

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/4/11 12:00 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Success for All Foundation (U411C110042)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
Sub Total	20	17
Total	20	17

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - 84.411C Tier 2 Panel - 6: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Success for All Foundation (U411C110042)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the project evaluation. In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (1) 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.
 - (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project to facilitate further development, replication, or testing in other settings.
 - (3) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Note: We encourage eligible applicants to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation

- (1) What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook and
- (2) IES/ NCEE Technical Methods papers.

Strengths:

This evaluation will have both a qualitative and quantitative piece with random assignment of students to conditions within 12 schools (p18). It will examine the impacts of the program at the end of preschool and kindergarten for students using interactive multimedia compared to students without interactive aspects. It will then take the additional step of analyzing the impacts for students of different achievement levels, genders and ethnicities (p.33). This analysis may be extremely valuable in this time of increased use of technology in education.

Twelve schools with at least 2 preschool teachers will be in the sample. Teachers not receiving multimedia materials in year 1 will receive them in year 2. This is an effective method of recruiting comparison teachers. Students will be randomly assigned to one of the two treatment groups (p36).

The data collection measures include student assessments with high internal consistency (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test and Woodcock-Johnson instruments (p34) in combination with other Success for All instruments (p35). Observer reports, a review of teacher logs, and teacher questionnaires will be included (p35). Observer reports should provide information to assess the quality of program implementation, make necessary reality-based adjustments and assist those who may wish to replicate the project.

The budget for evaluation is 14% of the total grant request (p18). While this is a robust percent, the actual monetary value ranging from 60 to 90 thousand per year (p 127) is relatively modest considering that observations will be conducted over a wide geographic area.

The evaluators are highly qualified to conduct the study.

Weaknesses:

There is some difference in statements as to the number of students to be in the study. On page 36, 720 students are noted. A few sentences later, it is stated that there will be 500 experimental and 500 control children. A fuller explanation of these two numbers would be helpful.

Procedures for test administration are not stated so it is unclear if classroom teachers or researchers will administer the instruments.

The design would benefit from the addition of a logic model to graphically explain the relationship of program components with evaluation activities. Including an evaluation of Goal 2 (materials sent home) and Goal 3 (teacher professional development) would improve the design.

Reader's Score: 17

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Success for All Foundation (U411C110042)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	14
Sub Total	20	14
Total	20	14

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - 84.411C Tier 2 Panel - 6: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Success for All Foundation (U411C110042)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the project evaluation. In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (1) 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.
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Strengths:

The key questions to be addressed in the evaluation are clearly stated (pg. 14). Data to be collected is summarized and is appropriate for the analyses in question (ie. PPVT, Woodcock Johnson, CAT, SOLO, Observer reports, logs, questionnaires) (pg 16). Data will enable formative, summative, and fidelity of implementation analyses.

A review of literature supporting the various components of Around the Corner was provided and included mean effect sizes (pg 8-9). This understanding of the literature allowed some prediction of the power and minimum detectable effect size in the current analyses (pg 17).

The proposal provides discussion of the analyses to be completed upon full implementation of the Around the Corner project in 12 schools. The proposed ANCOVA and Huber White Corrections will address attrition/inequality of groups and the effect of clustering respectively (pg 17). There is provision for of random assignment of subjects within each school (pg 15-17).

The authors do support the assertion that the project can be carried out with the proposed resources (Budget Narrative, pg e126). The qualifications of the independent evaluation team are reflected in Vitae provided in the appendices.

Weaknesses:

The collected data is appropriate for evaluation of both pilot and outcome studies; however, the proposal only describes the outcome study that will begin in 2014 (pg 17 & 19). More information regarding the selection of subjects, data collection, and analyses during the pilot phase (pg 19) is needed. A logic model would assist greatly in assisting the reader to understand the overall evaluation structure and outcomes.

Clarification is needed regarding the selection of subjects for the outcome study. On page 15, the proposal

states that 12 schools will be selected and 1000 students will be randomly assigned within schools to either treatment or control classrooms. Page 17 begins by stating there will be 720 students subjects with 60 students per school.

Page 15 also states that the control group is a delayed treatment-control group that will receive training on multimedia materials after their first year. This statement implies that control group will implement Around the Corner in Year two. Given that preschool and K curriculum on the SFA are separate and that the preschool curriculum, in particular, does not produce results until after students' Kindergarten experience, the inclusion of a strictly SFA group would be a more effective comparison (pg 8).

The Analyses section recognizes that attrition may decrease the overall power of the study. However, no discussion is provided regarding the evaluator's selection of the ANCOVA as a method to control for this attrition and no mention is made of examining the characteristics of students who left the treatment or control to understand the reasons for attrition (pg 17).

The demographic characteristics of schools in the pilot study vary greatly (pg 22-23). Mention is made that the outcome study will disaggregate the results of program impact by various demographic variables (pg 14) but no mention is made of how these variables will be treated in the pilot study nor how the evaluators will ensure that demographic variables of pilot study students will either be replicated or controlled for in the outcome study. It is feasible, for example, that the program might be very successful among students with Limited English Proficiency but not among Caucasian students eligible for Free-Reduced lunch. A different demographic makeup of the final impact study could produce different results if some consistency is not ensured.

Pg 13 states that the program will be scaled up to an additional 1100 SFA schools by 2015 and serve an additional million children. While this organization does appear to have the capacity and experience to undertake such a scale up, the program evaluation, at the present time, does not address how the scale up will be successful in diverse settings or within diverse student populations.

The current evaluation does not address the effectiveness of either Goal 2 or 3 of the current study (pg 10). No provision is made in the evaluation to measure either effectiveness of materials sent home with children or the professional development of teachers.

Reader's Score: 14

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