

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/25/2013 11:25 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	13
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	83

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - i3 Development - 11: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(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 proposed project will substantially improve on the outcomes achieved by other practices, such as through better student outcomes, lower cost, or accelerated results.

Strengths:

The project's approach is unique in that it addresses family engagement around children's executive function using a cross-cohort training model with families and educators participating together with a target of families whose children have not had formal educational experiences. Multiple novel strategies in a single project.

Timing of the project - engaging families prior to entrance of children into Kindergarten is a strength.

The application provides a strong theoretical basis for their approach and clearly describes how the project will advance the field of knowledge regarding children's executive function, collaborative approaches to family engagement and early literacy data on the academic performance of children without early educational experiences.

A pilot project utilizing the approach with five schools yielded positive results raising confidence that the outcomes are likely to be extended to those individuals in this project and by developing the skills of educators and family members; extending it beyond to additional students in the future.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(3) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Strengths:

Addresses the absolute priority of improving parent engagement through providing parents the skills (Mind in the Making) in a cross cohort manner with educators extending the breadth and depth of teacher-parent relationships that promote effective engagement.

Two Project Goals are clearly identified with quantifiable objectives (e.g. provide outreach to 4,800 families over four years). Objectives are clearly tied to precise activities with pertinent personnel identified, timelines established and benchmarks/deliverables established (see Management Plan Table page 18). The Logic Model also illustrates the relationship between the organization and personnel, project plans and expected outcomes and impact.

Potential risks are identified as providing the number of trainings identified and engaging participants and strategies are identified for how to address those risks.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The management plan documented in the table is well described with sufficient detail and sufficiently connected to goals and objectives. Given they have completed a similar pilot project, initiation of the project will be minimal. The expertise, resources and commitment of the Families and Work Institute provide a high level of support to ensure the likelihood of successful replication and expansion of the pilot.

Evidence of effective management and continuous improvement are found in that a primary set up task will be to establish a comprehensive management plan with regular meetings and mechanisms for review and reflection. They will also have

quarterly reports from the independent evaluator, and sharing participant level data analysis.

Weaknesses:

The lack of precise approach for continuous improvement identified in the application.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. In determining the quality and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The adequacy of the project's staffing plan, particularly for the first year of the project, including the identification of the project director and, in the case of projects with unfilled key personnel positions at the beginning of the project, that the staffing plan identifies how critical work will proceed.

Strengths:

Highly qualified and appropriately skills project director, family and community partnerships director, and family outreach ambassadors identified to be ready upon funding. Other positions are also well described with individuals identified who are highly skills as well including school readiness and recruitment.

A senior research scientist with experience on Early Reading First has been identified as the outside evaluator.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project, as well as a measureable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/25/2013 11:25 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/25/2013 07:45 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	13
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	83

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - i3 Development - 11: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(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 proposed project will substantially improve on the outcomes achieved by other practices, such as through better student outcomes, lower cost, or accelerated results.

Strengths:

The novel approach is cross-cohort training intervention focusing on K-3 grade transition. The contribution of the proposed project includes Mind In the Making knowledge and practices and how it supports the early cognition theory of development of young children. The need for the project is stated on pg. 1 highlighting demographic need data. The strength of the Providence Plan's Empowering Families Project is that it will work with the Providence Public School District, Center for Women at Wellesley College, and Families & Work Institute in defining the problem and providing solutions to include marginalized populations (K, linguistically and culturally diverse families) with equal access and inclusion opportunities for engaging families in their children's academic development. The project proposes to build capacity of families with a focus on students in entering K to 3 grade transition to support these students' social emotional and cognitive development, while enhancing the ability of these families to collaborate more effectively with their child's teachers and other school personnel through a well-designed national recognized Mind In the Making training of 8-module, 16 hour training intervention described clearly on pg. 2-6 to focus on executive function along with unique aspect of cross-cohort training model among families, teachers and other diverse staff; and implementation of Kindergarten Registration Process for school readiness and relationship-building.

In addition, the outcome measures are stated for student performance indicators (attendance, homework completion), performance across learning domains (assessment data), and improvement in relative executive metrics (student report cards). Thus, the project substantially addresses practices that will improve student outcomes.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(3) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Strengths:

The applicant uses a well-designed national model with similar continuum of solutions on pg. 15 in mitigating risk and addressing needs of entering and existing families from diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic through creation of logic model on pg. 16 and the deploying staff, Americorp members, volunteers, leading expert consultation to ensure outreach and participation in plan. Empowering Families activities will begin when Providence families register their children for Kindergarten readdressing invitational experience and continue through third grade. The activities are designed to achieve three goals: 1) Build capacity of families to work in partnership with faculty and staff to support transition; 2) Expand district's strategic plan to promote students' social and emotional development; and 3) Create a community of learners among school staff and families who possess greater collective capacity of family engagement. The target focus will address 21 elementary school teachers listed as innovation, advancement, and acceleration; 1,280 parents, 160 1-3 grades students, 160 school staff in co-facilitation training and outreach model. The applicant uses key partnerships to address underlying issues with specific objectives with logic model for empowering families on p. 9-16.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The management plan (pg. 18; 73 MOA) in the Providence Plan articulates a shared vision with key responsibilities and timelines in supporting all high needs students (K-3) with further transitions support of middle and high schools trajectory as collaborative partners to provide a series of family engagement interventions that will help families, district, and support staff to take a more meaningful focus on developing students in social, cognitive and emotional skills in early learning grades through research-based models that have proven effective with similar populations and community demographics. The project director management has experience in managing projects of similar scope and complexity, successful history of leading early learning and childcare projects with similar need demographics, and assisting in cross-functional data collection to support evaluation and impact. .

Weaknesses:

Applicant shows limited reporting and dissemination with school district communications department of outcomes on pg. 25. More details of method and timeline of sharing outcomes and data impact project status in a family friendly format dissemination and specific student data-feedback-strategy and continuous improvement systems to ensure on track to meet and accomplish goals.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. In determining the quality and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The adequacy of the project's staffing plan, particularly for the first year of the project, including the identification of the project director and, in the case of projects with unfilled key personnel positions at the beginning of the project, that the staffing plan identifies how critical work will proceed.

Strengths:

The staffing plan identifies project director and key personnel positions at the project. The management team supports bilingual needs of the project and works closely with its consultants and contractors on pg. 53-68 of extensive experience with collecting, analyzing, and using data for decisions for decision-making, improvement, and accountability measures throughout the application for quality assurance. The project director has deep experience in managing projects of similar complexity in serving as project director for three U.S. Dept. of Education funding projects.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and

the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project, as well as a measureable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

Evaluation experts will address this section of the application.

Weaknesses:

Evaluation experts will address this section of the application.

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/25/2013 07:45 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/24/2013 08:11 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	13
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	83

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - i3 Development - 11: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(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 proposed project will substantially improve on the outcomes achieved by other practices, such as through better student outcomes, lower cost, or accelerated results.

Strengths:

The proposed project provides several novel contributions to their application of Mind in the Making. Of particular note are components identified by current researchers for needing more study: family engagement focused on children's executive function and social-emotional development, a cross-cohort training model, and school readiness strategies for kindergarten preparation (p. 3).

This project has honed in on the most critical areas that have been identified in family engagement theory and practice. Not only will the project focus on content that is of current interest, but it also has focused on format of training to ensure positive outcomes (p. 3).

In addition, timing of the project that begins with intervention during transition to kindergarten at kindergarten registration and follow-up throughout the spring and summer prior to the school year is based on transition research. Attention to family involvement in relation to their children's executive function and self-regulation, factors that are known to influence school success, is likely to be a key to better student outcomes. The proposal provides a very strong background of existing research to support content and methods (pp. 2-6).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(3) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Strengths:

The proposed project addresses absolute priority #6, family engagement in a manner that is respectful of family diversity and based on an understanding of child development and children's approaches to learning (p. 6-7).

Additionally, attention to adult learning through "self-reflection and discovery" (p. 7) indicates that the project will be attentive to training formats that are most effective for adults, including family members, teachers and other professionals using the cross-cohort model. The Parent University concept attends to the need for follow-up as a support beyond initial training (p. 13).

Noted mitigation of risks focuses on a need to provide the large number of proposed trainings and to maintain engagement throughout the project (p. 15). Challenges regarding diversity of family backgrounds, known to be a barrier to successful family programs, are addressed with realistic plans to overcome the risks. One example of this is the effort to recruit staff and volunteers reflective of the communities they represent (p. 15). Project goals and objectives clearly and thoughtfully offer details about how goals of the program will be met. A well-developed logic model is provided with attention to inputs, strategies, outputs, outcomes and impact (p. 16).

Weaknesses:

None noted

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The management plan is clearly described and offers a thoughtful alignment of objectives with activities, personnel responsible, time frame and outcomes (p. 18).

Partnerships with PPSD, Wellesley Centers for Women, and Families and Work Institute offer strong evidence that the management plan has a high potential for success (pp. 20, 21).

Weaknesses:

Description of continuous improvement efforts is brief without much detail about why the composition of the team or their past experiences will be effective (p. 17).

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. In determining the quality and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The adequacy of the project's staffing plan, particularly for the first year of the project, including the identification of the project director and, in the case of projects with unfilled key personnel positions at the beginning of the project, that the staffing plan identifies how critical work will proceed.

Strengths:

The staffing plan clearly explains and relates experiences of selected staff from Providence Plan, PPSD, and consultants from Wellesley Centers for Women and the Families and Work Institute to on-going roles in family engagement and community school work (pp. 20, 21).

Weaknesses:

None noted

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project, as well as a measureable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

Scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

Scored by another reviewer

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/24/2013 08:11 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/23/2013 10:36 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	0
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	0
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Personnel	10	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	10
Total	100	10

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - i3 Development - 11: 84.411C

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(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 proposed project will substantially improve on the outcomes achieved by other practices, such as through better student outcomes, lower cost, or accelerated results.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(3) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. In determining the quality and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The adequacy of the project's staffing plan, particularly for the first year of the project, including the identification of the project director and, in the case of projects with unfilled key personnel positions at the beginning of the project, that the staffing plan identifies how critical work will proceed.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project, as well as a measureable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a quasi-experimental design with a matched comparison group. The logic model on page 16 includes the essential components of the project, along with the associated outputs, outcomes and impacts expected as a result of the project. The timeline and work plan on page 18 include project evaluation activities, which demonstrate evaluation is integrated into the project's management plan and continuous quality improvement framework. The project team has on-going relationships and experience with achieving IRB approval for evaluation projects. The five key questions on page 22 are clearly stated and align directly with the intervention activities/strategies.

Weaknesses:

More information is needed about the specifics of the evaluation plan. For example, the proposal would be improved by stating each of the evaluation questions along with the data to be collected and the analysis methods to be employed to address each of the questions. These items could be included in the chart on page 23 or an additional table could be added that includes these items so it is clear what measure and analysis will be used to address each evaluation question. In the process evaluation goal 1 on page 23, observations may be more appropriate to determine implementation fidelity than using the other methods described. It is also not clear how the program impacts will be clearly linked to the intervention as there is so much going on in the opportunities offered to the participants. It is also unclear how the parent and teacher outcomes will be linked to the project as there does not appear to be any comparison group for the parents and teachers. The evaluation plan would also benefit from a discussion of the minimal detectable effect sizes to ensure significance of impact.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/23/2013 10:36 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/23/2013 07:27 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	0
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	0
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Personnel	10	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	11
Total	100	11

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - i3 Development - 11: 84.411C

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: The Providence Plan (U411C130083)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(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 proposed project will substantially improve on the outcomes achieved by other practices, such as through better student outcomes, lower cost, or accelerated results.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(3) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. In determining the quality and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factor:

(1) The adequacy of the project's staffing plan, particularly for the first year of the project, including the identification of the project director and, in the case of projects with unfilled key personnel positions at the beginning of the project, that the staffing plan identifies how critical work will proceed.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project, as well as a measureable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

The applicant is proposing at a minimum a quasi-experimental design. As stated on page e38, "...will employ a control group using a matched pair design, based on baseline data collected during kindergarten enrollment..." In postulating casual claims, these claims are strengthened when randomization is possible, but also strong with matching in the absence of a true-experimental design. In addition, the research questions tied to the two specific goals are provided, and appropriately will assess the impact of Empowering Families project. The applicant's proposed analytical methods are appropriate in addressing the research questions. These methods identified are regression analysis, ANOVA, and HLM. These are all widely acceptable quantitative statistical methods to address impact type research questions. Finally, the applicant is utilizing Wellesley Centers for Women as their independent evaluator. The evaluator will meet quarterly to discuss findings and operational issues (see pg. e41). This will help to ensure the project is on track to meet the stated goals.

Weaknesses:

The evaluation plan is lacking specific information related to the expected effect size, hence, the ability to estimate the sampling sizes needed for acceptable power to detect the expected effect size. In order to evaluate impact, a minimum detectable effect size should be stated prior to treatment.

Reader's Score: 11

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/23/2013 07:27 PM