

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2012 04:23 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Significance		
1. Significance	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Mgmt Plan and Personnel	25	25
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	0
Sub Total	100	75
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. CCP 6	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. CCP 7	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. CPP 8	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. CPP 9	1	
Sub Total	1	

Competitive Preference Priority 10

Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. CPP 10

Sub Total 1

Total 105 76

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Validation Panel - 1: 84.411B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional):

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design 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 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 Validation grant.

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

(4) 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.

Strengths:

Goals and strategies are presented. The program strategies provide clarity to exactly what is intended in the goals (28 weeks of ELLA intervention, Early Reading interventions, integration of subjects, PD for teachers, focus groups, virtual observations, electronic support, train principals on interventions, survey teachers regarding their community of practices, analyze blog comments) [e19-e23].

The applicant indicates that the cost requested of the sponsor for ELLA-V is \$983.57 per participant (\$14,827,438/15,075), and the overall cost inclusive of the private partnership is \$1082 per participant (\$16,310,181/15,075) [e24].

The applicant indicates that the cost to scale is 100,000=108,200,000; 250,000= \$270,500,000; and 500,000=\$541,000,000 (e24).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the project. In determining the significance of 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 the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(3) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant provided data and demographics of the make up of ELLs in the area and nation. This application is an exceptional approach to addressing the improvement of achievement in low-performing schools by frontloading the educational experiences of students (ELLS) who typically do not receive quality education.

The applicant clearly describes how its project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. Research was mentioned throughout the application (e25-e33).

The applicant indicates that no studies were found that determines if the altered condition of virtual observation and feedback and online PD impact ESL teachers. The applicant indicates that The ThereNow classroom observation and feedback technology should facilitate this validation study and could impact observations of future teachers and practicing teachers of ELLs, and the use of Blackboard, Tegrity videoing, and webinars via Citrix GotoMeeting should have an effect on implementation and on thousands of teachers after the intervention as webinars are released. Three programs used in the original ELLA are in wide use (e33).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

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 complex projects.

(3) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

The thorough, well-organized plan includes milestones, responsible group, timeline, and other critical components. Qualifications, expertise, and experiences for the key personnel (Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator, Lead Coordinator) are appropriate.

The applicant stated that at the end of the grant period, products of the project will include PD resource developed for implementation in districts and which will be offered free online via Education Service Centers. The LDN via ELLA-Virsity for replication of the model components and strategies which will be available at the state, national, and international levels. The team will provide guidance and assistance to the partner LEAs and will provide follow-up each year for continued implementation and expansion.(e41). This is a strength for the application.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

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 include a well-designed experimental study or a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. 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:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not meet the needs of pre-k students.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Competitive Preference Priority 7

1. 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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Competitive Preference Priority 8

1. 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 entire program is designed to met the needs of ELL students.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. 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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. 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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score:

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2012 04:23 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2012 05:52 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	23
Significance		
1. Significance	25	23
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Mgmt Plan and Personnel	25	25
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	0
Sub Total	100	71
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. CCP 6	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. CCP 7	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. CPP 8	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. CPP 9	1	
Sub Total	1	

Competitive Preference Priority 10

Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. CPP 10

Sub Total 1

Total 105 72

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Validation Panel - 1: 84.411B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional):

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design 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 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 Validation grant.

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

(4) 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.

Strengths:

ELLA-V proposes a clear set of goals, objectives, and activities to support Priority #1. The narrative describes in great detail how the grant will be implemented over the five years proposing the use of treatment classrooms versus control classrooms. Monetary teacher incentives are built into the budget to adequately fund teacher participation, which is important. The application's focus on increasing the achievement of ELL students in participating districts across Texas has great potential for moving the field forward for this demographic by validating the unique interventions used in K-3 classrooms. Its second goal of examining the impact of the quality/quantity of professional development to increase teacher effectiveness is equally strong. Using virtual tools for evaluation and observation is forward thinking and should yield interesting results.

Weaknesses:

A weakness is the way the cost of this proposed project has been estimated. The applicant outlines cost per student AND teacher, which needs to be taken into consideration when comparing budgets across all applications (p.9). The application describes eight curricular interventions that use a combination of publisher materials and scripted lessons to achieve fidelity. The precision and the lockstep nature of instruction could contribute to teacher frustration. Another weakness of this proposal is the lack of professional development

for principals and other key administrators in the districts. The focus of the grant appears to be on teacher professional development and not a unified, integrated approach.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the project. In determining the significance of 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 the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.**
- (3) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.**

Strengths:

The applicant sufficiently explains how the project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice with 11 publications currently published or accepted for publication related to the original Project ELLA (K-3) (p.21). The goal of examining the impact of bi-monthly professional development for teachers is directly aligned to Priority #1.

Weaknesses:

This proposal would be stronger if it sought to validate the teaching strategies incorporated within the eight identified interventions. The combination of resources used to comprise interventions at each grade level is complicated. Many of these interventions are dependent upon commercial materials. If the grant is funded, shifting the emphasis to strategy analysis would leave curriculum resource decisions up to the states who choose to replicate the initiative. An additional weakness is the applicant's research question, which focuses only on native Spanish speaking students. Although Texas has large numbers of Spanish speaking students, a larger effect might be achieved if ELL students of various language groups were examined.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

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 complex projects.**
- (3) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other partners, either during**

or following the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

This application clearly outlines the responsibilities, timelines, and milestones of the ELLA-V project. It is evident from the qualifications of the project director and other key personnel that they have the experience necessary to make results happen and vast previous experience at managing complex projects.

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 25

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 include a well-designed experimental study or a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. 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:

NA

Weaknesses:

Focusing on interventions to help English Language Learners in K-3 is strongly described within the application; however, there is no identified plan for improving alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs that serve children from birth to age three, in preschools, and in K-3.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Competitive Preference Priority 7

1. 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. 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:

This application is designed around validating successful interventions for limited English students in K-3. Specific strategies designed to improve academic of students are clearly outlined. Implied throughout the application is how these early learning interventions will ultimately close achievement gaps and increase college-career readiness.

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. 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. 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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/04/2012 05:52 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2012 08:12 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	0
Significance		
1. Significance	25	0
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Mgmt Plan and Personnel	25	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	24
Sub Total	100	24
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. CCP 6	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. CCP 7	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. CPP 8	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. CPP 9	1	
Sub Total	1	

Competitive Preference Priority 10

Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. CPP 10

Sub Total 1

Total 105 24

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Validation Panel - 1: 84.411B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional):

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design 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 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 Validation grant.

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

(4) 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.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the project. In determining the significance of 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 the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(3) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

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 complex projects.

(3) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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 include a well-designed experimental study or a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

The project includes two main goals, each of which is addressed through evaluation activities and specific research questions (pages e45-e46). The evaluation plan uses a reverse-order approach to evaluating grades, so that implementation at an earlier grade does not impact implementation at a later grade. Evaluation will be conducted using a randomized control trial. Each of the treatment groups of schools is divided into two separate groups to determine the impact of separate components of instructional activities. Sustainability of the professional development program is directly assessed by evaluation activities. The professional development component of the grant will be evaluated using two established survey instruments, Transitional Bilingual Observation Protocol (TBOP) and Teacher Observation Record (TOR). The proposal includes a detailed timeline for major milestones that includes the group responsible for each milestone. The evaluation group is involved with at least one milestone for each of the six main objectives of the proposal and is involved with all evaluation activities identified under Other Critical Components. The external evaluation group is chaired by Johns Hopkins staff members. The seventy five schools will be randomly assigned to one of the two treatment groups or to the control group, with sets of three schools matched before random assignment. The number of schools needed was established through a power analysis for the planned hierarchical linear modeling analysis. Target minimum detectable effect sizes are provided. Plans for handling attrition and missing data are provided. Evaluation will include a survey instrument specifically to assess fidelity of implementation.

Weaknesses:

The evaluation plan does not specify who will conduct classroom observations. Specifically, the plan should indicate whether the evaluation group will conduct these observations or if they will be conducted by some other independent means. In particular, the plan should indicate who will be implementing the TBOP and TOR instruments and how these individuals will be trained.

Reader's Score: 24

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. 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. 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. 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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. 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. 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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/04/2012 08:12 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2012 07:21 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Sub Total	0	
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	0
Significance		
1. Significance	25	0
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Mgmt Plan and Personnel	25	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	23
Sub Total	100	23
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. CCP 6	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. CCP 7	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. CPP 8	1	
Sub Total	1	
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. CPP 9	1	
Sub Total	1	

Competitive Preference Priority 10

Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. CPP 10

Sub Total 1

Total 105 23

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Validation Panel - 1: 84.411B

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional):

General:

Overall, many sections of the application are difficult to understand due to the heavy use of acronyms, and portions that are narrative that would be more understandable as a table supporting well-written text (e.g., pgs. 3-7).

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design 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 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 Validation grant.

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

(4) 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.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the project. In determining the significance of 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 the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(3) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

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 complex projects.

(3) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

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 include a well-designed experimental study or a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

--The evaluation narrative provided a thorough and well-explicated analysis section for each project goal.

--The application provides a table of data collection instruments which includes the psychometric properties (pgs. E268-9). This information is critical for both internal validity and in replication studies.

-- The application provides a very thorough budget narrative for each year. The resources allocated for evaluation (external and internal) are sufficient to facilitate a thorough and effective project evaluation.

--The evaluation design includes multiple types of data collection, both qualitative and quantitative. Classroom observations are included, which complement data collected through surveys, and are an important validity component.

--The external evaluation team includes individuals with extensive experience in project evaluations as proposed in the application. The amount and types of resources are sufficient for the evaluation plan.

Weaknesses:

--The writing style used in the application does not facilitate easy understanding by the reader, particularly in the overuse of acronyms, which occasionally are not defined prior to first use.

-- The total amount of budgeted funds for evaluation (external and internal) is on the high side, at 16.4% of the budget.

-- The evaluation plan does not include a component for the use of technology, even though technology is a key element in project implementation.

Reader's Score: 23

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. 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. 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. 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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. 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. 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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/04/2012 07:21 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/05/2012 07:59 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Significance		
1. Significance	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel		
1. Mgmt Plan and Personnel	25	25
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	0
Sub Total	100	75
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
Competitive Preference Priority 6		
1. CCP 6	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
Competitive Preference Priority 7		
1. CCP 7	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
Competitive Preference Priority 8		
1. CPP 8	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
Competitive Preference Priority 9		
1. CPP 9	1	0
Sub Total	1	0

Competitive Preference Priority 10

Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. CPP 10

	1	0
Sub Total	1	0
Total	105	76

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Validation Panel - 1: 84.411B

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: Texas A&M University (U411B120047)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional):

General:

Texas A&M, in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University evaluation group, seeks funding to validate findings of the intervention components of an earlier, similar study regarding the effectiveness of teachers in meeting the needs of ELLs. Other previous studies have not delivered definitive results to answer with certainty what the best way is of teaching children whose first language is not English in public schools where only English is spoken. It is important to have reliable research on what works for this high-needs group, as ELLs now represent 21% of students in our nation s schools with 79% of those students speaking only Spanish and they are falling behind even other high-needs students. For example, Texas fifth-grade ELLs scored lower on the state tests in science than any other sub group, including Economically Disadvantaged, At Risk and Special Ed.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design 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 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 Validation grant.
- (3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.
- (4) 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.

Strengths:

The applicant has designed a project that is exceptionally detailed about goals, objectives and strategies, e.g., measuring achievement by not just one assessment but five, factoring in a 40% attrition rate and providing for dissemination of results. It builds on a previous IES-funded study and ongoing efforts to determine which approaches work best with the ELL growing population. There will be a 16-member, broad -based Advisory Board and it has the support of a wide-range of LEAs and numerous private partners. The costs seem reasonable and are presented in great detail with a budget narrative for each year of the grant.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the project. In determining the significance of 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 the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(3) The importance and magnitude of the effect expected to be obtained by the proposed project, including the extent to which the project will substantially and measurably improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates. The evidence in support of the importance and magnitude of the effect would be the research-based evidence provided by the eligible applicant to support the proposed project.

Strengths:

The proposed project is significant in that the results of it should prove very helpful in guiding the instruction of ELL students, specifically Spanish-speaking students, a fast-growing percentage of the nation's students. There is an ongoing division about the right approach to reach these students and frustration about the lack of progress and yet, there has been a paucity of research in this area. The applicant is acutely aware of what research does exist and will build on that, particularly on the findings of an evaluation of the earlier version of the approach that funds are being sought to validate. The applicant has reason to believe that this approach improves the achievement of this high-needs sub group more productively than alternatives and seeks to investigate the impact of its components on the instruction and achievement of the targeted students.

The results should greatly add to the knowledge base about not only the main question, but also the various components of the approach, e.g. virtual professional development, various commercial programs and whole group instruction.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

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 complex projects.

(3) The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a State or regional level (as appropriate, based on the results of the proposed project) working directly, or through other partners, either during or following the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

The applicant is obviously very knowledgeable about what it takes to manage the designed project and has set forth a plan that divides responsibilities among four groups, clearly assigning each responsibilities for major milestones for each objective and strategy.

The qualifications of personnel involved could hardly be better and those of the Project Director and Key Personnel are amazingly suited to their role, e.g., being bilingual in addition to specific expertise required. In addition, the percentages of their time allotted to the project are greater than usually found.

Weaknesses:

Considering the great detail given on all the other aspects of the plan, the capacity to bring it to scale could have been further developed. However, being aware of the inclusion of a coordinator of dissemination of results in the third year, the involvement of Johns Hopkins well-known experts, the obvious need and desire to disseminate the study s results, in addition to collaboration with school districts that was stated in the proposal, there can be no doubt of the applicant s capacity to bring the project to scale.

Reader's Score: 25

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 include a well-designed experimental study or a well-designed quasi-experimental study.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 6 - Competitive Preference Priority 6

1. 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:

This project is all about improving early learning outcomes by improving teachers' ability to teach young ELLs how to read fluently, the skill that is crucial to all achievement.

Weaknesses:

Project is silent on any alignment, collaboration or transitions involving programs serving children from birth to age three.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 7 - Competitive Preference Priority 7

1. 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: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 8 - Competitive Preference Priority 8

1. 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:

This entire project is about addressing the unique learning needs of Limited English Proficient Students.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 9 - Competitive Preference Priority 9

1. 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: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 10 - Competitive Preference Priority 10

1. 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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/05/2012 07:59 PM