient experience to count as successful past performance with large, complex rapidly growing projects let alone mounting the large scale effort proposed in this application.

Presenting data on only two subgroups weakens the applicant's claim to have significantly closed the achievement gap as evidence that it has the experience to carry out the scale up of the project, a requirement of this criterion. In addition, the rationale for including only two subgroups for comparison is not well explained and raises doubts about the reliability of the information about gains in narrowing the achievement gap because including more subgroups for comparison could show a different trend or more mixed results.

Lack of consistency in the dates for reported data make determination of true progress difficult. For example, California API growth is reported for 2007-2008, while English language arts and mathematics growth is reported for 2006-2008. Gauging whether this applicant has the experience in raising student achievement is difficult without consistent and comparable data.

**Reader's Score: 6**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

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

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

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

during or following the end of the grant period.

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

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

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

#### **Strengths**

Some program components can be replicated at little cost and because of ease of use. These include small group student activities, team building games, discussion groups, and policies, such as the honesty policy. This is strength when considering feasibility since ease of use appeals to potential adopters.

#### **Weaknesses**

No substantive information is presented indicating the applicant has the capacity to carry out the scale up project. To-date, the project has not extended beyond one middle school. In addition, the number of students in the district is small compared to the applicant's claim that the project will be scaled up across the whole county and state in the next four years of the grant cycle. This appears to be too ambitious an aspiration for such a small district with limited staff dedicated to the project to carry out successfully.

No explicit plan for scale up is outlined nor are the numbers of students to be affected included. No mechanisms for dissemination are identified. Cost estimates are not presented.

The applicant's claim that the project as a whole is easily duplicated is not supported by the project description. For example, it is not clear how this project with its multiple components fits within the confines of a typical school day or whether it requires an extension of the school day. Details about how time allocations for subject areas within the school day may have

been reorganized, whether or not waivers have been sought and received, and/or modifications in schedules were not included in the project narrative. These details have an impact on replicability in schools that may not have the same flexibility in scheduling.

This school district has a relatively low percentage of students participating in the federal free and reduced-price lunch program which is a statistic commonly used as an indicator of poverty - 30 percent. School districts that have higher percentages of students living in poverty, should they attempt to implement the components of this project, may not achieve similar results. This limits replicability. Another drawback in this area is that data on only two sub-groups have been reported limiting the generalizability of the project's impact on narrowing the achievement gap. Districts that are larger and have many more subgroups to consider would not deem this project a replicable model.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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

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

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

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

##### **Strengths**

An important aspect of sustainability is building the capacity of teachers to carry on the work when the funding cycle for the scale-up grant is over. In order to insure this internal sustainability, the plan for teacher professional development is critically important as is the quality of the training they receive to continue the work. The applicant identified instructional coaching provided by district coaches as a method for improving teacher practice. If planned well and conducted skillfully, this is a viable and useful way to provide direct support to teachers and build human resources capital for sustainability.

## Weaknesses

The professional development plan for teachers for this project is not clearly or comprehensively outlined. Reference is made to a "trainer of trainers" model and instructional coaching by district coaches, but the kind, frequency, modes, timing, and scheduling of professional development is not delineated nor is there a plan to insure professional development is delivered expertly and well. As a result, the expectation of internal sustainability through increased teacher capacity building may not be achievable.

Including stipends in the grant budget for teachers to participate in professional development limits sustainability because incentives for teachers may not be able to continue when grant funding ends.

The applicant did not include evidence of broad stakeholder support for the project nor stakeholders' commitment to seek or allocate funding and resources to continue the project beyond the grant cycle.

Although the applicant presented a four year financial plan, no indication of how or whether grant funds would be leveraged with other funds and resources to support sustainability was provided.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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

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

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

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

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

## Strengths

The project director is the Assistant Superintendent for the County Office of Education. This indicates that the project will receive central office

attention. The project director also has some experience in district wide grants management which indicates some familiarity with the management of projects.

### **Weaknesses**

The project director is listed as the project evaluator. As a result, the requirement of this criterion that an independent evaluator conduct the evaluation has not been met.

The management plan, without timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and without clearly defined and assigned responsibilities for each program component, does not appear adequate to achieve the objectives of the project. In addition, project staffing may not be sufficient. Project staff consist of a project director who will manage the project as one of many responsibilities she currently assumes as Assistant Superintendent for the County Office of Education and two trainers. There is no provision for either the position or services of an accountant or budget director. This is not a strong enough management model, given the expected scope of the project, either to provide sufficient services for the current operational level of the project or to manage the expansion and sustainability of the project over time when it is expected to reach a large number of schools, students, and teachers.

**Reader's Score: 3**

### **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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

The applicant does not address any aspects of this criterion in the project narrative.

**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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

No program components are specifically geared toward raising students' aspirations for college, helping them or their parents understand affordability issues and the availability of financial aid and the college application process, nor providing support for students for college preparedness from peers and adults.

**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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

Although students with disabilities are included in the population served by the current project, project practices are not specifically targeted toward the needs of students with disabilities to increase their college- and career-readiness or to increase their high school graduation rates.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

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

**Strengths**

The project, as it currently operates, is located in a rural school district and includes strategies that are associated with drop-out prevention and improved high school graduate rates, such as lower suspension rates and referrals for special education services.

**Weaknesses**

Information provided on significantly narrowing the achievement gap and improving student achievement is compromised by inconsistency in reporting dates and use of only two subgroups for comparison.

**Reader's Score: 1**

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/07/2010 10:31 AM

Status: Submitted  
Last Updated: 07/08/2010 3:38 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, -  
Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

**Reader #5:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	5
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	0
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	8
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	0
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	1
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	1
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	1
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
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
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	16

---

## Technical Review Form

**Scale Up 2: 84.396A**

**Reader #5:**

**Applicant:** Amador County Office of Education -- Curriculum and Instruction, - Curriculum and Instruction, (U396A100007)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary State

### Selection Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

The proposal identifies an unmet need for the school district. High-need, low socioeconomic students are targeted for the Excellence for All program. There is a need for low socioeconomic students to develop character and social skills. This program focuses on preventing bullying skills and developing leadership at the middle school level. Middle school students, especially students who attend low performing schools need programs that provide guidance for and address bullying prevention, leadership, and character building.

### **Weaknesses**

The hypotheses or goals of the proposal do not directly relate back to how the goals would affect student achievement in future years.

There is only a small population of students that are affected by increases in student achievement as presented in the data. There are no data showing that the past successes were widely adopted by a large population on a large-scale basis. The proposed project only demonstrates affects for a small population of students and it is unclear as to whether or not the proposal can achieve the same success when serving a large population of students.

The goals are generally stated on page e3 and are not clear or measurable. Example: "rolling out to high risk, low performing schools in California and beyond." A clear set measurable goal would include the percentage or number of students to be reached and would define the boundaries of "beyond." As a result, the concepts and data were provided in overall areas and do not demonstrate how the data throughout the grant would align with each specific goal area.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

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

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

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

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

**Strengths**

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion B.

**Weaknesses**

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion B.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Strengths**

There is documentation demonstrating that the applicant used the character education programs such as TLT, LEADS, SKILLS to close the achievement gap with students in the district. The application indicates that a component of the proposed project received an award (Character Education Partnership National Schools of Character Promising Practices Award) for successes with this program.

On page e0 the proposal states that "Excellence for All is centered on data driven teaching and individual instruction plans for students and teachers." There is documentation on pages e13-14 that the program has data demonstrating successful increases in student achievement. The data presented demonstrate that the achievement gap is diminishing for the disadvantaged students relative to student achievement on the California Standards Test, suspension rates, and student referrals to multi-disciplinary teams.

### **Weaknesses**

There is not specific documentation to indicate that the applicant has personnel on staff with experience or past histories for implementing large scale, complex, rapidly growing project. On page e22 the proposal states that the programs used to provide data were implemented over a two year time period. The enclosed credentials did not document past experience with the programs that the district implemented nor were there references to demonstrate that the personnel had successes with large scale projects. The only resume attached to the proposal was that of the Assistant Superintendent in charge of curriculum. It is unclear from the resume as to what types of historical success experiences this person has with the implementation and success of large scale projects.

Data supplied on page e13 refer to "lone Junior High." Therefore, the data provided in the application are not indicative of large scale success because a large number of students and/or a large number of schools were not used. The data provided indicate that only a small number of schools were used in the program to provide evidence of success. This data do not provide support for closing student achievement gaps in large, complex and rapidly growing projects.

There were no meaningful data provided for increasing recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals.

**Reader's Score: 8**

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

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

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

**Strengths**

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion D.

**Weaknesses**

Not assigned to score Selection Criterion D.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Strengths**

Start-up costs and operation costs are articulated in the proposal in chart format on pages e5 and e6. The applicant provides documentation for support of 150 community business partners. It is possible with the partner support and the requested funding that the project could be brought to scale over a 2 year period of time.

#### **Weaknesses**

The proposal indicates that the project can be easily replicated regionally and nationally. However, there is no plan indicated for how the proposed project will be replicated regionally or nationally. In addition, it is not clear throughout the proposal as to the number of students the applicant intends to affect on a large scale basis.

The costs proposed in the project do not align with what it would actually cost to maintain the project for a five year period of time or longer. More careful consideration needs to be given to such areas as professional development, availability of resources to implement the project with fidelity,

or dissemination of the information to reach the larger populations. Adequate consideration and realistic cost proposals were not sufficiently supported for these areas. More attention needs to be focused on having more than one person assigned to oversee the fidelity of a project that is designed to reach large numbers of students. For example: It will be difficult and unrealistic for this individual to continue in the role of Assistant Superintendent and oversee financial aspects, data collection, dissemination and articulation of project success and assure fidelity of a large scale, multi-year project.

**Reader's Score: 1**

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

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

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

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

##### **Strengths**

The grant includes a four-year financial and operating plan.

The applicant does have a vision and plan to incorporate partners and activities that could be incorporated and continued beyond the end of the Scale-Up grant. There are 150 community and business partners committed to assisting with the project.

##### **Weaknesses**

There was no evidence of commitment from any named stakeholder groups, such as the teacher union, etc. when referring to stakeholders.

The financial plan did not provide the necessary supporting details to demonstrate success of a large scale project. The application would be stronger if it included details for the incorporation of proven strategies and expenses related to these strategies such as: professional development, travel

expenses to other counties, regions, state conferences, and joint meetings with partners.

Although the proposal contained realistic financial costs for sustaining the project for multiple years, the amount that was requested does not appear to be realistic with all the resources that might be needed to sustain the project beyond the five year period of time. The following areas were not addressed in the proposal and should be considered in order to assure success beyond the end of the project: salaries for reaching an increased number of students, personnel to collect and analyze the data, costs for increased and updated use of technology hardware and software, dissemination of information to increasing numbers of partners, students, parents, teachers and other district-funded personnel.

**Reader's Score: 1**

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Strengths**

There is evidence of timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks within proposed budgetary expenditures.

#### **Weaknesses**

The proposal does not provide for an independent evaluator to conduct research and gather data in order to demonstrate the relevant successes of the project.

Although the application addressed provisions for professional development at the district level, the proposal did not account for professional development that would sustain a large scale project over a 3-5 year period of time.

On page e51 the applicant did state that the fidelity of program implementation will be overseen by the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction or Amador County Office of Education and Amador County Unified School District. However, there was not a clearly defined assignment of a designated project director or listing of designated responsibilities for key personnel involved with the short-term and long-term implementation of the project. Additionally, the application did not demonstrate that the applicant nor the independent evaluator had extensive experience with conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives.

**Reader's Score: 1**

### **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**

No strengths found.

#### **Weaknesses**

There was not substantial evidence that the entire project would target the birth to grade 3 students. There were not specific projects described that would involve long-term planning or support for prekindergarten to grade 3 students.

There was no data to show that early childhood students had shown increased student achievement. There was not a detailed plan outlining how the project would significantly increase student achievement at the prekindergarten to grade 3 levels.

The curriculum vitae of personnel involved with the project did not indicate experience with large scale projects at the prekindergarten to grade 3 levels.

**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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

The proposal did not consistently address activities, strong data, evidence and/or documentation follow-up that college readiness was a priority emphasis area that would be targeted and sustained.

**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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

The proposal did not overall consistently address activities, data, and documentation that students with learning disabilities and/or ELL students were priority areas. Although at times these areas were mentioned no specific professional development activities to sustain this focus were addressed throughout the proposal. In addition there was no evidence in the proposal that indicated that personnel had background experience and/or credentials to successfully execute large scale projects/activities for students identified to receive ELL and/or special education services.

**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**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses**

Extensive data and documentation overall were aligned to only the district

applicant. There was no substantive documented activities or evidence relative to meeting the needs of students in rural areas. There was no documentation specifically aligned to student performance in rural areas. In addition, the application did not address how dissemination would take place to reach out to rural areas.

**Reader's Score: 0**

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/08/2010 3:38 PM