

**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:** Aspire Public Schools (U411C110424)

**Reader #1:** \*\*\*\*\*

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

# Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Aspire Public Schools (U411C110424)

## 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 PIs clearly spell out the three indicators of project success (p. e39), which are quite appropriate.

The proposal includes a set of hypotheses (p. e73) and the evaluation plans are closely related to the overall project goals and hypotheses.

Evaluators are well qualified to carry out the proposed work, and have a wealth of relevant experience.

The PIs proposed to provide quarterly feedback to project leadership and to track the implementation at each of the sites (such timely feedback is critical).

In pages e132 to e144, there is detailed information about standards, indicators, and rubrics. The evaluation plans build on these tools.

EXHIBITs 1 to 7 provide other information about teacher evaluation tools, examples for formative assessments, etc. These exhibits along with information on pages e132 to e144 show that the PIs (and evaluators) have thought out the evaluation methods and the instruments well.

A thorough power analysis was included in the proposal.

PIs proposed sound statistical models to analyze the data (p. e42).

The evaluation plan is quite thoughtful with detailed information about the instruments to be used, data source, and data analysis.

Both RCT and QE designs are proposed to detect short-term and long-term effects. These designs are appropriate, along with sufficient information about outcome measures and factors to be considered.

Yearly results and accumulated results will be provided.

In summary, it has a thoughtful evaluation plan.

**Weaknesses:**

Evaluators will monitor the potential threats to the internal validity (e.g., differential attrition) (p. e41), but there is no information on how this will be done.

Possible confounding effects are a concern. There are two designs (RCT and QE), and the proposed project has three key components: (1) new technology support for coaching, (2) a data-driven PD, and (3) recruitment plan. The current evaluation plan is not designed to differentiate the effect from each of the key components (effects are confounding). This issue can be addressed by using an alternative design.

**Reader's Score:** 17

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**Applicant:** Aspire Public Schools (U411C110424)

**Reader #2:** \*\*\*\*\*

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

# Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Aspire Public Schools (U411C110424)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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(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 proposal's evaluation is designed to assess short and long-term impacts of Transforming Teacher Talent (t3) in Aspire Public Schools using a dual experimental design approach. First, a randomized control trial (RCT) with blocked randomization at the school level with 39 schools (17 treatment and 17 control) to assess single year effects on student- and teacher-level variables. Then, the evaluation will conduct a quasi-experimental design with the full sample of 39 schools to assess longitudinal impacts from baseline conditions. The design and analytic approach are of very high quality and a definite strength of the application.

The power analysis provided in the evaluation was clear and articulated a high level of sophistication in the analytic and methodological approach used in the evaluation (p. 20)

The application of hierarchical linear modeling as the analytic framework appropriately addresses the inherent nested structures of education outcomes. Further, acknowledging the need for scale transformations indicates experience working with a variety of education data sources and need for transformations.

The interrupted time series model and difference in differences approach outlined for the quasi-experimental design was very sophisticated and utilizes the most up-to-date methods of experimental design recommended in education research (p. 21).

The evaluation team, Empirical Evaluation, has the expertise and experience to complete the project with a high degree of integrity.

### Weaknesses:

The study included three different components within the intervention; however, there is no way to parcel out differential effects between the three components within the design. The authors could have included a staggered or cohort staggered component implementation within the design to examine differential effects, but no such delineation was in proposal.

**Reader's Score:** 18

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