

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 9/13/11 12:00 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas Tech University (U411C110102)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	35	34
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	24
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Quality of the Management	20	20
Sub Total	80	78
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. Competitive Preference 6	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. Competitive Preference 7	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. Competitive Preference Pr	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. Competitive Preference 9	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 10		
Competitive Preference Priority 10		

1. Competitive Preference 10

	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Total	85	79

Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - 84.411C Panel - 8: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Texas Tech University (U411C110102)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the project. In determining the need for the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the 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.

Strengths:

The College of Education at Texas Tech University (TTU) and the Lubbock Independent School District (LISD) seek to implement and test a competency-based model of educator preparation and school intervention (Abstract, p. e16). The proposed project focuses on developing highly competent math/science teachers, who possess the content knowledge, and 21st century pedagogical skills to positively influence students' math/science achievement in high-needs districts. The project also provides a mechanism for removing underperforming teachers from the same setting.

The proposal presents critical information, which sheds light on the differences between traditional versus 21st century schools. TTU cites relevant research which supports its desire and need to transform its teacher preparation program into a 21st century competency-based model (pp. e19-22, e32-34). The proposal also explains how such a transformation in teacher preparation would better serve high-needs, underperforming students from LISD and other similar districts (pp. e23, e41).

Using a plan for simultaneous reform which addresses needed changes within the TTU teacher prep program as well as LISD classrooms (Table 2, p. e25), the proposed project smartly capitalizes and builds on pre-existing and functioning partnerships between the University, the LEA, and select businesses.

At the implementation level, the project presents a well-coordinated and efficient approach for using Teachscape technology to capture competency-based successes and failures in four distinct settings: classrooms, professional learning communities, post-observation conferences, and school leadership

meetings (see Table 9, p. e48). Using qualified analysts (with dedicated time) to regularly assess, real-world teaching and meeting episodes, TTU and LISD leaders expect to prescribe "just in time" interventions and coaching support to positively strengthen each facet of the teacher/leader improvement cycle. This strategy represents a holistic and formative approach to determining "what works" in the real world.

To assess project outcomes, the applicant poses 10 research questions--4 questions focus on teacher preparation effects (Appendix J, p. e173); 6 different questions focus on school intervention effects (p. e175). Within the body of 10 research questions, 5 questions explicitly focus on the relationship between teacher preparation/competency and student achievement/growth.

TTU has articulated a robust plan for sharing project outcomes and disseminating study findings (See Table 11, p. e50).

Weaknesses:

The project places great emphasis on the TI Math Forward curriculum. However, other than cursory information conveyed by the vendor (via a Letter of Support for the project), little was shared regarding the merit of this particular curriculum.

Reader's Score: 34

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

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

(2) 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, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

Note: The Secretary considers cost estimates both

(a) to assess the reasonableness of the costs relative to the objectives, design, and potential significance for the total number of students to be served by the proposed project, which is determined by the eligible applicant, and (b) to understand the possible costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach the scaling targets of 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students for Development grants. An eligible applicant is free to propose how many students it will serve under its project, and is expected to reach that number of students by the end of the grant period. The scaling targets, in contrast, are theoretical and allow peer reviewers to assess the cost-effectiveness generally of proposed projects, particularly in cases where initial investment may be required to support projects that operate at reduced cost in the future, whether implemented by the eligible applicant or any other entity. Grantees are not required to reach these numbers during the grant period.

(3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(4) 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 Development grant.

Strengths:

The project is completely aligned with Absolute Priority 1 (See Table 2, p. e25). A review of the proposed goals, objectives, timelines, activities, milestones, and responsibilities reveals a thoughtful, comprehensive, detail-oriented plan ready for implementation (Project Narrative, pp. e35-38, e46-50). Further, because the TTU and LISD project leadership teams control the flow of teacher candidates to the LISD, executing the plan as designed is more likely to occur.

Cost estimates and sustainability within the organization: The project designers wisely built in a "phase out" plan--which will be triggered after the use of competency-based teaching and leading becomes embedded in district operations. This decision to prepare personnel for a definitive and limited amount of external support maximizes the opportunity for sustainability within the organization.

Weaknesses:

Cost estimates: The means used to project cost estimates is confusing. Providing cost estimates for reaching all 30,000 students within LISD, when the project really focuses on the six model schools, and two select core subjects, seems somewhat disingenuous. Also, the project designers correctly noted that any new clients requiring University consultation can receive such support on a fee-for-service basis; however, this expectation may limit opportunity for scale-up.

Teacher candidates: The project design appears to select or assign top TTU math/science teacher candidates solely to the competency-based/TI Math Forward group. Given the large number of teacher candidates involved in the project, it would have been preferable to clarify how prospective teachers are selected for the TTU traditional versus competency-based teacher preparation program. For example, explaining to what degree, if any, the students who score favorably on the Haberman disposition measure are considered for either program (not just the competency-based group), would have been useful. (See Table 2, pp. e25-26, Table 9, p. e47). While statistical analyses may account for such differences, it would have been helpful to learn more about how students become enrolled in one program versus the other.

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(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 projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The plan: The management plan is comprehensive, cohesive and detailed. Project goals, activities, milestones, timelines and responsibilities are clearly defined and well-coordinated (pp. e46-50). The applicant's commitment to the project extends far beyond the scope of the grant.

Key personnel: The application named the project director and all other key personnel. The proposal provided extensive information to substantiate that project personnel have significant experience managing projects of the size and scope proposed (See Personnel and Management Plan, p. e43, and Appendix F: Project Personnel, p. e65).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (zero or one 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:

Not scored

Weaknesses:

Not scored

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Competitive Preference Priority 7

1. Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Innovations that Support College Access and Success (zero or one 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:

Not scored

Weaknesses:

Not scored

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Competitive Preference Priority 8

1. Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (zero or one 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 does not adequately explain, nor provide the necessary details to substantiate meeting this priority.

Weaknesses:

The project inherently focuses on strengthening math/science instruction for all students. Other than the bilingual dual certification feature the teacher candidates earn, the project explains little as to how the unique needs of SWDs or LEP will be met.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Improving Productivity (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Strengths:

Not scored

Weaknesses:

Not scored

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Technology (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to improve student achievement or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Strengths:

The project inherently requires teachers, teacher leaders, and principals regularly use technology captured observation episodes to analyze and improve instructional services. As well, teachers and students must use the TI equipment as a core project component. An important project outcome consists of establishing a "real-world captures" archive which will be made available for future review and analysis.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 9/13/11 12:00 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 9/9/11 12:00 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas Tech University (U411C110102)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	24
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Quality of the Management	20	20
Sub Total	80	79
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. Competitive Preference 6	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. Competitive Preference 7	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. Competitive Preference Pr	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. Competitive Preference 9	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 10		
Competitive Preference Priority 10		

1. Competitive Preference 10

	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Total	85	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - 84.411C Panel - 8: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Texas Tech University (U411C110102)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the project. In determining the need for the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the 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.

Strengths:

One of the strengths of this proposal is that it identifies a significant gap between policy and practice in that teachers are, for the most part, being prepared in a very traditional manner when the classrooms of today demand a very different skill set from their first day in the classroom.

Within this massive gap, the proposed work has honed on a specific area of need- middle school mathematics in the LISD District (page e 23). Emphasis on an achievable deliverable demonstrates the project leadership s ability to focus on an accomplishable goal within their commitment to the broad scope of work. This singular focus also gives them the opportunity to use this project to develop an adaptable model of implementation with other subjects and grades in the future.

Middle school mathematics is an excellent choice to begin this reform both because of the challenges of teaching the topic in a way that is relevant and meaningful and reflective of the goals of the project and also because of the significant consequences of student failing to master this subject.

Moreover, another strength of this section is the applicant s recognition of the critical role that their partners will play so much so that space in the front of the proposal is dedicated to outlining their partners and supporters and explaining how the team will work together.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

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

(2) 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, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

Note: The Secretary considers cost estimates both

(a) to assess the reasonableness of the costs relative to the objectives, design, and potential significance for the total number of students to be served by the proposed project, which is determined by the eligible applicant, and
(b) to understand the possible costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach the scaling targets of 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students for Development grants. An eligible applicant is free to propose how many students it will serve under its project, and is expected to reach that number of students by the end of the grant period. The scaling targets, in contrast, are theoretical and allow peer reviewers to assess the cost-effectiveness generally of proposed projects, particularly in cases where initial investment may be required to support projects that operate at reduced cost in the future, whether implemented by the eligible applicant or any other entity. Grantees are not required to reach these numbers during the grant period.

(3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(4) 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 Development grant.

Strengths:

A significant strength of this proposal is that the project has very clear goals and an explicit strategy on how to accomplish it. Perhaps the most significant strength is Texas Tech understands that placing teacher candidates who have been trained using this completely new model will needlessly struggle and potentially fail if they do not have the opportunity to experience classroom settings that put into practice the information and materials that they are learning about. The complementary work streams revamping the curriculum and working with in-service teachers is a logical, solid approach that does much to support successful changes in programs AND in classrooms.

An additional strength is that throughout the proposal the language always returns to the impact on student achievement. It is clear the project teams at Texas Tech and at LISD are strongly committed to supporting students by giving them highly effective teachers and raising their achievement.

Another strong point in this proposal is that funds for the pilot of the teacher competency initiative have already been committed.

There is already some incorporation into ongoing work, and the proposal presents a strong case for further sustainability with their partners and with statements of support from school leaders offering to participate using a fee for service model in the future.

The proposal presents the per student cost levels at very reasonable rates of investment and scale up. The proposal also provides some of the scale up estimates required by the application.

Weaknesses:

Not all of the scale up estimates that are required in this application have been included; leaving reviewers to wonder if more cost savings could be realized with even larger cohorts of participants. The cost estimates also apply to whole school rather than just the cohort of students proposed in this work.

With regard to cost-effectiveness and sustainability, there was no evidence presented that supports the statement that school leaders were willing to use a fee for service model in the future (no letters in the Appendices).

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(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 projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths:

A work plan with clear goals, activities, responsibilities, timelines, and milestones is included. A strength of this proposal is the specific assignment of responsibility when it is appropriate pages e46-e50.

There is also a clear statement on e51 that acknowledges the work proposed is significant and aspirationally surpasses what is proposed in the work plan. The proposal is strengthened by the project teams understanding that what they are proposing to do is a significant challenge and that it will require close cooperation and working relationships with their partners and supporters.

The project lead has significant experience managing projects of even larger size and scope. The team is well qualified to lead and support the success of this initiative.

Weaknesses:

There are no identified weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (zero or one 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:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Competitive Preference Priority 7

1. Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Innovations that Support College Access and Success (zero or one 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:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Competitive Preference Priority 8

1. Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (zero or one 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:

Information is presented in this application on how this project will support the indentified population.

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not specifically address criteria set in the application for how these teachers will implement a plan that will increase the graduation rate or reduce the dropout rate for LEP special education students.

Reader's Score: **0**

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Improving Productivity (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Technology (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to improve student achievement or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which

may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Strengths:

This proposal has a strong technology component throughout and has thoughtfully made establishing partnerships w/technology providers a priority.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted for this competitive preference priority point.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 9/9/11 12:00 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 9/15/11 12:00 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas Tech University (U411C110102)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	22
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Quality of the Management	20	18
Sub Total	80	75
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. Competitive Preference 6	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. Competitive Preference 7	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. Competitive Preference Pr	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. Competitive Preference 9	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 10		
Competitive Preference Priority 10		

1. Competitive Preference 10

	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Total	85	77

Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - 84.411C Panel - 8: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Texas Tech University (U411C110102)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

The application provides a compelling need to create more realistic and relevant alternatives to teacher preparation than is currently in place across the nation. Strategies include the use of competency-based training to prepare teachers to teach for the 21st century skill needs of students.

Focused on the immediate service area of Lubbock, Texas, the management plan creates a partnership between the local school system and the School of Education at Texas Tech University.

Cost estimates on a per student basis are also provided to address the financial aspect of implementation. These cost estimates are specifically provided for serving up to 100,000 students in expansion.

The need to provide a more relevant, competency-based teacher preparation program is the key to this project and promises to create an approach that could serve as an alternative to existing traditional teacher preparation approaches.

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the project. In determining the need for the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(3) The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the 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.

Strengths:

The ongoing issue of teacher preparation to meet the 21st century learning needs of students is the focus of this project. It is clear from the extensive background information that the need outlined in this project is clearly articulated, well documented and represents a significant need for improvement.

The problem of the gap between past weaknesses in teacher preparation of teachers is especially compelling. The problem is defined and the significance of the need to address this problem is well

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

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

(2) 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, 250,000, and 500,000 students.

Note: The Secretary considers cost estimates both

(a) to assess the reasonableness of the costs relative to the objectives, design, and potential significance for the total number of students to be served by the proposed project, which is determined by the eligible applicant, and (b) to understand the possible costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach the scaling targets of 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students for Development grants. An eligible applicant is free to propose how many students it will serve under its project, and is expected to reach that number of students by the end of the grant period. The scaling targets, in contrast, are theoretical and allow peer reviewers to assess the cost-effectiveness generally of proposed projects, particularly in cases where initial investment may be required to support projects that operate at reduced cost in the future, whether implemented by the eligible applicant or any other entity. Grantees are not required to reach these numbers during the grant period.

(3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(4) 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 Development grant.

Strengths:

The projects goals relate to both competency-based Teacher Education and school intervention efforts. Specific goals are provided with strategies for each. This plan appears to offer a clear set of goals with a well-documented plan to implement these goals.

Information on outcomes is mentioned in the proposal. Various tables include measures for each objective that are both quantitative and qualitative in measure.

Weaknesses:

The cost estimates for the grant funding cycle need further clarification. Detailed line item budget requests include a description of each line item that is comprehensive in nature.

The cost per student for expansion to 100,000 is provided. Expansion to 500,000 is not explicitly provided, but it appears reasonable to assume the generic cost for 100,000 students remains the same for higher numbers of students.

The lack of various financial data raises questions about sustainability and scalability. In addition the primary information provided about sustainability requires school systems to pay for this service. No mention is made

about alternative funding if school district budgets continue to be limited.

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(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 projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The management plan, broken down by specific goals, appears appropriate. The strategies to achieve these goals include the expected responsibilities, timelines and milestones. This information appears to adequately support the management plan.

Weaknesses:

Various partners are mentioned in the grant (Foundations, TTU, etc., yet the actual financial contribution, if any, does not appear to be outlined in detail.

Reader's Score: 18

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes (zero or one 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:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Competitive Preference Priority 7

1. Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Innovations that Support College Access and Success (zero or one 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:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Competitive Preference Priority 8

1. Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students (zero or one 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 to provide alternative approaches to teacher preparation will focus in part on limited English proficiency students and students with special needs. Competitive priority #8 is adequately addressed.

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Improving Productivity (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Technology (zero or one point)

We give competitive preference to applications for projects that are designed to improve student achievement or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Strengths:

As part of the development of the alternative approach to teacher preparation, the project relies on the extensive use of a variety of technology related equipment and implementation efforts. Competitive priority #10 is adequately addressed.

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 9/15/11 12:00 AM