

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/22/2012 07:29 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	25	25
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	30
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management and Personnel	20	20
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	75
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes</b>		
1. CPP 6	1	0
<b>Innovations that Support College Access &amp; Success</b>		
1. CPP 7	1	0
<b>Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs</b>		
1. CPP 8	1	0
<b>Improving Productivity</b>		
1. CPP 9	1	1
<b>Technology</b>		
1. CPP 10	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	2
<b>Total</b>	105	77

# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Full Development Panel - 5: 84.411C

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

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

## Questions

### 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 eligible applicants 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.

(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:

(1) This project design encompasses partnering with two consortiums of schools: Pennsylvania and Michigan. Such a partnership has the potential to reach a greater number of students and to share information on a much broader scale. The applicant meets AP #2, by proposing the delivery of STEM-content PD for secondary science teachers. The applicant offers clearly stated and measurable goals (e22,e23) and strategies (e.g., field testing and refinement of an online PD support program for science teachers, web-based program - iRAISE, recruitment of science teachers, and building teacher capacity via a facilitator training program/train-the-trainer model). There is a significant body of research (e21,e22) already available regarding the efficacy of the PD provided by the applicant. The applicant proposes to extend the project to an online piloting of its PD framework. Importantly, by expanding on the success of the prior PD program, the applicant is able to reach more a greater number of teachers, impacting more students. In addition to meeting AP#2, the applicant also meets two competitive priorities (9 and 10).

(2) The proposed project will serve 33,000 students, over a 4-year period, at a cost of \$87 per student. This cost seems reasonable and once developed and evaluated, the applicant estimates that the per student cost will decrease to \$8 for the same 33,000 students. The post-development cost for scaling up to 100k, 250k and 500k students would remain constant at \$8 per student. The cost seem reasonable and inline with the goals of the project.

(3) The proposed scalability of the project is of particular note. The applicant proposes that the program would cost 50% less than the \$16 student cost for the face-to-face (non-web-based) RA PD. The applicant provides reasonable cost estimates (e136,e137), over the 4-year duration of the project.

(4) If funded, this grant will build upon the applicants prior RA PD (non-web-based) program (e21). The proposed online PD will build upon the research base and PD, already recognized in the previous grant, providing helpful data, to inform instruction. The applicant demonstrates that if funded, they will share the knowledge gained from the research proposal, via conferences (e.g., AERA and Learning Forward), online blogs and publications (e25). Due to the continuing limitations in available resources, the applicant predicts that once developed and refined, numerous districts will be interested in learning more about the program and that the applicant is committed to sharing data.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found

**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 potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.**
- (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 applicant suggest an exceptional approach by leveraging and building upon prior research data by expanding an existing PD program, to an online plan - which will reach more educators, and hence, students. The applicant states that teachers will receive online PD, specifically using literacy to teach complex STEM content, such as biology, chemistry, earth science and physics (e23). This proposal will add to educational research, by building upon Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core Standards and its impact on teacher preparedness, and hence student preparedness and success. The proposal also will expand knowledge in the efficacy of online PD. As well, the proposed project extends knowledge in understanding more about the limitations and challenges of online PD

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not fully delineate the type of PD that will be delivered. Although RA appears to be an extension of iRAISE, it is unclear what exactly is involved in the actual PD. RA PD was mentioned, as used in an earlier study. However, the components of RA were not specifically stated in this proposal. This proposal could have been strengthened, by providing more background information on the original non-Web-based PD program.

**Reader's Score:** 30

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

**Strengths:**

(1) The management plan is adequate to achieve the stated objectives of the proposal. A detailed project timeline is provided (e43), listing the activities, milestones and the person responsible for completing (e44). A process to monitor and assess student development (e39) allows for potential adjustments in intervention strategies. Based on periodic assessments, and clearly defined responsibilities and timelines and milestones, this project is both sustainable and scalable.

(2)The applicant provides evidence of extensive experience in managing a grant of this scope and magnitude (e21). The applicant has approximately 17 years of experiences, in 34 states - reaching more than 75,000 teachers. The Project Manager has more than 25 years of experience (e45) and also holds an advanced degree in Language and Literacy Education. Because the program is heavily literacy-dependent, a Literacy Specialist lends much-needed support and expertise, in the delivery of PD. Including a former biology and chemistry teacher on the team, provides support around the curriculum and its delivery. Especially useful is that the chemistry teacher has incorporated RA practices in many of his classes, and is therefore very familiar the program. Finally, having two key personnel that have strong backgrounds in technology will be helpful, to trouble-shoot any potential problems with an online system.  
of personnel and relevant experience.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**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.**

**Strengths:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

Reader's Score: 0

### Priority Questions

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes

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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

Reader's Score: 0

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations that Support College Access & Success

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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

Reader's Score: 0

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs

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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

Reader's Score: 0

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Productivity

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:**

The applicant meets CPP9, through the use of an online Professional Development plan. The project would provide a significant cost-savings. Because teachers could work at their computers, they would be no need to pay for travel time, nor would a consultant be needed to provide the PD. In addition, a building/site in which to hold the PD would not be necessary, as the proposed mode of delivery is web-based and accessible everywhere.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 1

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Technology

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:**

The applicant meets CPP10, technology. The applicant uses an online technology system to deliver PD, specifically addressing weaknesses of teachers around content (reading, math, etc).

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score:** 1

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/22/2012 07:29 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2012 09:35 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	25	23
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	35
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management and Personnel	20	19
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	77
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes</b>		
1. CPP 6	1	0
<b>Innovations that Support College Access &amp; Success</b>		
1. CPP 7	1	0
<b>Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs</b>		
1. CPP 8	1	0
<b>Improving Productivity</b>		
1. CPP 9	1	1
<b>Technology</b>		
1. CPP 10	1	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	1
<b>Total</b>	105	78

# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Full Development Panel - 5: 84.411C

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

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

## Questions

### 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 eligible applicants 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.

(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:

1. Each of the goals is carefully and sequentially described in detail that reflects thinking through the viability of achievement. The numbers of recruited teachers seems plausible, the goals themselves all seem to support the overall vision and purpose of the grant. Using teachers as leaders is a kind of train-the-trainer model, but the iterative design process with teachers seems like it will achieve the buy-in necessary to maintain interest and build the teacher cohorts. It seems like a very adoptable solution to literacy that will not only enhance reading skills for STEM content courses, but for all coursework. The strategy is clearly aligned with the priority.

The projected number of 33,000 students reached after four years with 150 teachers trained breaks down to approximately 55 students/teacher over the four years, very realistic considering teachers will be teaching to multiple classrooms.

2. The cost of \$87/student is very reasonable and includes all development costs. When scaled, the cost/student drops to \$8/student for 100K, 250K, 500K students (development costs are no longer necessary); making the program a very promising investment, should the results prove successful.

3. The costs are completely aligned and reasonable in relation to the objectives; they reflect real (actual) predictions and forecasting based on costing previous models.

4. The applicant is a center within an organization whose projects consist of similar development grants and efforts. In fact, the model and genesis of this grant was a previously funded i3 validation grant, demonstrating that the organization has leveraged findings, knowledge, and experiences from another similar grant to further their reach in the educational innovation field. It is natural to expect that all findings and design discoveries would fit precisely into the mission and ongoing work of the proposing organization (this is what they do!!!)

**Weaknesses:**

1. While the goals are clear, the actual content of the professional development, a core component of the project, is not described clearly; perhaps they are referring to the previous program and assuming the reader knows what they are talking about, this detail is not stated.

**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 potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.**

**(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:**

1. The exceptional aspect of this grant is how the focus on the fundamental teaching/learning skill of reading will be leveraged as the core strategy to learn STEM content. The proposers argue that understanding how to read and therefore comprehend science will move students away from rote memorization of science facts to building deeper understanding of core science concepts (p 7). Further, focused and deliberate reading strategies will help all learning, not just science; lastly, this approach finds grounding in research that ties together science inquiry and literacy, practices that share important properties that make the integration of literacy and science particularly powerful. (p 8). The arguments for the needs to improve reading skills in science as well as the direct connections of this strategy to NRC standards, NSES, and Common Core support its exceptional approach and each argument is very well supported by cited research.

2. The potential contribution to the field includes those in curriculum design, professional development delivery methods (f2f vs. online vs. hybrid), as well as the effect of increasing STEM knowledge through a literacy-based approach. Researchers expect to contribute a constructivist adult learning model that is cost-effective, scalable (online delivery) and has the potential to change classroom practice.

3. There is no reason to doubt that students who have achieved improved literacy (reading) skills in STEM and comprehend not only the science content but inquiry-based strategies will show gains in a variety of measures, including content and attitudinal, which will likely positively impact student growth and close achievement gaps. A previous study on the method, enacted in a non-online setting, but based on the same design principles, showed significant gains across a wide range of dimensions for both teachers and students.

**Weaknesses:**

no weaknesses found

**Reader's Score:** 35

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

**Strengths:**

1. The management plan is strong, well-designed and adequate to achieve the objectives. Personnel time on the project, as reflected by the budget, is adequate to support and guide the project through its milestones. Teacher-leaders will be the core component of sustainability, since they are a cost-effective entity, being part of the existing school infrastructure beyond project funding. The timeline (p 23-24) shows careful consideration of sequence and timing of tasks with associated personnel that will effectively accomplish project goals.

2. The group and consultants have had much experience with similar projects as well as many others in related educational fields; they have managed projects of similar size. The key personnel are leaders in their respective fields, and designers and consultants are all very qualified; many have worked together previously, insuring that little time will be invested in team-building or aligning work styles.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no details about sustaining the project beyond the funding period.

**Reader's Score:** 19

**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.

**Strengths:**

not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Reader's Score: 0

## Priority Questions

### Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes

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:

not applicable

#### Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 0

### Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations that Support College Access & Success

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:

not applicable

#### Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 0

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs

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:**

not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Reader's Score: 0

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Productivity

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:**

The productivity preference is addressed through online professional development to achieve scale with a significant cost savings over f2f PD. The increased reach of pd will lead to increased numbers of students participating in improved learning experiences (as defined by the proposal).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 1

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Technology

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:**

Online learning contexts are ubiquitous and not necessarily high-quality digital tools for learning; it is not clear what the technology used will be.

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

---

**Status:**           Submitted

**Last Updated:**   09/20/2012 09:35 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/24/2012 01:28 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	25	25
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	35
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management and Personnel	20	18
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	78
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes</b>		
1. CPP 6	1	0
<b>Innovations that Support College Access &amp; Success</b>		
1. CPP 7	1	0
<b>Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs</b>		
1. CPP 8	1	0
<b>Improving Productivity</b>		
1. CPP 9	1	1
<b>Technology</b>		
1. CPP 10	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	2
<b>Total</b>	105	80

# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Full Development Panel - 5: 84.411C

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

## Questions

### 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 eligible applicants 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.

(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 proposal has amassed a significant body of research that points to the efficacy of SLI s face to face Reading Apprenticeship PD. A natural extension is to adapt this formula to an online version (iRAISE). The proposal presents a compelling and strong collegial association between the Departments of Education in MI and PA. This association already has a successful RA PD model and is piloting an online PD course featuring the RA framework. The proposal put forth an explicit strategy to develop, to field test, and to refine an online 65 hour course (iRAISE). The strategy utilizes extensive materials and protocols from the existing and successful RA face-to-face PD. This online strategy has significant potential to leverage the use of technology to differentiate teacher learning in a cast effective manner. The PD has the potential to reach more teachers and thus the cost effectiveness of the PD is improved. The proposal outlines a rather comprehensive and logical plan to recruit teachers in a sequential manner to develop the online PD course. The recruitment of science teacher leaders to serve as apprentice facilitators in training continues to strengthen this proposal. Research consistently demonstrates that PD in many cases is more effective when delivered by teacher colleagues. Making the training both online and face-to-face is a real strength of this proposal because the social interaction has strong potential to make the PD even more effective. The proposal makes the case that the project could translate its' potential effectiveness to other disciplines. This is true because the need continues to be great for effective and low resource PD. The PD model proposed here could be developed in mathematics, English, and social studies utilizing the same science strategies. A real strength of this proposal is its' ability to be replicated across disciplines. This has the real potential to empower teachers about their growth and development and ultimately lead to improved student learning, sustainability of the project and ease of impacting larger groups of teacher and student learning. The \$87 per student cost in the development phase for 33,00 students is appropriate for an online PD development project and this reader thinks it is very reasonable that the scale-up student cost would be \$8 considering the on-line design of the proposal and the potential to reach larger numbers of teacher audiences.

**Weaknesses:**

**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 potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.**
  - (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 proposal presents significant research (NAEP) about reading comprehension statistics. High school achievement levels in science classes reflect these statistics. Despite a preponderance of data indicating a correlation between students unable to read and the ability to think critically about texts, synthesize information etc. very few districts provide the needed academic literacy instruction. The proposal presents the Common Core Standards call for students to demonstrate advanced literacy proficiency in all classes. The proposal reports studies indicating that science education teachers are not prepared to simultaneously engage students in a rigorous curriculum of science and build student's academic literacy skills. The proposal suggests that online learning has potential for transformative teacher learning. Typical instructional strategies for struggling readers involves simplifying, slowing the pace, etc. The proposal presents compelling results from West Ed that alter this approach and lead to significant student achievement. The proposal also makes a compelling case for iRAISE as it has the potential to fill a growing need for low-cost, high quality PD that addresses the Common Core Standards. The online courses adapt key design elements of RA PD.

**Weaknesses:**

**Reader's Score: 35**

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

**Strengths:**

The management plan contains Table 2 (P23) that clearly outlines timelines and responsibilities that are reasonable and have real potential for meeting the deadlines. The milestones are spaced out and not so compact that give this reader the belief that the objectives can be reasonably accomplished. There is sufficient redundancy in the people responsible for an activity to help ensure that no one individual is overburdened and that there are other hands-on-deck to accomplish the activity in a timely fashion should one individual not be able to meet their goals. The resumes of key individuals reflect a breadth and depth of experiences similar to the proposed project. The project directorThe letters of support are specific and comprehensive.

**Weaknesses:**

It would help this reader if the timelines were broken out into weekly blocks because the activities are quite comprehensive and may be a bit overwhelming for those responsible for their completion. A sort of weekly timeline might help keep people focused and not feel overburdened. Expounding in more detail about the state-wide partnerships with Michigan and Pennsylvania would strengthen this proposal. These collaborations are significant in their potential to spread the wealth of this online PD program.

**Reader's Score: 18**

**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.**

**Strengths:**

not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Priority Questions****Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes**

- 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:**

not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations that Support College Access & Success**

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:**

not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs**

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:**

not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Reader's Score: 0

**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Productivity**

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:**

The proposal clearly explains and justifies an online PD plan to improve teacher knowledge in STEM subject matter. This plan has significant potential to improve student learning.

**Weaknesses:**

Reader's Score: 1

**Competitive Preference Priority - Technology**

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:**

The proposal details a strong plan to use digital technology that will lead to improved PD that will lead to improved teacher learning and teacher effectiveness and ultimately will lead to improved student achievement in STEM subject matter.

**Weaknesses:**

Reader's Score: 1

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/24/2012 01:28 AM



Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2012 08:53 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

Reader #4: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	25	0
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	0
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management and Personnel	20	0
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	16
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	16
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes</b>		
1. CPP 6	1	0
<b>Innovations that Support College Access &amp; Success</b>		
1. CPP 7	1	0
<b>Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs</b>		
1. CPP 8	1	0
<b>Improving Productivity</b>		
1. CPP 9	1	0
<b>Technology</b>		
1. CPP 10	1	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	0
<b>Total</b>	105	16

# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Full Development Panel - 5: 84.411C

Reader #4: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

## Questions

### 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 eligible applicants 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.

(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:

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 potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

(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:**

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

**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 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.**

**Strengths:**

1. The evaluation pays attention to fidelity and assigns a numerical index to fidelity to assess impacts for teachers who implement with adequate fidelity. Fidelity studies consider the extent to which a program is implemented as planned and the data helps explain program outcomes. The evaluators will provide ongoing feedback to keep the project on track. The evaluation also addresses attrition which is also critical in understanding program outcomes.

2. Teachers and students will be selected randomly to participate. Details of the randomized selection are presented which attest to the rigor of the evaluation design. Since some of the schools will have both treatment and wait-listed controls, detailed procedures are provided about how the evaluation team will limit within school bias (pages 38-39)
3. Details about the development, content, and reliability and validity of the measures are provided in Appendix D (p. 67) and appear adequate and appropriate. For example, results of internal consistency (i.e. Cronbach's alpha) and concurrent validity are presented.
4. Justification of sample size based on power analysis for effects size is presented and appears adequate (p. 39)
5. Monthly surveys and online data logs about usage will track implementation to allow for corrections as necessary (p. 39).
6. The application correctly notes that documentation of the implementation will help replication. The more details that are presented and tracked with regard to program implementation, the more likely it is that others will be able to replicate the program and expect similar results.
7. Some detail is presented about intent to treat estimates of impacts on student achievement and considers variables such as school-level blocking, clustering of students in teachers, etc., and their interactions. This careful attention to such details can add another dimension to explaining results and outcomes.
8. An additional quasi-experiment will further assess impact on science literacy assessment.
9. The external evaluation firm has experience with large-scale experimental impact studies and is currently leading other i3 evaluations. According to their vitas, the team includes doctoral level evaluators who appear to have varying amounts of experience in educational evaluation.

**Weaknesses:**

1. No logic model appeared in the proposal although reference to it was made twice (pages 37, 39)
2. The budget is more than 20% of the budget and with most of the evaluation measures already developed, it is not clear why that amount is necessary.
3. The evaluation mentions qualitative work on several occasions (pages 37, 39, 40, 41) however it is not evident which measures will yield such data. The measures outlined in the section on Human Subjects and in Appendix D all appear to be quantitative. There is no evidence of interviews or focus groups. Further, little information is provided about the schedule of data collection (what data is to be collected when).

**Reader's Score: 16**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes**

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:**

na

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations that Support College Access & Success**

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:**

na

**Weaknesses:**

na

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs**

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:**

na

**Weaknesses:**

na

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Productivity**

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:**

na

**Weaknesses:**

na

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Technology**

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:**

na

**Weaknesses:**

na

**Reader's Score: 0**

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/20/2012 08:53 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2012 06:24 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

Reader #5: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	25	0
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	0
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management and Personnel	20	0
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	17
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes</b>		
1. CPP 6	1	0
<b>Innovations that Support College Access &amp; Success</b>		
1. CPP 7	1	0
<b>Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs</b>		
1. CPP 8	1	0
<b>Improving Productivity</b>		
1. CPP 9	1	0
<b>Technology</b>		
1. CPP 10	1	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	0
<b>Total</b>	105	17

# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Full Development Panel - 5: 84.411C

Reader #5: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: WestEd (U411C120094)

## Questions

### 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 eligible applicants 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.

(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:

Not applicable

#### Weaknesses:

Not applicable

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 potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

(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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

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

**Strengths:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

**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 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.

**Strengths:**

1. The evaluation methods afford multiple high quality evaluation protocols including a feedback loop, randomized control study of a significant number of teachers (100) to assess the impact of iRAISE on teacher and student learning and advancement of knowledge in the field. The project will engage an evaluation team (Empirical Education) with a proven track record for evaluating i3 grants, and a national organization long established in testing in content areas, who will create an assessment adapted to assess the areas under

consideration (specifically science reading comprehension). The evaluation will build on recognized research from their 2010i3 validation grant (p 1). The randomized controlled trial of those taking the iRAISE course in comparison to the randomized control trial with 300 of 33,000 students will maximize validity of outcomes (p 3). Impacts on intermediate outcomes and on distal outcomes (student engagement or achievement) will be measured and ETS surveys (appendix p18) will be controlled via random assignment to limit cross-over/contamination.

2. Research study is based on several theories: "working in design research" (Brown, 1992,), the thesis of "usable knowledge" (Weiss, 1979,), and research from Lee and Spratley (2000) which shows that students are capable of complex reading (p 10). Fidelity assessment is built in and defined. Improving upon a research based and thoughtful design, the evaluators also include a secondary design, paired with the experimental approach as a backup for assessing impact on the science literacy assessment (p 20). More importantly, the evaluators have the benefit of results from previous evaluations of the program.

3. WestEd has allocated significant resources to this, including a 2013 validation study that is more than 20% of the total budget. The evaluation plan describes the use of many validated instruments including assessments, surveys, feedback, scales and logs and is robust enough to carry out the multiple year evaluation. The plan is aligned with the key questions and should be given careful consideration for teacher compliance with fidelity studies.

#### **Weaknesses:**

In the needs statement (pp 6-7) national statistics are provided but it would have informed the reader to show how local statistics compare against those for evaluation purposes.

Research based on the teacher's role in 2004 and 2011 was compiled by Greenleaf and Schoenbach who appear to be West Ed staff and not independent researchers; the research would hold more validity if provided by an outside source.

It is unclear if all treatment groups receive the same surveys and are part of the same baseline data collection.

Evaluation will provide enough information to address Competitive Preference Priority 10 (Technology) by examining the impact of technology and cost effectiveness of providing a web based model opposed to a face-to-face model, however the evaluation plan does not address comparisons between prior cohort using the face to face protocol and the project currently under development (treatment group).

While positive outcomes were shown in research on the face to face program in the form of robust changes in instruction, it is unclear how the web based approach will be will evaluated to show that the face to face program scales to the web based program with fidelity (p12).

On page 20, the evaluator states, "mediator analyses will be conducted with multilevel framework," but it would be helpful to see an expansion on the specific activities included in that model.

**Reader's Score: 17**

#### **Priority Questions**

##### **Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes**

**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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations that Support College Access & Success**

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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs**

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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

**Reader's Score:** 0

**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Productivity**

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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

**Reader's Score:** 0

**Competitive Preference Priority - Technology**

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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

**Reader's Score:** 0

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/20/2012 06:24 PM