

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

Status: Submitted

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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Baltimore City Public Schools (U411C110047)

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 #1 - 84.411C Tier 2 Panel - 1: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Baltimore City Public Schools (U411C110047)

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:

There is a description of an on-going implementation review with on track, not quite on track and off track indicators.

The plan contains a description of appropriate analytical methods for both the student and teachers impact study.

The plan provides for a description of and a breakdown of impacts by demographic variables that can inform generalizability and future replication attempts.

The evaluation budget and the evaluation team are sufficient to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Weaknesses:

There are no plans for gathering data on strengths and weaknesses (key elements) of project implication and identification of unique factors that would have implications for replication. This will make it difficult to dis-aggregate the characteristics that were unique to this study and therefore limit its generalizability. Further, there is no provision for providing documentation to determine what worked and what didn't work and the impact of any mid-course corrections.

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Strengths:

The evaluation design is focused on two primary objectives: evaluating the implementation of the program, and measuring the impact of the program on student academic performance and teacher effectiveness. Data on recruitment, student attendance, attitudes about college aspirations, and other benchmark assessments will be collected and measured at periodic intervals and formative reports will be supplied by the evaluator during the implementation phase of the project. By using these data sources, the plan appears to be sufficient to evaluate each stated objective and provide evidence of success and suitability for replication.

Student impact of the program will be analyzed using a regression discontinuity design due to the fact that random assignment is not possible given the program design. This is an acceptable quasi-experimental design that will lend power to the results of the analysis. Teacher impact will be measured by a teacher observation instrument that measures classroom quality across three domains. The research design is an acceptable approach to analyzing these types of data for the purpose of determining effect of the program.

The application provides sufficient funds for conducting a program evaluation of this size, and the evaluator has expertise and experience in conducting evaluations of this type. In fact, the evaluation firm is a coalition of university and school district stakeholders with the primary purpose of providing research-based evaluations for surrounding school districts. The fact that they have a working relationship with the district will provide access to the student level data that will be needed to conduct the research study.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 20

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