

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2013 04:59 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	32
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	6
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	76

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - i3 Development - 9: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

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:

It is considered a strength that the applicant associated factors contributing to trauma in the context of the home and community. The model is being implemented in 7 school districts, with the potential to impact the lives of approximately 3500 students, distributed across a K-12 grade population over the life of the project.

Contribution to theory, knowledge and practices in the field – may inform teachers, practitioners, special services providers and mental health professionals by testing the hypothesis that an integrated intervention system promotes an inclusive educational environment (pg-4).

Weaknesses:

It is considered a weakness that the applicant did not include a more extensive theoretical base on the effect of trauma on student performance and teacher performance to lend more support to the outcomes of this project.

Reader's Score: 32

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 project addressed absolute priority 4(b) through an effort to develop inclusive educational settings and enhance teacher skills.

It is a strength that the management plan is very descriptive, providing sequential, understandable, and coherent goals, subordinate objectives and anticipated outcomes.

Clearly defined goals and objectives were considered a strength because they provided a road map of what the applicant intended to do, how he intended to do it and what he expected as a result of the implementation, without ambiguity. With regard to the identification of potential risks and mitigating strategies, it was considered a strength that the applicant developed an alternate plan of action in the event potential risks were incurred. In so doing, the project activities can be implemented without interruption.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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 applicant strengthened the management plan by establishing clearly defined benchmarks at regular intervals (initial, midyear and end of year); strategies to ensure feedback to stakeholders and the community; and, recommendations for continuous improvement (pg. 18). In addition, the applicant proposes to obtain feedback from key participants (steering committee, project management team and advisory council) to gather additional information necessary to meet project goals p.18.

As demonstrated in the resumes of the key partners, the applicant will be working with an established team from Seneca, as well as community and school district professionals who have had extensive experiences and training working with the targeted population of students with emotional disabilities. This is considered a strength because it provides evidence that the stakeholders have the knowledge base necessary to oversee and implement the project activities.

Weaknesses:

It would have been helpful if the applicant made a reference in the application indicating where resumes could be found.

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:

Key personnel who have extensive experience, credentialing and knowledge in program administration are already in place (Co-Directors, Director, and Program Director). Provisions to cover start up were made. Applicant has identified key personnel who are current employees of Seneca to ensure that critical work activities proceed until such time as all key positions are filled.

Weaknesses:

Job descriptions outlining specific roles and responsibilities would have strengthened the personnel section. In addition, key leadership team members will have multiple responsibilities which may hinder project success until other key positions are filled.

Reader's Score: 6

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: 09/19/2013 04:59 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2013 11:09 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	32
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	12
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Personnel	10	7
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	76

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - i3 Development - 9: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

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 applicant proposes a novel approach that focuses on addressing the impact of trauma (living in disadvantaged neighborhoods, exposure to gang activity and violence) and children coming to school manifesting symptoms of chronic stress and trauma (p. 1). This is seen as a strength as the applicant is proposing including mental health supports for children to address the trauma.

The applicant recognizes that providing trauma-informed care is a crucial component to preventing and addressing academic, behavioral, and emotional challenges (p. 1) which is seen as a strength as the project acknowledges that what can happen to a child outside of school can impact his/her academic readiness.

The applicant will utilize the Unconditional Education Model (UE) which is an innovative, multi-tiered intervention framework that infuses trauma-informed understanding of the mental health challenges that may underlie students' needs (p. 2). This is seen as a strength as the Unconditional Education Model recognizes that special education interventions must involve the whole school community and benefit all students (p. 3).

The proposal will bring to its partner schools a toolkit of evidence based practices such as the School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWBPS) and will also incorporate a multi-tiered trauma informed approach that will address the ongoing effects of trauma at the school-wide level as well as the more acute intensive effects of trauma at the individual level (p. 3).

The integration of a trauma approach of the UE model with the School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (SWPBS) holds promise of enhancing theory and practice by including the understanding of how local contexts influence the implantation of interventions (p. 4).

The applicant reports that the UE model has evidenced potential to reduce special education costs through the use of Wraparound and one-on-one Behavioral Intervention Support to keep youth within their classrooms while providing teacher skills and coaching (p. 6).

Weaknesses:

The application would have been strengthened by including more information on evidence-based practice other than SWPBS. For example, research regarding the trauma-based approach would have strengthened the proposal.

Reader's Score: 32

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 addresses Absolute Priority 4 with a comprehensive model that is innovative and focuses on the individual student in which the project will work with the student in a model that is community, school, and family focused designed to improve social-emotional, behavioral and academic success (p. 8). This is seen as a strength as it encompasses a 'whole' child approach.

The proposal has three goals which are well-articulated and coherent. Each goal has specific objectives which are aligned with the goals. This is seen as a strength as it includes parents and caregivers. For example, Goal Two, Objectives 2.1 a and 2.1 b specifically address that helping parents and caregivers support their child's success (p. 13).

Potential risks and ways in which to mitigate the risks were provided as evidenced by the applicant identifying the main risk as the process being inadequately supported and that mitigating this risk is done by providing coaches to specific schools, and ongoing training and ongoing and responsive professional development and teacher coaching (p. 12).

Weaknesses:

None noted

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:

Project goals, activities, milestones and timelines were provided which addresses key responsibilities of project staff (p. 17). This is seen as a strength as it provided a seamless overview of the alignment of all aspects of the proposal.

The proposal includes an Advisory Council comprised of professionals and academics who are experts in the special education, mental health, trauma-informed care and school climate (p. 17).

Procedures for feedback and continuous improvement include surveys and post-training evaluations, a leadership conference, surveys from parents, and surveys and feedback from the Advisory Council (p. 18).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not specifically identify specific key stakeholders.

It would have been helpful if the applicant indicated specifically where resumes could be found in the application.

Reader's Score: 12

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 Project Co-Directors have experience in overseeing large budgets, programmatic and political landscapes or mental health and special education, and supervisory, teaching/training experience in special education and school partnerships (p. 19 and Organizational Chart Appendix). This is seen as a strength as the breadth and depth of the Project Co-Directors are necessary for proposal such as this.

The Program Director has experience as a special education teacher and assistant principal and will be responsible for the development and start-up of district and charter partnership programs, consulting and coaching school partnership leaders, and training on topics regarding multi-disciplinary intervention teams (pp 19-20). This is seen as a strength as field experience such as this is helpful to undertake a project of this capacity.

The Staffing Plan identifies that Unconditional Education Coaches will be hired and will hold Master's degrees and have at least three years' experience in working with youth (p. 20). This is seen as a strength as it specifically identifies the qualifications and training necessary.

Job descriptions are provided for unfilled positions (Appendix).

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant identified key personnel to ensure that if funded, the project could quickly move forward. However, there is concern that with the key project's staff's current responsibilities that adding the specific grant responsibilities (during start-up) to what they are already doing might negatively impact the project from moving forward.

Reader's Score: 7

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:

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/20/2013 11:09 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2013 01:37 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	32
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	12
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Personnel	10	6
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	75

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - i3 Development - 9: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

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 Unconditional Education model proposed by this project will bring a mental health approach to school wide systems such as positive behavioral supports. A great need is established for this addition to traditional school based models. A commitment of strong national partners should assist in the wider advancement of findings of this project (i.e. Horner, SRI). This inclusive approach to serving students with issues that typically land them in segregated settings can improve outcomes and perhaps reduce cost.

Weaknesses:

More information about other evidence-based practices in the tool-kit other than just school wide positive behavioral supports would have strengthened this section. More of a research-supported case could have been made on page 1 for the impact of trauma on students as this is a trauma-trained approach to education.

Reader's Score: 32

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:

This project adequately addresses the priority to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and to promote improved inclusive settings. The narrative on pages 8-16 outlines a detailed plan to achieve project goals. This plan coherently and comprehensively addresses potential risks and mitigating factors to limit these risks.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

A strong management plan organized by objectives that articulates key responsibilities, activities, timelines, and milestones is provided. This lends confidence that the project goals are likely to be completed and assessed. Key partners have shown commitment to this project.

Weaknesses:

Formative measures occurring more frequently than beginning, mid, and end of year points may provide more useful ongoing data measures to inform the project. More specific and measurable performance targets would improve this project. The proposal would be strengthened by involving parents as stakeholders or partners in this project.

Reader's Score: 12

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:

Co-directors with experience in the field were identified. The identified evaluators are strong and qualified for this project.

Weaknesses:

It is not clear if the Co-Directors have any previous experience running grants. It would have been helpful to more specifically describe the responsibilities of personnel positions. Job descriptions of and qualifications desired of the program assistant and evaluation manager would have strengthened if they were found inside of the narrative or at least directed to the appropriate appendix. It was difficult to find these. It is not clear how the project will run in the event that unfilled positions can't be immediately filled as the identified key personnel are already running other projects.

Reader's Score: 6

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: 09/20/2013 01:37 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2013 02:08 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

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	14
Total	100	14

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - i3 Development - 9: 84.411C

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

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:

scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

scored by another reviewer

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:

scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

scored by another reviewer

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:

scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

scored by another reviewer

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:

scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

scored by another reviewer

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:

Seven key research questions that are closely aligned with project goals and objectives are included (p. 21). The applicant describes appropriate measures or assessments to evaluate each key question; for example, California's STAR tests and a battery of educational, social adjustment, and risk assessments will be used to study project effects on students (p. 22).

The applicant has a clear plan to gather and use data to ensure the project is on track to meet its goals. For example, the applicant's external evaluator, SRI International, will gather implementation data to track the implementation experiences (p. 5). The applicant will collect and report implementation data semi-annually, using existing tools including the School-Wide Evaluation Tool and the Team Implementation Checklist (p. 14). The applicant will convene an Annual Leadership Conference with key stakeholders to provide ongoing information on the effectiveness of the project and lessons learned (p. 15). The evaluator is a member of the Project Management Team; the Team will meet three times yearly to review established goals and milestones and to make modifications based on an assessment of progress (p. 16).

The applicant will produce information about the effectiveness of the project in serving students with disabilities by adapting the School Climate Assessment Instrument to include evaluation of how students with disabilities are served, including the extent of inclusive practices (p. 9).

The applicant describes a credible analysis plan, including the use of hierarchical linear modeling to assess outcomes for all students in the school and for subgroups who receive intensive services (pp. 23-24). The applicant incorporates implementation fidelity measures into its data analysis plan to ensure that dosage and quality of implementation are taken into account when analyzing effects on students (p. 25).

The applicant includes measureable outcomes with thresholds for acceptable implementation for each goal. For example, for Goal 1: Increase the capacity of partnering schools to deliver effective interventions (p. 8), the applicant will survey staff regarding the degree to which services are integrated, data-driven, and youth centered and the threshold for acceptable implementation has been set at 75% (p. 10). The applicant includes a plan for generating performance data for each objective; for example, parents participating in training/workshops will complete evaluations regarding the degree to which the trainings/workshops have increased their knowledge and skills regarding supporting the diverse needs of their children; the applicant has set a threshold of 75% of participating parents increasing knowledge and skills to evaluate whether the project is on track to meet its goal (p. 13).

The applicant's proposed sample size of 3,500 (p. 22) is sufficiently large to detect minimal effect sizes of 0.35 for each impact tested. The applicant will translate effect sizes into percentile rank measures, which increases the likelihood that participants will understand analyses reporting the minimum detectable effect sizes (p. 25).

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant describes a plan for using propensity score techniques to select matched comparison students, no evidence is given that comparable students exist and no agreements of participation from comparison schools are described (p. 21).

Reader's Score: 14

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2013 02:08 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2013 05:59 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

Reader #6: *****

	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	14
Total	100	14

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - i3 Development - 9: 84.411C

Reader #6: *****

Applicant: Seneca Family of Agencies (U411C130048)

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:

Score by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

Score by another reviewer

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:

Score by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

Score by another reviewer

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:

Score by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

Score by another reviewer

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:

Score by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

Score by another reviewer

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:

This application provides a strong and relevant approach to evaluation the proposal's performance. In particular, the sample size of 3,500 students is adequate even in the event of potential non-matchers or partial matchers within the matching analytical framework. This large sample will provide the evaluators with multiple avenues to estimate the causal impact of the primary research questions. The proposed embedding a student-level matches within a HLM approach is appropriate and will provide feedback at all level of the implementation (student, teacher, and school). The calculation of the MDES appears to be conservative but still provide a meaningful effect size – a product of the large sample size and multi-level nature of the proposal analytical plan.

Weaknesses:

This application could have been strengthened by providing additional information or validation of agreements to participate from control schools. It is not clear if the control schools have already been identified and/or agreed to participate.

Reader's Score: 14

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/20/2013 05:59 PM