

**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: The College Board (U411C110176)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
Sub Total	20	19
Total	20	19

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: The College Board (U411C110176)

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:

The key questions are clearly stated on page 39. A simplified logic model is presented on page 168. It is clear and easy to follow. There is to be a total of 176 schools involved in the evaluation, 44 treatment and 132 comparison schools (p42). Each treatment school will have 3 comparison schools from the same state matched on noted characteristics (p42). This should provide an adequate sample that will provide sufficient power to detect effect sizes.

The formative evaluation is to use cognitive lab (think aloud) protocols and interviews to examine teachers' understanding of students' learnings based on program-generated reports (p40). The impact evaluation will include comparison schools (p42). Hierarchical generalized linear modeling (HGLM) will be used in the analysis (p42). This is an appropriate statistical approach for this project.

Consideration will be given to treatment and comparison schools that change from establishment of the groups at baseline and then later diverge (p 43). This is an excellent consideration in that many high needs schools change composition and format rapidly over the years. Appropriately, there will be a test of teacher content knowledge developed and administered pre, mid project and end of project (p43). The use of 3 data points is helpful. Changes in instructional practice will be evaluated by a survey of 44 treatment teachers (p43). Assessment of changes in instructional practice would benefit from the inclusion of observations of classroom instruction. Appropriately, professional development dosage will also be considered (p44). This will provide important information for the evaluation by insuring that the amount of professional development received by teachers is considered along with outcomes. Student level feedback will also be collected.

Findings will be discussed with the Implementation Team at regular meetings (p44). This will allow for program adjustments as necessary.

The evaluator is independent, well regarded, and qualified to conduct the evaluation. The budget of 500K represents approximately 15% of the total budget and should be sufficient to conduct the study.

Weaknesses:

On page 33, the baseline data for the 2012-13 school year is stated. An explanation is required to clarify how it is possible to have baseline data for a year not yet occurring. Teaching staff may change over the course of the study but consideration of this is not noted in the evaluation.

Reader's Score: 19

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Applicant: The College Board (U411C110176)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	18
Sub Total	20	18
Total	20	18

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: The College Board (U411C110176)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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Strengths:

The current proposal clearly summarizes the Project Goal, Objectives, and Activities (pg 10-11). A Logic Model is provided which links Program Activities (Interventions) to Teacher/Instructional Outcomes as well as Student Outcomes (pg e168). The analyses are broken into formative and summative components which clearly allow the evaluator to monitor and refine aspects of ongoing implementation and finally to summarize the impact of the feedback on both teachers and students (pg 16).

An interrupted time series design (pg 18) is proposed and appropriate for this project. Since students do not take the AP Biology test year after year, the evaluation will rely on data from successive cohorts of students in the identified project schools. To control for fluctuations that may occur in these cohort groups, there will be matched comparison groups from schools within the same state. The proposal does provide some detail on the variables that will be used to match schools in the treatment and control groups (pg 19). Comparison of the growth trajectory for both treatment and control groups will determine whether the program produced a significant impact.

Discussion of the effect size of feedback on student achievement is provided in the literature review, with distinction made between the effect size for high-need students and the rest of the student population (pg 9). This information was used to predict the minimum effect size needed in the overall evaluation (page 19-20).

Because of the nested study design the evaluators will use HGLM to analyze study results.

Data to be collected are clearly outlined on page 17 for both the formative and summative evaluations. Data are appropriate for the goal/objectives of the study and the research questions.

The proposal clearly details that a sufficient amount of resources are set aside for the program evaluation (Table on Independent Evaluator, Budget Narrative). The evaluator is independent of the program and qualifications are provided in the Appendix (vitae).

The applicant does appear to have the internal capacity and past experience to appropriately scale up this project and the current research design. Such scale up could easily occur given the applicant's broad client

base

Weaknesses:

While ongoing implementation and outcome measures of the program evaluation are addressed, the proposal does not address how they will ensure the fidelity of implementation.

The issue of attrition is not clearly addressed in the text.

The research design considers that the project is likely to have a greater impact on high-needs students. It is inferred but not clearly stated that the data will be disaggregated to understand the impact of this program on high needs students as compared to other students. It might also be helpful to look at how outcomes differ between different groups of high need students.

Reader's Score: 18

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