

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

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

**Reader #1:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
2. B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (up to 20 Points)	20	9
3. C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
4. D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 15 Points)	15	8
5. E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale (up to 15 Points)	15	_____
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	_____
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	_____

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address 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	_____
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	17

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## Technical Review Form

**Scale Up 1: 84.396A**

**Reader #1:**

**Applicant:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

### Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary State

### Selection Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Strengths

## Weaknesses

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

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

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

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

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

#### Strengths

In support of two of the interventions the applicant proposes to scale up, the applicant cites several experimental or quasi-experimental studies that provide support for both the effectiveness of teacher professional development (coaching -- CS) and of ELL instruction. The findings for all studies are reported as being statistically significant, and in one case (the second study listed on p. 16) the effect size appears to be of large magnitude.

#### Weaknesses

Two studies cited (Lara-Alecio et al., 2009, and Tong et al., 2008) in support of the ESL instructional model (ELLA) appear to involve sufficiently large

samples to ensure adequate power and statistical significance. Outcomes measures appear to have validity. There is scant information, however, about the actual design of the studies, though the discussion of random selection of schools and teachers implies they are experimental. However, the applicant's reference to "these studies with the experimental and quasi-experimental design" (p. 16) adds to the uncertainty about whether these are, in fact, experimental. If they are quasi-experimental, there is too little information to determine whether they meet the criteria specified in the Notice Inviting Applications.

In addition, there are some questions about the external validity of the Project ELLA studies cited. They involved a single urban district of 44 schools. And although there are likely to be similar issues for ELL students in any classroom, the fact that the proposed project involves rural, suburban, and urban districts across a wide geographic region of the state could introduce new variables that impact the efficacy of the applicant's program.

In support of the coaching (CS) model, the applicant refers to either one or two studies (Denton et al., 2010 and/or Mathes et al., 2009). Whether there one or two studies is unclear. One study is presumably experiment, as it discusses random assignment. Small to moderate effect sizes are noted for the training components, but there is no discussion of sample size or sample characteristics. Thus, neither the internal nor external validity of the study (or studies) can be determined.

The evidence provided for the effectiveness of the online ESL certificate (TOEC) does not appear to involve an experimental or quasi-experimental study, but there is insufficient information provided to verify that. Such a study might have compared the effectiveness of the online-certified teachers with more traditionally certified ESL teachers, but the evaluation cited focused on the consistency of the curriculum with research and the quality of instructional delivery.

The narrative is difficult to follow and could be much more tightly organized, with clearer descriptions of the research designs, treatment and comparison groups (including size), and outcomes. The table of studies would be much more helpful if the summaries were more comprehensive and included title and authors, as well as information about the research design and a summary of outcomes. There is no additional information in the Appendices that might assist the reviewer in understanding or evaluating the quality and significance of the research cited.

**Reader's Score: 9**

### **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 experimental and quasi-experimental studies on the three principal components of scaled-up programs (ESL instruction, teacher and administrator professional development, and online certification), and the narrative responds to various challenges that might compromise their validity. There is good detail about the design of the experimental study of ECS, including data collection, the application of the interventions to be evaluated, and a power analysis.

The research questions focus the evaluation properly on assessment of the effectiveness of the various components of the programs to be brought to scale, as well as on the program progress.

The scale-up strategy is described in detail.

The lead external evaluator is independent.

#### **Weaknesses**

The description of the proposed research studies is somewhat sketchy. The extent to which the sample populations for the studies that are described mirrors the larger population of schools participating in the scale-up project is unclear. For the ECS study, the quasi-experimental study seems to meet the criterion for strong research in employing matched comparison groups, but the description is sketchy.

For the TOEC study, it is unclear what the comparison group is for the teachers who are certified online. It does not appear, for example, that there is an intention to compare the efficacy of the TOEC teachers with traditionally certified ESL teachers. This would appear to be an important element of the study given the general concern that all teachers meet the same rigorous certification standards in order that poor children have equal access to effective teachers.

More detail about the qualitative data and how they will be used to monitor and assess the implementation of the programs at the replication sites would

have been helpful.

There is no information about the evaluation budget, hence no way of determining its adequacy. In attempting to glean some information about available resources for the evaluation from the budget information provided, it appears that the total allocation of time for the three lead evaluators over the five years of the project is approximately 0.4-0.5 FTE for each of the five years. One would think this is inadequate staffing.

Although the lead evaluator is external and presumably independent, the two individuals named as quantitative and qualitative internal evaluators are employees of partner institutions within colleges of education. Although their role appears to be restricted to data collection, and they may well be independent even though internal, greater clarification of the roles of the external and internal evaluators would have been desirable.

Although there is good detail provided about the interventions to be studied, the narrative is rambling, repetitive, and very difficult to follow. There is also reference to a "Table 3" (p. 32) that is to provide information about various outcome variables, but no such table is included. This leaves some uncertainty about the validity and reliability of the outcome measures to be employed.

**Reader's Score: 8**

### **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**

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**Status:** Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

**Reader #2:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	11
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	10
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	9
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	4
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	5
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address 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	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>41</b>

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## Technical Review Form

**Scale Up 1: 84.396A**

**Reader #2:**

**Applicant:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

### 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 case is made for the immediate need for this program as nearly 10.8 million school aged children do not speak English (p. 2). Of these students, 75% are Spanish speakers and thus the basis for this grant proposal.

Assessing students prior to third grade will provide additional knowledge about student development and the impact of this model.

Speaking to the current research using interventions that produce only one year gain for ELLs strengthens the fact that this model will provide additional support to teachers and principals in order to attain the additional half year gain.

Utilizing the ELLA model will allow this approach to be used in whatever type of program is in place for ELLs which makes the project design more flexible.

This application will reach 112,500 students, 4500 classrooms, 270 principals, and 1,340 teachers impacted by the multi-tiered approach to this project.

Use of the ELLA research will provide a basis for the work and make scaling of this project more feasible.

The goals and strategies are specific and include action plans that are aligned to the focus of the project. Absolute Priority 1 is addressed through the coaching of teachers and principals. The strongest Absolute Priority addressed is number 7 as the primary focus is on increasing the performance of LEP students through effective instructional practices.

## Weaknesses

On page 3, the applicant states that 72% of eighth grade students perform below basic in math but the proposal addresses science and literacy. A statement that the increase in literacy would address math achievement would have strengthened this application. Although the applicant addresses Priority 5 it does not mention a transition from preschool or birth to age three.

**Reader's Score: 11**

## **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**

The Texas A & M Research Foundation partners with three universities to provide the support necessary to implement this project. Texas A & M serves as a partner in this application and have conducted research in the area of ELLs. The ELLA Project conducted by Texas A & M was a contributing factor to the achievement of the Broad Foundation award in Aldine Independent School District where the gap between ELLs and non-ELLs was reduced(p. 21).

### **Weaknesses**

The applicant, The Texas A & M Research Foundation, does not provide any information as to its ability to implement large, complex, and rapidly growing projects. A description of past performance in implementing projects of this nature would strengthen the application.

**Reader's Score: 10**

#### **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 strategy takes a very cautious approach by spending the first year selecting schools, training observers, training teachers, and ensuring all aspects of the grant are in place.

The applicant has the needed number of school districts in each of the categories stated in the application.

The plan to prepare teachers for the grant is well thought out for scaling and will impact the lives of students in Texas for years to come.

The use of materials that have been developed locally and tested on ELLs in the ELLA project provide strength to the ability to scale a project of this

magnitude.

The feasibility of replication is based on the development of a total package at the end of this grant to be used for future implementation. This package will specifically address the differences in implementation for rural areas.

Provision of the materials online at the Language Diversity Network at TAMU is a benefit for schools/districts/ teachers.

The cost of implementing the program decreases each year with the average cost of \$332.67 per student over the five year grant(p.41).

The identification of one individual to be responsible for coordinating the dissemination plan lends credence to the importance placed on this aspect of the grant.

The production of no less than 20 papers for professional journals highlights the academic nature of this application. The professional growth for others in the field is a key aspect of the dissemination plan.

### **Weaknesses**

The reader could not locate Figure 2 for ECS and therefore could not make reference to the scaling in project year 2.

Personnel are in place to support this grant but as mentioned elsewhere no one is full time on the project from the list of prominent professors.

Providing clarity as to why only 2 kindergarten teachers were included in the plan when 4 teachers were added at grade 1, 2, and 3 would have strengthened the application. With only 2 kindergartens, grade 1 will not have enough students who have been involved in the program. If the kindergartens are half day it would have provided clarity as to why only 2 kindergartens.

A statement that the materials may be available commercially without cost would alleviate the concern that materials developed under a Federal Grant would be used to create income for an entity.

Listing the cost per student without training costs for principals and students causes one to wonder what the cost would be with training included. It would strengthen the application to include those costs with the student cost or in a separate statement.

The budget documents speak to allocating \$200,000 per year for teacher and administrator incentives. A mention of these incentives in the body of the grant would clarify the purpose and need for incentives.

**Reader's Score: 9**

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

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

**(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources 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 inclusion of an Advisory Board composed of marketing experts, business people, and researchers is an excellent model for continuing the project beyond the grant period.

Inclusion of the dissemination coordinator on the Advisory Board increases the likelihood of sustaining the momentum of this aspect of the grant.

The mention of having a dissemination plan in place the first year is key to ensuring this is not an add on at the end. The mention of refining the plan over time indicates the knowledge that this is a developmental process.

The materials developed and disseminated to schools are easily accessible to school personnel and can be incorporated into the ELL program.

The training and certification of teachers in working with ELL populations will benefit schools beyond the Scale-up grant timeframe.

#### **Weaknesses**

The application states that the funders are in place and will continue to support this program across the state and nation. If this is an accurate statement, it would help that the letters of support state this because it was not clear in the documentation.

TEA support is strong but this is only for the state of Texas and not for areas outside of this state. A statement that other state agencies had been contacted to determine their support would add to the strengths of the sustainability section.

In listing the advisory board it would be helpful to provide information as to who the individuals are e.g. (Claude Goldenberg). Without confirmation of individuals to serve on the advisory board it might be helpful to state "to be determined" rather than list names of individuals with "to be confirmed".

**Reader's Score: 4**

### **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 management plan lists the phases, responsible person, and the years of accomplishment.

The personnel involved in the management of this grant application are extremely qualified to lead a large and complex Scale-up grant. Dr. Lara-Alicio has been involved in numerous federal grants involving large scale up projects.

The personnel involved in this grant are the authors of the materials being used; the theory on which the project is based; and the leadership theory being proposed for training.

Each of the individuals has expertise and background in the research methodology being utilized in this application.

Two of the independent evaluators have also served as a PI on several grants.

#### **Weaknesses**

The management plan would be stronger if there were timelines and more specificity to the work involved.

The personnel aspect of this application would be strengthened if one of the individuals listed were as full time. It is difficult to determine if Dr. Mathes is full time as no time commitment was listed for this individual.

In reviewing the resumes of the independent evaluators, it was not clear if any of these individuals have served as independent evaluators on a large, complex scale up grant. It would be helpful to list their experiences if they have served in this capacity.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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 measurement of learning for K-3 is included and will provide data on developmental learning in the early grades

**Weaknesses**

The applicant does not provide information on the alignment, collaboration, and transitions between the K-3 focus of this application and those from birth to age three and preschools.  
No mention was made of improving developmental milestones and standards.

**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**

Not addressed by the applicant as a 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**

The proposal will provide a new approach to teaching ELLs that includes curriculum, teacher training, principal training, and assessments.  
The population of ELLs being studied is K-3 which will provide a body of knowledge regarding how early ELLs acquire language in a school setting.

**Weaknesses**

None found.

**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**

Rural schools are included as part of the study and are important as recruiting qualified ELL teachers in rural areas can be challenging. The online training provides support for teachers in rural areas to teach this population.

**Weaknesses**

Rural schools are a part of the study but not a focal point of the project. Including specifics as to how rural schools will benefit would strengthen the application.

**Reader's Score: 1**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/03/2010 10:54 AM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/02/2010 9:33 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

**Reader #3:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	11
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	9
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	9
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	4
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	5
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	0
2. Competitive Preference 6: Innovations That Support College Access and Success (0 or 1 Point)	1	0

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address 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	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>40</b>

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## **Technical Review Form**

**Scale Up 1: 84.396A**

**Reader #3:**

**Applicant:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

### **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 teachers and high quality instructional models for English language learners are demonstrated needs at the national, state, and local levels.
2. The goals and strategies are explicitly described with intended student outcomes defined.

### **Weaknesses**

1. The proposed project does not appear to be an exceptional approach to the priorities the applicant is seeking to meet. Teacher development is something that should be ongoing whether it is face to face or virtual.
2. The applicant's approach to achieving the goals, objectives and outcomes was difficult to fully understand in terms of the role of the school districts and Texas A&M and the long term relationships to achieve the intended teacher training and the anticipated student results.

**Reader's Score: 11**

### **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**

1. Texas A&M presented information related to their ability to implement large grant programs listing a series of past grant awards.
2. The school districts and Texas A&M have worked together to provide professional development for teachers that result in higher levels of student achievement for limited English proficient students.

**Weaknesses**

1. The applicant did not show evidence of a history of implementing a project of the proposed scale.
2. Little evidence was provided other than saying that (P.e21) that 98% of

principals were extremely satisfied with teacher quality.

**Reader's Score: 9**

#### **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 applicant proposes that 1,340 teachers, 270 principals, 4,500 classrooms, and 112,500 at-risk limited English proficient student will be served by the model.
2. The capacity to continue this effort after the grant period is based on the fact that teachers have been trained and materials developed as well as the working relationships with the school partners.
4. The applicant describes the cost estimates to scale-up the proposed project to anticipated levels.

#### **Weaknesses**

2. The capacity to continue the proposed project based on the existing personnel at the university and within school districts without the Scale-Up grant was not well documented.
3. Replication of the model with relative ease would need further development. The model was presented in terms of research to design a model so that more work would be necessary to facilitate its ease to replicate in multiple settings without the intensity of the model proposed.

5. The mechanisms planned to broadly disseminate information would largely be limited to institutions of higher education. The applicant plans to development 20 papers to be presented at national conferences but is unclear as to how broader information would be available to various constituencies.

**Reader's Score: 9**

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

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

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

1. Texas A&M provided a commitment to future work to sustain the project after the Scale-Up grant period ended.

##### **Weaknesses**

1. The applicant based much of its ability to continue the model on the professional development of the teachers. There was not a plan in place for new teachers coming in nor was there evidence of stakeholder support for long-term success.

2. The potential and planning for incorporation was assumed within the design for teacher development and the adoption of the model into their classrooms. Contingencies for new leadership and turn over in teachers was not explored nor addressed in the model.

**Reader's Score: 4**

#### **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**

1. The management plan was developed to achieve the proposed outcomes with the financial aspects and timelines provided.
2. Evidence was provided that the project director and key personnel had experience managing large grant programs.

#### **Weaknesses**

1. The overall model management did not support long-term sustainability and scalability based on the guidelines presented in the guidelines for the application.
2. The overall qualifications for the proposed project director and personnel, while good, do not represent the scope to manage large, complex, and rapidly growing projects.
3. Overall, the information provided regarding the independent evaluator did not represent experience to conduct an evaluation of the scope of this educational initiative.

**Reader's Score: 5**

#### **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 application addressed the priority but did not meet sufficiently meet the criteria.

The applicant did not address 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.

**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 address this competitive 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**

The applicant successfully addressed competitive preference 7. The design of the application addressed the needs of limited English students by presenting a model that provided professional development to enhance the ability of teachers to deliver instruction.

**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**

The applicant addressed the preference that serves schools in rural areas.

**Weaknesses**

Areas that the applicant did not address were: high school graduation rates and decreasing drop out rates.

**Reader's Score: 1**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/02/2010 9:33 AM

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Status: Submitted

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

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

**Reader #4:**

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

3. Competitive Preference 7: Innovations To Address 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	_____
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	20

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## Technical Review Form

**Scale Up 1: 84.396A**

**Reader #4:**

**Applicant:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

### 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 proposal presents three studies, one experimental, one quasi-experimental and one that provides moderate evidence using a large sample size to demonstrate the positive impact of the proposed project (page 12). In addition 7 major studies are identified that have been completed at different phases of the ELLA implementation at the K-3 level. The studies reported were conducted to determine the impact of three different program components on student achievement including professional development, teacher and principal coaching, and the certification intervention called TOEC.

The experimental and the quasi-experimental studies were conducted on 44

Texas schools, in one urban district, that were randomly assigned to the treatment (ELLA) or the traditional instructional method. Teachers were randomly selected to participate in the project which provides stronger internal and external validity. Using these same participants another study with a large number (9,508) of repeated observations of teachers found that teachers in the treatment group spent a significantly higher proportion of their instructional time on key tasks that are considered effective instructional practices. They also were more aware of their pedagogical behavior. There were no statistical significance factors or effect sizes reported with these findings. Another study conducted using the same participants found ELL students' oral language acquisition from kindergarten to first grade occurs at a significantly faster rate than the control students. This study reported an effect size of .68 (Cohen d). Another study using the same participants and their students used multi-level modeling to address threats to validity such as repeated measures and nesting. This study found that students in the treatment group exhibited a steeper growth and out-performed the control group on a variety of language and reading skills. However no statistical significance or effect sizes were reported.

Data are provided (page 15) for the seven other studies that have been conducted on the ELLA program identifying the effect sizes of their findings. All of the studies were published in professional journals. The effect sizes range from .059 to .68. These effect sizes indicate that the proposed project is likely to have a statistically significant effect on the student and teacher outcomes if replicated. Evidence to support using the MCREL Balanced Leadership Framework for coaching principals was found in one study that was a meta-analysis of research on the impact of leadership on student achievement. This study reported effect sizes that ranged from .15 to .32 for various training items.

The research presented for the professional development component indicates that the component would have a positive impact on student achievement and closing the achievement gap. The teacher coaching research which randomly assigned participants to different treatments also indicates the proposed project may have a positive impact on their teaching strategies ultimately leading to improved student achievement. However no effect sizes or statistical significance outcomes were reported.

### **Weaknesses**

The research presented on coaching, although conducted using a randomized study, did not provide sufficient evidence such as design, significance levels or effect sizes to determine the magnitude of the importance of the outcomes. The other research presented on coaching was not on the same practices or delivery mode that is being proposed for scale up. For the TOEC component

the research presented was simply a statement that an independent evaluator indicated that the TOEC curriculum was grounded in research delivered in a strong manner. There was no specificity regarding research design, significance levels or effect sizes and no evidence for this statement. The scale up plans to include rural and suburban schools yet none of the studies cited in the research evidence include rural or suburban schools.

**Reader's Score: 10**

### **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 will be conducted by an external evaluator at the University of Houston. It is also a collaborative effort with the internal evaluators at other participating universities (page 37). The proposed evaluation plan uses methods will be both experimental and quasi-experimental. The experimental component will randomly assign schools to one of three coaching conditions. The quasi-experimental design will use propensity scores to create matched student groups that will be administered the district's English language proficiency test.

The experimental study is a four year study for Texas students and teachers. Based on WWC guidelines the applicant estimated the necessary number of schools needed to ensure sufficient statistical power at the .05 level with an effect size of .5. Random assignment will be used where possible and statistical corrections made such as the Benjamini-Hochberg correction procedure for multiple comparison groups and regression analysis when measures can only be taken at two points in time to alleviate threats to external and internal validity. They have used a statistical program to determine the best sample size to ensure statistical power. For the quasi-experimental design a robust matching will be implemented to ensure equivalency of groups. The studies will be longitudinal in nature documenting the impact as scale up occurs. The data collection will be used both for program purposes and for evaluation purposes, particularly the teacher observations of participants in the coaching component (page 26). Pre-post test design will be used for determining impact on student achievement. A number of existing instruments and newly developed

instruments and measures will be used which will allow for triangulation of data. The statistical analyses used will include hierarchical linear model (HLM) to determine changes in academic performance over time and address the nested structure of the data. Multi-level modeling will be used to evaluate the efficacy of different coaching strategies. Qualitative data will be collected and maintained over the life of the grant regarding implementation standards. The steps for scaling up the project will be documented and tested each year and a notebook maintained for step by step implementation as well as program materials posted online. The evaluator is independent and experienced in conducting evaluations in areas similar to this project.

### **Weaknesses**

The complex random selections of sites and assignment of subjects to treatment raise questions about the external validity of this study. The randomization for principals for their treatment is based on a sample of teachers drawn from the TOEC data base. Yet the selection of teachers excludes teachers being selected from the original 60 schools that were selected based on the power analysis. There is not sufficient detail provided regarding the sampling strategy to determine it addresses threats to validity and if it could be duplicated. Although there is discussion about correcting for attrition by selecting this sample of schools there is no discussion about losing subjects. The complex sampling and provision of services may be difficult to provide clear documentation and direction for other sites to replicate. It is not described how all three geographical types (urban, suburban, and rural) will be represented in the study. There is no technical information presented regarding proposed instruments to be used for collecting data.

**Reader's Score: 10**

### **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**

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**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:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

**Reader #5:**

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>POINTS SCORED</b>
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	N/A	N/A
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
1. A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (up to 15 Points)	15	11
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	9
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	8
6. F. Sustainability (up to 10 Points)	10	4
7. G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 Points)	10	6
<b>Competitive Preference</b>		
1. Competitive Preference 5: Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (0 or 1 Point)	1	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	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	105	40

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## **Technical Review Form**

**Scale Up 1: 84.396A**

**Reader #5:**

**Applicant:** Texas A&M Research Foundation -- TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. - TAMU - Educational Psychology, College of Educ. & Human Develop. (U396A100048)

### **Summary Statement**

#### **1. Summary State**

The proposal is designed to take previously successful literacy, coaching and online preparation programs to scale. These previously funded efforts are designed to assist a significant number of at-risk ELL students.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criteria. My score reflects my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

### **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 multi-phased approach to provide assistance and support for high-needs LEP students appears to be an exceptional approach in this area. The detailed discussion of the three projects that have been previously funded and highly successful, based on the research and data collected, is very positive. These three projects are designed to meet the requirements of Absolute Priority 1 and the Competitive Priority 5. The proposals have not been widely adopted nationally, but have had a strong history of growth and support in the state of Texas.

**Weaknesses**

The proposed project has a clear set of goals yet the objectives and strategies need further clarification to be adequately understood. The goals, objectives and strategies are conveyed in paragraph form, and it became easy to get entangled in understanding the flow, for example, from Goal 2, Objective 2a, Strategy 2a, 2b, and 2c, and then Action 2a,b, and c.

This was difficult to follow and connect to the overall goals.

**Reader's Score: 11**

**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**

The proposal's personnel from various higher education settings have achieved significant success in implementing large, complex projects. A litany of grants administered, awards received for successful implementation and the total funding of these grants (\$20m) provides evidence of the applicant's ability through partners/higher education institutions to successfully implement large projects.

### **Weaknesses**

The record of improved student achievement outcomes is sketchy, with no concrete data are provided to validate the general comments made. Examples include;

\* Dr. Lara has improved educational achievement in ELLs in Texas and nationally based upon his production of "theory". No data is provided to validate the statement.

\* "...six-year grant period which ended in 2009 aided Aldine Independent School District in reducing the gap between ELLs and non-ELLs to lead Aldine ISD to become the Broad Foundation winner". Once again, no data are provided to explain and validate that the grant mentioned was a major factor in the Broad Prize.

**Reader's Score: 9**

#### **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 number of students proposed to be reached is 112,000, and the past performance of the applicant in meeting needs as the project grows appears

to be solid. There is a detailed explanation of each year's growth in teachers and students, including assessments, professional development and other responsibilities. The information on growth is confusing at times, but is not of major concern.

The applicant's capacity, based on previous growth of the program over 38 school districts and 280 campuses, appears solid. Personnel with experience and a strong academic background are described as being 'in place and have agreed to work with us in scaling the project'.

The feasibility of replication presented in the proposal has strengths and weaknesses. Replication is described as being feasible via a 'total program package' to be finalized by the end of the scale up. This 'package', in terms of costs, professional development, methodology of delivery and other concrete information, is not described in any detail.

### **Weaknesses**

While the applicant's capacity appears solid, as outlined in the strengths section, what is not clear is whether or not the applicant has really thought through the complexities of a significant scale-up effort after the grant period ends. There was very little discussion of detailed planning in this area.

The feasibility of replication presented in the proposal has strengths and weaknesses. Replication is described as being feasible via a 'total program package' to be finalized by the end of the scale up. This package, in terms of costs, professional development, methodology of delivery and other concrete information, is not described in any detail. Thus replication is unknown. The estimated cost per student per year is very confusing. For example, cost figures including indirect costs equate to one figure per student, yet this is without including training teachers and principals. The total budget per student for the five year cycle does not include figures related to teacher and administrator preparation. This information is inadequate.

In addition, there are no figures provided as estimates of the costs to reach 100,000, 500,000 and 1,000,000 students.

Dissemination strategies appear to be traditional, including conferences, papers and presentations. One additional strategy is the dissemination of policy issues to the media, unions, etc. The plan appears to need further strengthening to reach a larger audience across the nation.

**Reader's Score: 8**

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

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

**(1) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources 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 Advisory Board and its composition is a plus, as the Board will be able to work closely with the project to help sustain the effort in the future.

**Weaknesses**

The section on resources for sustainability is inadequate for the following reasons;

- \* The promise to operate beyond the time of the grant is based on the 'model with easy access by school personnel'. This statement is inadequate as validation of sustainability.
- \* Founders will continue to support such efforts, yet there is no commitment for long-term support of a state/national model other than this one sentence statement.
- \* Finally, the statement (in part) is made: 'Additional resources to support the project are being garnered'

The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant was not addressed in this section of the proposal, other than vague statements about what may happen in the future.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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 management plan (Table 4) lists activities, persons responsible and timelines (by year) through the five-year cycle. The plan is not presented in great detail, yet the information presented is a reflection of the various items mentioned previously in the grant. Thus, the plan is adequate.

The qualifications of the project director and key personnel are clearly outstanding as academicians in higher education, and the interest and support of finding way to assist with ELL achievement is unquestioned. The independent external evaluator (Dr. Davis) appears to be well qualified, with strong credentials and experience in measurement, evaluation and statistics. The independent evaluators appear well qualified as well.

#### **Weaknesses**

The management plan (Table 4) lists activities, persons responsible and timelines (by year) through the five-year cycle. The plan is not presented in great detail and needs further clarification to clearly understand.

**Reader's Score: 6**

#### **Competitive Preference**

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

**We give competitive preference to applications for projects that would implement innovative practices, strategies, or programs that are designed to improve**

educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (birth through 3rd grade) by enhancing the quality of early learning programs. To meet this priority, applications must focus on:

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

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

This competitive preference was addressed, but not sufficient enough to fully meet the requirements as outlined. There was limited information on the social, emotional and cognitive readiness related to school readiness. In addition there was limited information on improving milestones and standards aligned with appropriate outcomes measures.

**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 competitive preference was not a target area of this application.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

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

**Strengths**

The focus on LEP students is very strong and clearly meets the requirements of this competitive preference.

**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**

This proposal did include the implementation of innovative practices and strategies in some rural settings.

**Weaknesses**

While rural schools are a part of the proposal, the rural effort was not a focal point of the proposal.

**Reader's Score: 1**

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**Status:** Submitted

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