

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/19/2013 10:35 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	20	18
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	17
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	1	0
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	2	2
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
1. Invitational Priority	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>67</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

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

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

## Questions

### Summary Statement - Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary Statement (Optional):

##### General:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

## Selection Criteria - Significance

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

(1) The likelihood that the project will have the estimated impact, including the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that unmet demand for the proposed project or the proposed services will enable the applicant to reach the proposed level of scale.

(2) The feasibility of national expansion if favorable outcomes are achieved.

##### Strengths:

The proposed project targets a critical need area, 9th grade students in low-performing schools thereby extending the instructional reach and expertise of novice and experienced teachers. Schools will be restructured in the 9th grade into a team teacher configuration (blocks) thereby giving 9th graders the opportunity to experience consistency of instruction, interpersonal relationships, and improved academic achievement. The applicant correctly points out that for many students, and particularly those in high-need, low-performing schools, the 9th grade is a "make it or break it" year (p. e20). There is a strong likelihood that the proposed project will have the estimated impact as one of the major foci is creating highly effective teacher teams (p. e20) that will build strong interpersonal relationships with each other and with their students. The BARR model posits that teacher effectiveness is a necessary factor in the academic success of students, particularly students in high-need schools/districts. To that end the BARR model focuses on providing teachers the opportunity to engage in peer-to-peer learning and collaboration, the capacity to build productive relationships with peers, parents and students, and contextual support from parents and school leaders (p. e. 20). Additionally, the likelihood that the project will have the estimated impact is reinforced by the results from the first two years of the BARR i3 Development grant which indicate that effective teacher teams positively impact students. The results also meet the What Works Clearinghouse Standards in terms of the effectiveness of BARR in increasing student achievement (p. e 21). Further, this likelihood is reinforced by evidence that the current i3 Development grant which has produced increases in the number of credits student earn, increases in academic growth and higher GPAs (p. e21).

The proposed project addresses an unmet need of focusing on 9th graders in low-performing schools who often experience social and academic difficulty and school failure. The proposed project also addresses an unmet need for support for novice teachers who often experience stress and burnout early in their careers, particularly in high-need districts as is evidenced by a BARR teacher survey which indicated that novice teachers reported "decreased feelings of isolation and strengthened teacher bonds" (p. e 22).

**Weaknesses:**

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weaknesses.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**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 national need and priorities the applicant is seeking to meet.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit plan or actions to achieve the goals, including identification of any elements of the project logic model that require further testing or development.**
- (3) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.**

**Strengths:**

The proposed project addresses Absolute Priority I by providing professional for teachers, staff and administrators (p. e18)--a holistic approach to improving student achievement and increasing teacher effectiveness. The proposed project addresses Absolute Priority 5 by focusing on 9th graders in rural communities based on its experiences in rural areas in Maine. Proposed reach into rural communities will provide opportunities to reach larger numbers of students in rural areas.

The proposed project addresses a national unmet need for a broader focus on teacher effectiveness, broader reach of experienced teachers into high-need districts and broader, yet strategic focus on parental engagement. This will be accomplished through the implementation of eight (8) well-developed strategies (p.e28-36).

For example, Strategy 1 , Building Professional Development for Teachers, Counselors and Administrators, will focus on the teacher-student dynamic thereby providing opportunities for teachers to think about and put into action strategies that will help them to develop "intentional relationships with students that enhance achievement motivation" (p. e28).

Strategy 8, Parent Involvement to Support in School Reform is a particularly important and strong component of the BARR model. The applicant correctly points out that "schools do little to set the stage for the necessary student-teacher relationships that foster student achievement" (p. e32). The parent involvement strategy will provide parents opportunities to communicate to teachers and leaders how they believe they can and should participate in their child's education. Parents will participate in a summer parent orientation and will also be invited to join the school's parent advisory committee. The applicant expects that parents will become more familiar with the needs of the children as "they are transition into high school, how they can support their child in school, and how the BARR approach builds an asset-oriented learning environment to meet student needs" (p. e32).

The project is further strengthened by a supplemental strategy (p. e36)--Educational Technical Assistance which will use experienced educators as mentors, and should be particularly helpful for novice teachers. The applicant makes a strong argument for providing ongoing support for novice teachers who often need more training, direction, and time to perfect their craft. The Technical Assistance component will provide novice teachers with access and help from experienced teachers, counselors, and administrators who also have experience using the BARR model. Novice teachers will participate in quarterly meeting thereby giving them a long-term, consistent mentoring and support needed to develop as professionals and to apply best practice strategies to building relationships with students and parents and raising student achievement.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant identified “programmatic gaps” (p. e36) as a barrier to implementation of the proposed project that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application. However, it is not clear what the programmatic gaps are nor it is clear in what ways the proposed Technical Assistance model addresses this barrier.

**Reader's Score: 18**

**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 clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional (as defined in the Validation Notice Inviting Applications) during the project period.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant addresses in sufficient detail how the management team will evaluate the BARR program. Including the activities to be conducted, a timeline for completion of the activities, metrics/milestones, and the personnel responsible for implementing/completing the specific tasks. The management plan has two primary objectives that will allow the BARR program to be scaled to a state level and a national level if successful (Appendix J7 (p. e196-201). To achieve the first objective, increasing student achievement by improving teacher effectiveness, members of the management team will begin monitoring the sites in February, 2014 to address metrics and milestones that include meeting with key members of the executive team, assuring that the evaluation plan is being implemented with fidelity, hiring additional staff, reporting training satisfaction rates, and compliance with the AIR evaluation plan, and will use the BARR Fidelity Matrix in the first year to assess whether/in what ways the BARR strategies are being/have been implemented. The management plan is well designed and should be effective in addressing the positives and challenges of the program as it includes the use of site-specific tasks and timelines for each site (rather than a one-size-fits all approach), collecting specific types of data at each site, and replication of the model at 12 sites.

The second objective, developing a model for broad adoption in Maine, activities will be achieved by holding quarterly meetings with representatives from Hazelden, utilizing Hazelden materials to design a mini-grant program, developing readiness assessment tools, selecting mini-grant awardees, and offering professional learning collaboratives.

The combination of these activities strongly suggest that the management plan will meet its goal to implement the BARR program at 12 sites across Maine, thereby scaling the project to a statewide level.

The financial plan is well articulated and consistent with the needs of the proposed project (p. e 281-286). For example the applicant provides sufficient detail about the use of funds in particular categories (i.e., how funds will be allocated for Project Director visits to the sites).

**Weaknesses:**

On page e197, the applicant indicates that the development of the ETA model will not be begin until February, 2014 and training for ETA specialists will not begin until April, 2014. These appears to be inconsistent with the strategy of providing support for novice teachers. It would seem that first year novice teachers would need support when they begin their teaching experience rather than in the middle of their first year. While this timeline might work for novice teachers in their

2nd or 3rd year, the applicant may wish to think about revising the timeline so that first year novice teachers and 2nd and 3rd year novice teachers who continue to need help addressing issues such as classroom management, effective instructional practices, and relationship building, will receive the necessary supports early in the school year rather than later.

**Reader's Score: 17**

### **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.**

**(2) The qualifications and experience of the project director and other key project personnel and the extent to which they have the expertise to accomplish the proposed tasks.**

#### **Strengths:**

The proposed project articulates the expertise and responsibilities of the management team (p. e 41-44). All personnel associated with the proposed project and their responsibilities are clearly identified p. e 41-44 and Appendix F, p. e89-151). The proposed management team has previous experience with an i3 Development grant as well as a collective set of experiences/expertise that aligns with/is necessary for successful implementation and operation of the grant (i.e., high school teaching certification and experience, educational consulting experience, experience designing and using sophisticated technological systems, strategic planning).

The duties of all key personnel for the first year are well articulated to ensure that initial implementation of the proposed project will be well coordinated (Appendix J7, p. e 196-201). For example, during the first year of the proposed project, the Project Director will visit every site during the first year "to ensure adequate plans for data collection and school implementation" (p. e283), play a key role in convening the management team, hiring site level project coordinators, planning and conducting BARR training, and developing the ETA model and training the ETA specialist. Other staff will hire ETA specialists, meet with the evaluation team, and monitor the progress of the grant.

#### **Weaknesses:**

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weaknesses.

**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 methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.**

**(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.**

**(4) 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.**

**(5) 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:**

NA

**Weaknesses:**

NA

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1**

**1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:**

**(a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.**

**(b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.**

**(c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.**

**Strengths:**

NA

**Weaknesses:**

NA

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

**1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:**

**(a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.**

**(b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.**

**(c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.**

**(d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant proposes a broad scale adoption of BARR program and will implement the program at 12 sites throughout the state of Maine in years 2-4 of the grant. The applicant will use a state-wide dissemination effort using the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program with a goal of reaching every school in the state of Maine (p. e34). The applicant will implement a Broad Adoption Plan that will include partnerships with the Maine Department of Education and Hazeleden. To facilitate broad adoption of the BARR model, the applicant proposes to award 15 mini-grants of \$15,000 each primarily to schools in rural districts. The grants will provide funds for materials, training, and technical assistance in years 2-4 of the grant.

The proposed project is consistent with Competitive Priority 2 as the goal of the broad adoption effort is to develop and implement a model that can be implemented on a larger scale. Additionally, the applicant proposes an adoption strategy that includes specific practices for broad adoption (what tools are needed) and an analysis of the BARR components in a large number of schools.

**Weaknesses:**

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weaknesses.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Invitational Priority - Invitational Priority**

- 1. The Secretary encourages applicants to propose projects that incorporate high-quality early learning components that are aligned with the early learning, elementary and secondary education systems in participating schools and help ensure that all children, especially those from low-income families, enter kindergarten ready to succeed.**

**General:**

NA

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/19/2013 10:35 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/21/2013 11:36 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	0
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	20	0
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	0
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Personnel	10	0
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	28
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	1	
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	2	
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
1. Invitational Priority	0	
<b>Total</b>	103	28

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

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

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

## 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 likelihood that the project will have the estimated impact, including the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that unmet demand for the proposed project or the proposed services will enable the applicant to reach the proposed level of scale.

(2) The feasibility of national expansion if favorable outcomes are achieved.

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 national need and priorities the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit plan or actions to achieve the goals, including identification of any elements of the project logic model that require further testing or development.

(3) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.

**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 clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional (as defined in the Validation Notice Inviting Applications) during the project period.

**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.

(2) The qualifications and experience of the project director and other key project personnel and the extent to which they have the expertise to accomplish the proposed tasks.

**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 methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.
- (4) 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.
- (5) 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 a true-experimental study. As stated on page e45, "...is a student-level Randomized Controlled Trial." In postulating casual claims, these claims are strengthened when randomization is possible. In addition to this exceptional methodological approach to the evaluation, the applicant provided several important components related to the evaluation plan, (a) the key research questions which will guide the evaluation (see page e44); (b) the key outcome variables being measured which are related to answering the research questions (see page e48); (c) the effect size, hence, the sample size needed for acceptable power to detect the effect size posited; and (d) the types of quantitative analyses which will be used to answer the research questions. The applicant has cited the "What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)" as related to the importance of casual claims on page e46, "This research design will produce evidence of the effectiveness of the BARR program that meets What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards for evidence without reservations assuming low levels of attrition." It is not surprising that the applicant has provided a very strong evaluation plan; WWC is the gold standard to follow when outlining a well-designed research study. In addition, the applicant also addressed the possible issue with all studies involving people; the external threat to validity, "mortality" was addressed on page e46.

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant references in several places an appendix J8, but the appendix was not attached to the application. This is a minor omission, given the sufficient detail provided in the main application as related to the evaluation of the proposed project.

Reader's Score: 28

### Priority Questions

#### Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:

- (a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.
- (b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.
- (c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.

**Strengths:**

**Weaknesses:**

**Reader's Score:**

#### **Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

**1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:**

**(a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.**

**(b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.**

**(c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.**

**(d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.**

**Strengths:**

**Weaknesses:**

**Reader's Score:**

#### **Invitational Priority - Invitational Priority**

**1. The Secretary encourages applicants to propose projects that incorporate high-quality early learning components that are aligned with the early learning, elementary and secondary education systems in participating schools and help ensure that all children, especially those from low-income families, enter kindergarten ready to succeed.**

**General:**

**Reader's Score:**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/21/2013 11:36 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/20/2013 03:53 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	20	20
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	15
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Personnel	10	8
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	1	0
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	2	2
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
1. Invitational Priority	0	
<b>Total</b>	103	65

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

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

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

## 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 likelihood that the project will have the estimated impact, including the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that unmet demand for the proposed project or the proposed services will enable the applicant to reach the proposed level of scale.

(2) The feasibility of national expansion if favorable outcomes are achieved.

##### Strengths:

Results of project will be dissemination with a partner (Hazelden), who has experiences and procedures in place for national wide dissemination (page 2). Plan described procedures Hazelden will use for dissemination,

Applicant cited unmet need to serve students in critical ninth grade year of school (page 3).

BARR program based on research-based strategies, which impact a teacher's effectiveness: peer-to-peer collaboration, positive, intentional relationships with colleagues and students and support from home and school leaders (page 3).

Results from a two-year i3 Development grant indicated improved student academic achievement from developing effective teachers through teams, with a focus on research-based strategies (page 4).

Schools currently participating in BARR Development grant indicated satisfaction and will continue with the program after the conclusion of the Development grant - two schools considering expansion to the high school (page 6).

Multiple independent evaluations indicated program effective to improve student achievement (page 8).

The likelihood for scalability to a national level will be high due to the anticipated cost effectiveness of the program (page 6), skill of applicant in managing a large i3 Development grant in two different states so able to successfully manage additional states; and a partnership with a strong publisher, Hazelden, which will clearly be able to publish curriculum and results and distribute at a national level (page 8).

**Weaknesses:**

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weaknesses.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**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 national need and priorities the applicant is seeking to meet.**
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit plan or actions to achieve the goals, including identification of any elements of the project logic model that require further testing or development.**
- (3) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.**

**Strengths:**

Applicant clearly described the program to develop a team teaching approach in block schedule in ninth grade – (page 9).

Applicant described how the research-based strategies were implemented in the team teaching model to improve teacher effectiveness (page 9).

Applicant described the Educational Technical Assistance (ETA) teacher professional development – on site mentoring with web-based and DVD trainings (page 9).

A clear Logic Model for the inputs, indicators of impact, outputs and students outcomes was provided (page 10).

Applicant identified two clear and measurable goals for the project; Goal one focused on improved student achievement (page 10) and Goal two focused on scale up for national implementation (page 16).

Goal one described in the following research-based strategies (page 16) to achieve the goal: professional development to improve teacher-student relationships (page 11); restructuring school schedule into block teaching with teams of teachers (page 12); improve teacher collaboration and problem solving (page 13); implementation of an asset based social skills curriculum developed by BARR (page 13); implementation of Risk Review Team to collaboratively problem solve using real-time data for high-need students (page 14); leadership training to support the model (page 15); parent involvement (page 15).

Project would allow 12 new validation sites in two states and impact 17,123 students, 816 teachers and 45 schools (page e15).

Goal two described objectives to successfully enable broad adoption of the program in a collaborative effort with partner Hazelden resulting in a written dissemination plan (page 17 – 18)

Applicant identified a barrier to fidelity implementation from the i3 Development Grant, which was the need for some teachers to receive more training to effectively use the program (page 19). This barrier will be addressed through development of a continuing education module which will create collaborative, mentor relationships with other staff (teachers, counselors, administrators), to support ensure teacher fidelity (page 19).

**Weaknesses:**

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weaknesses.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**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 clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional (as defined in the Validation Notice Inviting Applications) during the project period.**

**Strengths:**

Applicant explained how the cost for program will decrease each year of the proposed project, with a final cost of \$89.00 per student (page 6 – see Appendix J8).

Applicant cited a history of successfully managing large projects (page 7 – Appendix C) and a current i3 Development grant (page 20).

Applicant provided an outline of in-school project communication model to implement the program (page e194).

Applicant provided an Organization Chart outline the follow of supervision between key personnel (page e195).

Key personnel to manage the project were identified: Co-Directors were identified as well as how the responsibly for each will be divided and assigned (page 20).

An internal evaluator was identified who will monitor reports and will collaborate with the external evaluator.

A strong partnership was described with SEARCH, the lead agency for the i3 Developmental grant to manage a seamless transition to validation (page 22).

A comprehensive project work plan was provided which aligned activities with Objectives and included a timeline, milestone and assigned staff (pages e196 – e201).

**Weaknesses:**

The Principal Investigator and Project Director were identified, however were not included in the Organization Chat (page e195) so unclear how their responsibilities will align with the plan.

Applicant failed to describe a plan for implementation of the program components in the participating school sites.

Applicant failed to explain the operations and management between the project and the participating sites to ensure effective communication and implementation.

Applicant failed to describe over-all project communications and operations procedures to ensure effective implementation

of key personnel.

**Reader's Score: 15**

### **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.**

**(2) The qualifications and experience of the project director and other key project personnel and the extent to which they have the expertise to accomplish the proposed tasks.**

#### **Strengths:**

Well-qualified personnel with appropriate experiences and expertise to implement the project were identified (Resumes in Appendix). For example, an identified staff member with Spurwink, has developed the BARR program and worked with the current i3 Development grant, will provide leadership to this project (page 24). Other key personnel representing Spurwink have extensive backgrounds in working with programs for youth development with Spurwink at the local school level as well as at the state level.

Spruwick personnel assigned to the project will bring strong experience from implementing and managing the i3 Development grant.

A qualified external evaluator was identified (page 22). The American Institutes for Research (AIR) will be a partner in the project and will bring a vast organization with expertise with independent research, development, evaluation and analysis in the social sciences to support the project's evaluation. Experienced and well qualified personnel with AIR were identified to work with this project (page 26).

#### **Weaknesses:**

Applicant was unclear about roles and responsibilities of key personnel; key personnel identified in the Management Plan were identified differently in the Budget Narrative.

Applicant failed to include a Budget Narrative with human resources allocations.

**Reader's Score: 8**

### **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 methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.

(4) 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.

(5) 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:**

Not applicable.

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1**

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:

(a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.

(b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.

(c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.

**Strengths:**

Competitive Preference Priority 1 was not addressed.

**Weaknesses:**

Competitive Preference Priority 1 was not addressed.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:

**(a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.**

**(b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.**

**(c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.**

**(d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.**

**Strengths:**

Applicant provided a plan which will enable expansion and adoption at a region and national level. A plan to investigate large-scale adoption strategies through a state-wide dissemination during the proposed project (page 17) was described. The state-wide adaption plan was modeled after successful implementation efforts partner Hazelden used with previous dissemination in multiple state efforts.

Applicant provided a plan which will enable expansion and adoption at a region and national level. A plan to investigate large-scale adoption strategies through a state-wide dissemination during the proposed project (page 17) was described. The state-wide adaption plan was modeled after successful implementation efforts partner Hazelden used with previous dissemination in multiple state efforts (pages 17 – 18).

Applicant will update training materials to support the train-the trainer format, which will be a key strategy for larger scale implementation of the program. Applicant will also develop resources and procedures to promote and implement the mini-grant process, which will be an essential strategy to promote implementation at the state level and eventual duplication in other states.

Applicant provided questions to evaluate the adoption plan and identify critical components which will be crucial to success and sustainability. One question will focus on adaptability of components to different teaching and learning environments and diverse learners.

An outcome of the state level adoption plan and evaluation will be a comprehensive written guide for other states will be able to implement the program.

Applicant demonstrated a commitment to replication and adaptability of the program by supporting the program in multiple locations through the project, using and evaluating the programs resource materials and training procedures.

**Weaknesses:**

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weakness.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Invitational Priority - Invitational Priority**

- 1. The Secretary encourages applicants to propose projects that incorporate high-quality early learning components that are aligned with the early learning, elementary and secondary education systems in**

participating schools and help ensure that all children, especially those from low-income families, enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

**General:**

**Reader's Score:**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/20/2013 03:53 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/19/2013 03:40 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	17
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	20	16
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	14
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	1	0
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	2	2
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
1. Invitational Priority	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>59</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

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

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

## 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 likelihood that the project will have the estimated impact, including the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that unmet demand for the proposed project or the proposed services will enable the applicant to reach the proposed level of scale.

(2) The feasibility of national expansion if favorable outcomes are achieved.

#### Strengths:

The applicant has identified an unmet need of improving teacher skills (particularly in novice educators) in combination with building student non-academic skills. To address criterion 1, the applicant plans to accomplish this through a combination of a student and teacher treatment protocol. It is a strength to come at the identified need from the perspective of both client and service provider. Building from both ends to the middle provides the greatest potential for success. Students utilizes the BARR program which is designed to increase academic growth in 9th graders by growing assets such as self-determination, bonding to school, integrity and honesty among others. The teachers will be in a cluster configuration which will allow for daily professional development placing a novice teacher in a team with at least one master teacher and a common planning period. The brainstorming sessions will allow for real time problem solving.

The feasibility of national expansion should be accomplished with relative ease as the proposed program is more a function of scheduling, program buy-in and subsequent training and adoption of the BARR program. The applicant lays out a clear plan, supported by BARR Strategy Implementation protocol that provides a road map to replication (p.e169). Based on the appendices tools, there does not appear to be an insurmountable barrier to implementation.

#### Weaknesses:

To support the hypothesis of the unmet need, more timely research should have been included. Impact research that extends back over 15 years (p.e20) may have changed as educational theory and practice has evolved considerably during that time particularly as it applies to 9th graders who have been classified as high schoolers, middle schoolers and junior high students. More timely research would support the applicant's case for establishing an unmet need and subsequent treatment protocols.

Reader's Score: 17

### 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 national need and priorities the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit plan or actions to achieve the goals, including identification of any elements of the project logic model that require further testing or development.

(3) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.

#### Strengths:

The absolute priority, improving the effectiveness of teachers (p.e15), is addressed satisfactorily in this criterion. The project design centers around restructuring the 9th grade schedule into blocks. The blocks have a stable team approach that has a teacher identified as highly effective serving on each cluster (p.e26). Teachers meet during common planning to discuss students and problem solve solutions to issues both academic and non-academic- such as attendance. The strength of the design is that it provides immediate feedback to teachers on real time issues and provides a master teacher as an instructional model. The block model also allows for students to build relationships with staff who are dedicated to their block configuration. Another strength of this design is the accommodation for issues that are not solvable within the cluster meeting format and need the expertise of a referral team trained in special education protocols such as Rtl (p.e31). The Theory of Action model (p.e27) includes teacher goals, student goals and student outcomes.

#### Weaknesses:

Missing from the Theory of Action model (p.e27) are measurable outcomes. Increased student achievement (p.e27) should have been quantified to adequately ascertain if the intervention has been successful. It is not clear that the applicant has identified a barrier to be addressed. It would have improved the application by restating the findings located in the previous section (scheduling, common planning) that present itself as a barrier to implementation and how the grant funds can address that allowing for achievement of level of scale.

Reader's Score: 16

### 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 clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional (as defined in the Validation Notice Inviting Applications) during the project period.

**Strengths:**

The applicant has provided both an in school and applicant organizational chart (p.e194-e195). Particularly at the school level, the hierarchy of management is well-defined. Partner expectations have also been clearly defined (American Institute for Research, Search Institute, Hazeldon). Pages e196-e201 contain a plan that outlines activities, timelines, milestones and key personnel. Particularly in respect to the objective "develop a model for broad adoption of BARR (p. e199), the applicant has included measurable objectives that will indicate success in meeting the benchmarks. The financial operating budget is clear and the applicant has provided five guiding assumptions for replication models (p.e40) which will prove beneficial for districts considering adoption/replication of the proposed model.

**Weaknesses:**

The theory of action model (p.e193) is not as clearly depicted as it could be. There is a lack of congruence as the model moves from left to right. For example, there are student outcomes, but no teacher outcomes. It is necessary to include teacher outcomes as that measurement responds directly to the absolute priority. In respect to student outcomes, the indicators have not been quantified. For example, increased coursework can be indicated by an additional credit or half credit per year attained by students, but needs a quantifiable element to support end of grant evaluation data gathering.

While there are a number of activities proposed under the objective "increase student achievement by improving teacher effectiveness through BARR (p.216-e219) the milestones do not have any indication of a measure of student growth. Providing professional development to the teachers is crucial; however, to align with the stated objective there should be included some measurable indicator that the PD has been successful. Consider including standardized test results, student retention figures and/or credit acquisition to indicate the success of the professional development.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**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.**

**(2) The qualifications and experience of the project director and other key project personnel and the extent to which they have the expertise to accomplish the proposed tasks.**

**Strengths:**

Having the program developer as the program director should garner positive results in the overall administration of the grant as the position is filled with someone who brings historical perspective to the position. Further, before ascending to a leadership position, she held positions that were school base (teacher, counselor) (p.e41). This is an added insight into management from the ground up. Additionally key personnel include teachers who have utilized the BARR program (p. e42) and the Spurwink staff with 15+ years of experience in evaluation and who are well regarded in the field.

**Weaknesses:**

This criteria was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weaknesses.

**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 methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.

(4) 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.

(5) 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:**

NA

**Weaknesses:**

NA

Reader's Score: 0

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1**

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:

(a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.

(b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.

(c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.

**Strengths:**

Not addressed

**Weaknesses:**

Not addressed

Reader's Score: 0

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:

(a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.

(b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.

(c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.

(d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.

**Strengths:**

The applicant has identified the BARR Program (Building Assets Reducing Risks) as the practice considered for broad adoption. Contained within the appendices is a strategy implementation review (p.e169) that contains a detailed rubric to assess progress toward the objectives, a block quality assessment to be used in the professional development component (p.e178) and a task timeline (p.e196) that includes training modules, materials development, and both on-site and distance support. One of the partnerships in the proposal, Hazelden (p.e19), has a national presence and a history of successful dissemination of programs with replication support. Their partnership in this proposal should be a key element in the applicant's ability to address criterion d in this section.

**Weaknesses:**

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and I did not find any weakness.

**Reader's Score:** 2

**Invitational Priority - Invitational Priority**

1. The Secretary encourages applicants to propose projects that incorporate high-quality early learning components that are aligned with the early learning, elementary and secondary education systems in participating schools and help ensure that all children, especially those from low-income families, enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

**General:**

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 08/19/2013 03:40 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/15/2013 03:07 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	0
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	20	0
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	0
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Personnel	10	0
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	28
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	1	
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	2	
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
1. Invitational Priority	0	
<b>Total</b>	103	28

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - i3 Validation - 2: 84.411B

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

Applicant: Spurwink Services, Inc. (U411B130021)

## Questions

### Summary Statement - Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary Statement (Optional):

##### General:

An external evaluator (AIR) has been identified and has the experience needed for the intended forms of analysis.

Reader's Score:

### Selection Criteria - Significance

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

(1) The likelihood that the project will have the estimated impact, including the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that unmet demand for the proposed project or the proposed services will enable the applicant to reach the proposed level of scale.

(2) The feasibility of national expansion if favorable outcomes are achieved.

##### Strengths:

NA

##### Weaknesses:

NA

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 national need and priorities the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit plan or actions to achieve the goals, including identification of any elements of the project logic model that require further testing or development.

(3) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.

**Strengths:**

NA

**Weaknesses:**

NA

**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 clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional (as defined in the Validation Notice Inviting Applications) during the project period.

**Strengths:**

Na

**Weaknesses:**

NA

**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.

(2) The qualifications and experience of the project director and other key project personnel and the extent to which they have the expertise to accomplish the proposed tasks.

**Strengths:**

NA

**Weaknesses:**

NA

## 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 methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.
- (4) 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.
- (5) 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 evaluation plan includes a series of ten research questions (pages e44-e45) that are well aligned with the eight program strategies for the first project goal (pages e28-e32) to increase student achievement by improving teacher effectiveness. The research questions include implementation fidelity questions to address issues for scaling up the BARR program across the state of Maine. The Data Sources (page e48) include variables to assess effectiveness of program activities, including student achievement measures. Specific models for eight of the research questions are provided (pages e160-e163) along with proposed methods of analysis (pages e156-e159) and data sources (pages e48-e49 and pages e164-e165). Several of the strategies will be evaluated using already existing tools (e.g., BARR Block Meeting Process Quality Assessment, I-TIME and Review tools). The budgeted amount for evaluation is appropriate. The detailed time-line of project activities associated with the first project goal include regular and appropriate involvement of the evaluation team (pages e196-e199). The evaluation plan includes a power analysis to determine sample sizes for appropriate minimal detected differences (pages e46-e47) as well as a contingency evaluation plan to deal with larger than expected attrition (page e46). It also includes the cross-checking of coding to ensure consistency of coding (page e52).

#### Weaknesses:

The external evaluator is not listed as an active participant in the implementation evaluation relative to the second goal of the project (pages e199-e201) to develop a model for broad adoption of BARR across Maine. The questions include topics that should be considered by an external evaluator (page e35). The evaluation plan includes assessment of two of the three intersecting variables impacting student success (opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and collaboration for teachers and capacity to build relationships with colleagues and students –page e20) but no formal assessment is included for the third variable, contextual support from parents and school leaders. Specifically Strategy 8 concerning parent involvement does not appear to be included in the evaluation plan. The planned randomized control trial does not allow for determining the separate effects of block scheduling and the professional development. The evaluation plan also does not include evaluation of the Educational Technical Assistance Supplemental Strategy (page e36).

Reader's Score: 28

### Priority Questions

#### Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:
  - (a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.
  - (b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.
  - (c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

#### Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:
  - (a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.
  - (b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.
  - (c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.
  - (d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

**Reader's Score:**

**Invitational Priority - Invitational Priority**

- 1. The Secretary encourages applicants to propose projects that incorporate high-quality early learning components that are aligned with the early learning, elementary and secondary education systems in participating schools and help ensure that all children, especially those from low-income families, enter kindergarten ready to succeed.**

**General:**

**Reader's Score:**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/15/2013 03:07 PM