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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/30/2010 3:29 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

Reader #1:

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

the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)		
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
TOTAL	105	2

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A
Reader #1:
Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

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

Weaknesses

The applicant fails to provide ANY Strong Evidence, as defined by the Secretary in the i3 Application for Grants (p. 9), in support of its application. There are no studies cited in support of the program proposed for scale-up that employ experimental or quasi-experimental design.

The study included in the Appendices on the Integrating Science, Math, and Technology Program is largely descriptive. The quantitative data at the end of the study are difficult to interpret and do not indicate either a control group or describe a clear intervention. The study is also dated (apparently completed in 1992). The study on professional development, also contained in the Appendices, while providing quantitative information, is also lacking

an experimental design or any sort of control group. Moreover, the relevance of this study for scaling up the applicant's Helping Hands program is unclear, since the study describes parts of a California state-mandated induction program that is not part of the applicant's scale-up effort. Other materials in the Appendices presumably included as evidence of the strength of the applicant's proposed project are similarly inadequate and of questionable relevance. They fail to clearly identify the specific impact of the kind of intervention the applicant seeks to scale up in distinction from the impact other programs that the state or local district may have implemented in the schools studied.

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

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

The evaluation includes a "Process Evaluation," which is intended to provide critical information about the program recipients' responses to the various elements of the training it seeks to scale up. In addition, the evaluation intends to study the nature and success of implementation in the scale-up schools and districts.

The evaluation also includes an Impact Evaluation. Impact of the training provided teachers will rely on data that include perceptions of the training participants, observations of their teaching, and document reviews. Impact of the teaching, materials, and opportunities provided to students will rely on data from standardized achievement tests. The applicant states the clear intention to ensure that the impact evaluation is statistically significant.

Weaknesses

The description of the project evaluation in the narrative is too cursory to understand the detailed nature -- including data collection and methodology -- of the evaluation proposed. The narrative notes only that "Statistical techniques that are appropriate to each of these designs will be applied" (p. 39). The narrative mentions "proportional random sampling," indicating an

intention to undertake an experimental study. But stated intention is insufficient. There is simply not enough information to determine whether the proposed study is adequately rigorous, of sufficient scope, or otherwise well enough designed to assess the success of the program to be scaled up. It is never quite clear from the larger proposal narrative what precisely the intervention is that is to be scaled up, making causal inferences and a study that supports them very difficult to conceive.

The information about the evaluator is inadequate to determine qualifications. The evaluator is apparently independent, and a resume of the principal evaluator is included. It indicates competency in formative assessment and qualitative studies, but it is unclear whether the evaluator and her staff (whose resumes are not included) have the background to carryout a study of the magnitude and experimental or quasi-experimental design that is asked for in the grant RFP.

The budget for the evaluation seems be approximately $1.1 million -- about 1.5% of the total project costs and likely inadequate for the envisioned scale of the project.

Reader's Score: 2

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: 06/30/2010 3:29 PM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/03/2010 11:05 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

Reader #2:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	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	0
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	1
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	1
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	0
TOTAL	105	10

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A
Reader #2:
Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

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 comment that many pre-kindergarten teachers do not have "concrete" science examples that are linked to the science standards help to support the need for this project. In addition, the comment that many teachers in the district do not have hands-on science experience is an area of concern around the country.
According to the applicant,NCLB testing has focused on math and English and science has not be a focus(p.4). This comment stresses the need for this project from a national perspective.
Providing science as a focus in pre-kindergarten is a positive approach to activating this interest in the early years of education.

Weaknesses

The variety of variables in this project makes it extremely difficult to understand the linkages e.g. service learning; professional development for preK-6 teachers; and integration of science and natural disasters (pp. 3-5). To strengthen this project a clear linkage of these items to data and research would be helpful.
There are three areas being addressed so it is difficult to determine if they are widely adopted. Service learning exists throughout the country; and professional development for teachers is also an area that is being developed elsewhere. The linkage to natural disasters does not seem aligned and would require additional explanation.
The need for math and technology are not fully addressed in this project. If this is indeed part of the title and the project, a demonstrated need for the other two areas would strengthen this project.
The elimination of science specialists because of the budget reduction does not seem to link to the need for the project. A clearer alignment between the budget reduction and the need for this project are necessary to understand the mention of staff reductions.
The goals of the project are vague and no objectives or outcomes were found in the document. These areas need to be included and specific to address this criterion.

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

Weaknesses

Evidence of experience in the implementation of large, complex, and rapidly growing projects was not demonstrated in the application. The only mention of implementation was within Fremont Unified School District preschool program and staff training. The applicant would need additional evidence of large scale implementation to strengthen the application.
In order to clearly demonstrate the success of the program, it would be helpful to include data for the Fremont Unified School District rather than one school. It is difficult to translate the work at one school to a large, complex rapidly growing project.
Graduation rates and high quality teachers and principals were only mentioned in terms of training the principals and teachers in science education. The applicant needs to demonstrate how the recruitment and placement of the teachers would be expanded to strengthen the application.
The data provided in support of the project were for English Language Arts on the California Standards Tests and the area of focus for this project is math, science, and technology. The data for these areas would need to be included for this criterion to be adequately addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

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

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

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

(4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the

key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

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

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths

The applicant has the City of Fremont, California and the Math Science

Nucleus organization to assist in the continuation of the project beyond the grant period.

Weaknesses

The abstract indicates that 1,709,000 students and 26,060 teachers will be impacted by this program over the 5 year period. The application does not indicate how this number was determined since the first year of the project is the packaging of materials. A clear explanation of how the number of students was determined would help to clarify how the $28.00 per student was derived(p. e0).
The selection of districts or schools requires the commitment to tracking student performance but there is no mention of a data collection device that is common to all project participants. It seems that to have data that can be compared a common assessment and data management system would provide ease of collection and analysis.
The application does not mention any partners that have funds to contribute beyond the grant funding. It would strengthen the application to have foundations, corporations, or other entities who can provide funding to continue the growth of this project beyond the grant period.
To date the demonstrated success of this project is in one preK-6 school in Fremont Unified School District in California. Evidence of a broader application of the project with different populations would strengthen the application with respect to this criterion.
No mention was made of evidence regarding relative ease or user satisfaction except for a quote from one teacher. Stronger evidence would need to be provided to meet this criterion.
No cost estimates for reaching 100,000, 500,000, or 1,000,000 students were provided.

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

The letters of support are from the partners in the project, one Assemblyman, and one State Senator

Weaknesses

The support listed above is primarily from those individuals who will be receiving funds from the i3 grant. All of the funds are in-kind funding and there are no corporations or foundations to fund the project beyond the grant period. The funding of the math and science coaches, service learning coordinator, and other positions consumes a large portion of the budget. It seems that the project is heavy on personnel from all partners and no explanation is provided as to how these positions would be covered after the grant funding ends.
There was no demonstrated evidence of support from teacher organizations, principal organizations, or parent-teacher organizations, except for the official partners in the project. Further expansion of stakeholders who will be involved in implementation would strengthen the application with respect to this criterion.

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 range of individuals and their expertise in the areas necessary for all of the aspects of this application provide a strong group of content and support personnel.

Weaknesses

The management plan lists activities to be completed versus accomplishments of goals and objectives. The timelines are not specific other than to list phases I and II of the project. There are no milestones listed and no clearly defined responsibilities of the personnel responsible for the project. These clarifications are needed to determine the adequacy of the management plan.
The Project Director has expertise as a Geologist and President of Math/Science Nucleus but the resume does not detail experience in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects. Only one of the key project personnel has experience in managing large, complex, and rapidly growing projects. Providing additional information on experiences of the key personnel to administer a Scale-up grant needs to be provided.
The applicant did not provide any information on the background and expertise of the Sinclair Group that will serve as the external evaluator. A study this group conducted on professional development for Fremont Unified School District was the only documentation and it did not provide their relevant expertise and experience. The individual who will serve as the Chief Evaluator does not appear to have relevant experience in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies. Clarifications and supporting documentation need to be provided to determine the qualifications of personnel.

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

The inclusion of pre-kindergarten in the application indicates an awareness of the importance of starting at an early age in science education.

Weaknesses

The applicant spoke only to providing science to pre-K students but did not speak to how the success of the instruction would be measured.

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

Weaknesses

The applicant did not provide evidence or support that its project addresses the requirements of this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

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

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

There was a mention of teaching Farsi and Mandarin in the project abstract in order to promote cultural awareness. No further mention was made of innovations to address the learning needs of students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

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

A rural area in California and one in North Carolina would be a part of the project design

Weaknesses

No innovations were listed except to indicate that the model would be used in rural areas to determine effectiveness for replication.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 11:05 AM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/02/2010 8:49 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

Reader #3:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	6
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	0
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
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	1
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	0
TOTAL	105	10

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A
Reader #3:
Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

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

(1):The need for effective mathematics and science educators is a nationally defined need particularly in urban and rural locations with populations of high-need students.The applicant's purpose is to provide professional develop for teachers,to design materials for instruction in STEM classrooms, and to build the practice of professional learning communities. In addition, service learning is incorporated utilizing the Red Cross as a "real world" experience.

(2a): FUSD's project design has two phases defined for Pre-K through high school for material development, teacher training, community training, student program, and web tools.

Weaknesses

(1): The practices proposed, while effective based on research and practice, include practices and procedures commonly used by school districts across the country. The applicant proposes practices, material development, and programs widely adopted in the design and development for math and science. The same can be said for the proposed service learning component. The professional development and development of materials by grade range, while good, do not meet this criterion.

(2a): The aligned priorities are not specific in terms of aligning the new materials, the professional development and the outcomes for students. Various experiences are outlined and discussed but the alignment was missing.
(2b): The anticipated outcomes include an increase in teacher effectiveness and increased student achievement in mathematics and science. However, measurable outcomes are not fully developed.

Reader's Score: 6

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

Weaknesses

(1): There was no evidence that the school district would have the capacity to grow and expand the project. Many effective elements are in place but the reader did not find sufficient evidence of past performance to implement large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.

(2i): An expectation would be that teachers' effectiveness could be measured in relation to their learning and that of their students. No documentation was presented as to how teachers' new learning would result in changes in their teaching practices that result in increased achievement.
(2ii): The applicant did not identify how the strategies proposed would significantly increase student achievement or how teacher effectiveness would be measured. Information regarding how the applicant increased teacher effectiveness that resulted in higher graduation rates, higher levels of student achievement, and placement of high quality teachers in high-need classrooms was not articulated.

Reader's Score: 0

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

(1): The projected number of students to be served is 892,500 and 10,400 teachers.The Fremont Unified School District is working hard to build effective teaching strategies and experiences that will result in better teachers and administrators which is important work. However, the reader does not see evidence that the district is ready to scale-up to the expected levels defined in the i3 grant application.

Weaknesses

(1): As proposed, the capacity of the applicant and its partners would be stretched to meet the targeted number of students. So much of the capacity listed is based on local assets, the current fiscal downturn has to be factored into overall capacity.

(2): State and local school budgets are fragile. With many of the staff serving in many roles, bringing this project to scale would be difficult. The Red Cross as a partner will also be limited in its ability to fully develop the service learning component. The ability of a local school district personnel to manage a project with the proposed personnel that have high level district responsibilities is not be realistic.
(3): Evidence was not described to assess how the project could be replicated in a variety of settings to meet the diverse needs of student populations. Professional development impact was largely dependent on those educators who had been trained to take the modules usage forward. This proposal has so many factors built in, replication would be difficult in multiple settings.

(4): Cost estimates were provided but they did not cover all of the proposed factors for teachers, principals, communities, and students.
(5): There was not a clear plan to disseminate information to support replication. Many of the materials developed would require a fee that could further limit dissemination.

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

(2): The city of Fremont has agreed to sustain the building after the grant period has ended.

Weaknesses

(1): The ability to operate the project beyond the Scale-Up grant did not include a multi-year finance plan. The plan proposed depends on the sale of materials, the potential for museum visitors, field trips, and the sales of materials to other schools. Much of the finance was reliant on the local district and community. The commitment of Intel and Lam was not clear in terms of their long term agreement.

(2): The complexities of the proposal and variety of delivery will make the long term incorporation into the district difficult particularly taking into consideration changes in administration locally and regionally. While the applicant has good ideas to incorporate and expand science/math instruction and materials development, the techniques and strategies should be under continuous development and not static.

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

(2): The management team has a long history of working together to promote math and science instruction.

Weaknesses

(1):The management plan to achieve its objectives is limited but there are

clearly defined responsibilities, and particularly tasks related to sustainability and scalability, however, proposed personnel have full time responsibilities in addition to those proposed by the applicant. Therefore, the applicant does not present an adequate management plan as described.
(2):The qualifications of the proposed personnel, while good, did not have the necessary experience managing large complex and rapidly growing projects that can be replicated in multiple settings.
(3):The qualifications listed for the independent evaluator spoke to her experience with the California Formative Assessment System. Other people were also listed but it is unclear what their roles would be in the project or the evaluation.

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

(c): Some emphasis is provided on early childhood outcomes by improving preschool teachers' ability to teach science through literacy and play.

Weaknesses

(a): The applicant did not address school readiness or methods by which children would be prepared for success in core academic subjects beyond math and science.

(b):The proposal does not develop milestones and standards beyond those set for science and math. The means by which outcomes would be measures for early childhood students was unclear.

(c): The applicant did not provide information related to this criterion.

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

Weaknesses

On page e1, the applicant indicates that they will address this preference through service learning. There was not enough information provided to meet the criteria listed in a,b,and c.

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

Limited English proficient students will have access to instruction in their native language as well as English to help them with each new science experiment. Materials will be customized to meet the needs of autistic children.

Weaknesses

Reader's Score: 1

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

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

The applicant refers to models that will emerge that would be able to service all schools to increase student achievement. In that this is a Scale-Up grant, the expectation would be that the applicant had evidence of models to employ to meet this competitive preference. They also specify that they will "test" different implementation models.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/02/2010 8:49 AM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/06/2010 11:57 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

Reader #4:

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

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	_____
TOTAL	105	6

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A
Reader #4:
Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

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

The applicant presented some comparative data regarding professional development sessions.

Weaknesses

This proposal does not meet the criteria for strong evidence by providing research studies that are experimental or quasi-experimental in design. There was no random assignment of subjects or schools to control or treatment groups. There were no matched groups for comparisons. There are no reports of statistical significance or effect sizes for any of the research submitted for Section B. There are no studies provided that indicate that this project would have an impact on improving student achievement or closing

the achievement gap or any of the other priority areas of the i3 program.

Reader's Score: 2

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

The applicant describes an evaluation plan that focuses on the continuous improvement cycle (page 34). The evaluation will be conducted over the length of the program. There will be a process component and an impact component. The professional development section of the process evaluation will use the Guskey Levels of Professional Development Evaluation and the National Staff Development Council Standards to determine the effectiveness of the training. The impact evaluation will determine the impact of the training, support and use of the curricular materials system on the participants (page 36). Data will be collected for each component of the evaluation.

Weaknesses

The narrative and description of the evaluation plan do not indicate that the evaluation is either a well designed experimental or quasi-experimental design. All information is presented in generalities, e.g. "data will be collected on..." (Page 37 - 38), but no details about the data are provided. The same is true for the analyses proposed. It is just stated that there will be an analysis of the data, but no specific strategies are identified (pages 38-39). This design does not reflect methods that will provide quality data for future organizations to replicate. There are resources allocated to the evaluation but it is not clear if they would be adequate to implement a high quality design. Although the evaluator has worked with the school district previously, the evaluator's experiences and capacity for conducting a rigorous evaluation are not evident based on the narrative and sample evaluation report found in the appendix of the proposal.

Reader's Score: 4

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 11:57 AM

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Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/03/2010 6:11 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

Reader #5:

	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS SCORED
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
Selection Criteria		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	6
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	0
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	0
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	1
Competitive Preference		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students With Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
4. Competitive Preference 8: Innovations That Serve Schools in Rural LEAs (0, 1, or 2 Points)	2	0
TOTAL	105	8

Technical Review Form

Scale Up 1: 84.396A
Reader #5:
Applicant: Fremont Unified School District -- Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects - Instructional Services,Federal and State Projects (U396A100022)

Summary Statement

1. Summary State

This is a proposal designed to offer STEM-related efforts to a high needs student population, including students from diverse backgrounds (for example Afghanistan). The proposal's focus on mathematics and science performance issues is well articulated.

The proposal is written in such a way that it is difficult to assess the overall need as presented. Data related to closing the achievement gap in the current program is inconclusive based on the information presented.

The information provided about the applicant's past performance in bringing large, complex projects to scale is inconclusive.

The proposal needs significant strengthening to be a viable recipient of grant funds.

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 applicant seeks funding to address key math and science performance issues involving an extremely diverse population in a local school system, including refuges from Afghanistan and other subgroups that total 68% of the population. The need for STEM activities is well articulated in this proposal, and a variety of strategies around models (or modules) is the focus. Information is provided about the need for maththematics and science initiatives in PreK-6 and 7-12 grade levels.

Weaknesses

It is difficult to adequately assess this Math Science Network approach as being exceptional. The proposed project is presented as a series of program offerings, including professional development, curriculum materials and creating modules for the system and eventually for use by others. While all of these are likely worthy strategies, what is missing is a clear definition of the actual project being proposed. The proposal begins with the heading of: Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design and then is followed by;

* A paragraph about the need for highly qualified teachers and administrators being the key to student success and then the need for rich lessons to engage students in STEM.
* A description of various projects in the school system, without an explanation of these projects? relationship with STEM
* The need to improve science in preK-6 and 7-12grade levels.
* Service Learning is mentioned to increase academic and community responsibility
* This information is followed by a heading titled: 'Dissemination'

At no point in the four pages prior to a new heading is the FUSD model (Helping Hands) defined clearly and explicitly.

The goals , objectives and timelines are very confusing, as the application contained numerous phases of detailed information around materials, teacher training and community training (i.e. pgs 9-13). Specific goals and timelines were difficult to determine.

Reader's Score: 6

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

Weaknesses

No information regarding past performance of the applicant in implementing large, complex and rapidly growing projects is provided in the proposal. A series of previous activities (Teacher Training, New Teacher Training, Principal Training and involvement with a non-profit)are provided as efforts the applicant has been successful in leading, but nothing is mentioned about experience with large and complex projects.

In terms of providing information on closing the achievement gap, the only reference to statistical performance is found describing test data on pg. e7. The test scores are presented in paragraph form with little explanation of what types of test these represent and whether or not achievement gaps have been closed among subgroups of students.

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths

The applicant presents information that suggests the financial resources can be well managed through the school system's current fiscal and oversight policies.

Weaknesses

The number of students proposed to be reached is 100,000 in year two, 500,000 by year 3.5, and 1,000,000 by year five. The capacity of the applicant to reach the proposed number of students is not addressed in this proposal.

The eligible applicant's capacity, in terms of personnel, is presented as a list of names and back grounds, but the applicant does not demonstrate the capacity of these individuals to bring the proposed project to scale. Financial and management capacity are not addressed in the proposal.

The feasibility of the project to be replicated successfully is difficult to ascertain based on the proposal. The project appears to have merit to impact science instruction in the nation's schools, but the difficulty in assessing past performance and the lack of clarity of personnel to manage the effort makes feasibility difficult to determine.

The proposal provides information of the operating cost per student per year that ranges from $154.00 in year one to $12.30 in year five. One sentence later the figure per student per year is $28.83 for all students. How these figures were determined is uncler from the prposal

Mechanisms for dissemination include local television interviews, Internet marketing and articles. How these strategies will be carried out is not found in the proposal.

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

Weaknesses

Resources to assist with sustainability include well trained staff to continue the effort after the grant concludes, the non-profit Math Science Nucleus to help develop a financially stable model and local governmental assistance. In addition mention was made of generating financial resources which presumably would be an effort that would be sold to other school districts. The applicant has not provided the specificty needed to demonstrate its commitmentof resources nor the broad support critical to the project's long-term success.

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

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

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

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

initiatives.

Strengths

Overall, while the lack of a management plan significantly hinders this proposal, the discussion of timelines and responsibilities in the proposal demonstrates the adequacy to sustain this project over time.

Weaknesses

A management plan does not appear to have been developed in the proposal, other than a set of activities found in appendix H-9.

The qualification of key personnel are presented and include a variety of people and a description of past/current professional duties. No mention is made of their ability or experience related to managing large, complex and rapidly growing projects.

The ability of the project director and key personnel of the independent evaluator in designing and conducting large-scale experimental and quasi-experimental studies of educational initiatives is not addressed in the proposal.

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

Weaknesses

The proposal does not adequately address this competitive priority. Information in the proposal related to improving early learning outcomes is limited and provides no detail in this ompetitive priority.

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

Weaknesses

The application does not significantly address this competitive preference. Information to support college access and success is limited and does not provide the detailed information necessary to meet this preference.

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

The proposal does not adequately address this competitive preference. Information related to the needs of special education and LEP students is limited and does not adequately address the unique needs of these students.

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

Strengths

Weaknesses

The proposal does not adequately address this competitive preference. It is unclear whether or not this applicant intended to address the needs of rural students, and thus the proposal does not meet the requirements of this preference.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2010 6:11 PM