

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/21/2014 10:15 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	33
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	16
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	75

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 5: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

The BPE plan is an extension of the work that many teacher residency programs are doing throughout the country. Although teacher residency is not new, creating an integrated system is promising for both theory and practices of existing residencies. BPE's commitment to sharing their knowledge with others is evident in their previous work and commitment in the proposal. The plan is well-thought out, clear, and cohesive. The proposal would be stronger if more details were available (especially in the timeline) and if a specific external evaluator was already committed.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

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

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

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

The applicant addresses the absolute priority of improving low-performing schools through a school's organizational design, the proposal expands teacher residencies into a teacher residency system, and promises to advance teacher residency theory, knowledge, and practices.

The absolute priority is met by serving Boston Public Schools of which 58% of the schools are in the low performing category (e16) and the schools are being redesigned into teaching academies and roles are being further differentiated. The teaching academies would provide additional teaching resources and innovative staffing and scheduling strategies to accomplish the goal of improving performance (e13). The comparison of the hospital system with the teacher's academy system compared to current residency programs making excellent teachers but not necessarily excellent systems was compelling on pages e17-e18. Finally, the feasibility of national expansion is demonstrated by prior commitments to supporting other programs such as the Boettcher Teacher Residency, Academy for Urban School Leadership, Urban Teacher Residency United (e21), presentations at 35 national conferences, 20 learning visits from other organizations,

and participation in other networks and print/electronic sharing (e30-31).

Weaknesses:

Teacher residencies are working throughout the country. The proposal states, but does not prove, that the proposed Teacher Academy system is novel. A more thorough discussion, possibly in an appendix, of systems in other parts of the country would alleviate this concern. A more detailed appendix of the print/electronic sharing and specific conferences/events would have increased the quality of the application even further.

Reader's Score: 33

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) 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).

(2) 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.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

The project goals are well-thought out, clear, complete, and coherent and the activities proposed under each of the goals seem to constitute an adequate plan. Potential risks are covered adequately. The goals of transforming the schools into Teaching Academies, training 120 new, highly effective teachers, and creating and communicating this model are clear (e13).

Goal number 1 of transforming low performing schools includes performance targets for reading, writing, math (e22) and will accomplish this through the activities of differentiating roles (e23), creating an instructional guidance system (IGS) (e24), increasing adult-student teacher ratios and differentiation (e24-25), and extending time. Goal number 2 is training 120 new teachers through teacher training (e28), having residents contribute to student learning (e30), and continuous improvement (e30). Goal number 3 is disseminating research is supported by previous experience as mentioned above.

The application did a good job of covering potential risks: changing the roles of the teacher (e31), replicating best practices (e31), and sustainability (e32) are discussed with possible mitigation strategies.

Weaknesses:

The plan could be improved by more discussion of recruiting resident teachers and the potential pitfalls of not meeting goals if the economy continues to improve and wages increase in competitive areas. Since the teaching roles are new, more discussion on how the observation and evaluation rubrics for the new roles would be helpful in order to tell how teachers would be hired and promoted.

The goals and some of the activities could use some more details. For example, the upper school goal for 70% making a one-year of growth in math and English (e22) does not take into account the students that are more than one year behind, especially with highly mobile students who may have not benefited from the lower school. The IGS system is the heavy task of the project and is not described in enough detail. For example, the existing system being used or the technical

requirements of the software/hardware and personnel background needed to accomplish this complex system are not described.

Reader's Score: 26

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.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

The quality of the Management Plan falls in the upper end of adequately developed. Most of the key responsibilities are generally well defined in the table on pages e32-e34 with a couple of improvements needed. There is support from various partners as evidenced by letters in the appendix (e91-e95). Procedures for feedback and continuous improvement are managed by BPE's Office of Improvement (e35-36), and the project director has good experience in the area.

The roles of the educators and principals are described on e23. The timelines/milestones are on page e32-e34 and include the three goals (transform schools, prepare teachers, research) and steps to accomplish each. The lead for the project will be [REDACTED] the BPE's current Chief Program Officer and BPE's Office of Improvement is charged with this role for the project (e35).

Support seems to be described in all areas: 700 students signed up for 48 slots (e36). All parents responded that the school is a good place to learn (e36). The BPS Superintendent called for expansion of the program (e36) and sent a letter of support for the application in the appendix (e91) The Barr Foundation invested \$5 million dollars in BPE (e36) with a list of previous funders shown on page e111.

Weaknesses:

There are a few of improvements that could be made in this section. For example, not all of the positions in the budget are defined in the narrative (e.g. for example Director of School Operations). Second, the performance targets need to be differentiated and expanded for each of the years. Third, since the project director already is managing two federal grants and the BPE program, it is difficult to see how he can cover this project half-time as well. Fourth, there needs to be more, or clearer, discussion of what he will be giving up in his current job to make time for the project. The plan lists responsibilities as groups of people. Fifth, one person should be clearly identified as the lead for each objective or activity

with others supporting in the role. Sixth, there are a number of resumes in the appendix but it is difficult to tell who will be doing what for this specific project. Seventh, page e36 hinted that there would be letters from parents and educators in Appendix G, but none seem to be available. Eighth, there seem to be no mid-year milestones for corrective action if necessary. Finally, participation of all stakeholders (especially educators and teachers) should be accounted for in the timeline and milestones.

Reader's Score: 16

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 measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

This section was reviewed and scored by another reviewer.

Weaknesses:

This section was reviewed and scored by another reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/28/2014 04:04 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	33
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	16
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	75

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 5: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

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 addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

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

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

Applicant seeks to build on its 30 years of experience driving educational improvement in an urban school district by developing an innovative preK-12 pathway of Teaching Academies to serve as a replicable model for improving low-performing schools. Applicant identifies a body of research (Byrk) showing that to dramatically improve student learning, educators must have coherent systems which align curriculum instructional practices, materials, assessments, professional development, and use of time. In order to specialize and coordinate educator roles, applicant proposes to re-structure school to leverage the various skills and expertise of all the adults in the school community in a coordinated manner centered around student learning; educator roles will become more specialized and more coordinated. (page e17) This project tightly aligns with absolute priority 2a and the proposal demonstrates the national need that it will meet (disparities in school quality between schools in many cities). (page e16) Evidence of strong theory is provided in Appendix D.

Weaknesses:

Teaching Academies are not a new concept, but the novelty is in this project envisioning such academies functioning like hospitals, with "residents" taking on specialized roles as pre-service teachers who are directed by "attending educators." It is not clear that this approach will work on a complete system of teacher professional development, rather than on

individual pre-service teachers. (pages e18-21) This is also a high-cost program, and both sustainability and scalability may be an issue.

Reader's Score: 33

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) 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).

(2) 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.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

Applicant provides three clear and coherent project goals and a logic model that demonstrates how the project's focus on inputs, activities (for educators and students), and outputs will lead to the desired outcomes of student achievement, student preparedness for college and career, and well-prepared new teachers. (pages e21-22) Specific performance targets are provide for each goal that are measurable and for the most part fairly aggressive. (pages e22-31) The application contains a detailed description of the project activities under each of the three goals, constituting a reasonably complete plan. (pages e22-31) Three risks are identified, along with well-thought through mitigation strategies. (pages e31-32)

Weaknesses:

The project activities do not go into much detail on how will pre-service educators by observed and how will evaluation of their professional development be done by attending educators, or others. The Teaching Academy concept will also require complex scheduling that exceeds what school normally need to manage, and the application is not clear what system will be used and who will be trained in it. It would have been helpful for the logic model to distinguish between "resident" pre-service teachers and "attending educators" and the desired outputs from each. (page e22) Some of the goals may not be sufficiently challenging (having an increasing percent of students, beginning at 70%, make one year of growth each year in math and English language arts). (page e22)

Reader's Score: 26

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.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

The management plan articulates key responsibilities, including timelines with a list of activities and milestones. (page e32) Letters of support are provided by key partners to the project as well as foundation and business leaders. (pages e36, e91-95) The project director is well qualified, with experience managing projects of similar scope and size, including two large federal grants in the past. (page e35)

Weaknesses:

The management plan does not always clearly identify which party has specific responsibility for the actions listed in the management plan. (pages e32-34) Additional letters of support from principals, teachers, and parents would have been helpful in demonstrating broad support from all stakeholders in the community. The discussion on continuous improvement was adequate but could have benefitted from greater detail, especially around the feedback process for pre-service teaching of the "residents." (pages 35-36)

Reader's Score: 16

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 measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/28/2014 04:04 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/18/2014 09:11 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

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	30	26
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	15
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	73

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 5: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

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 addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

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

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

Strengths:

- The strength of their school organizational redesign lies in the targeted population of high need learners and in their plan to establish to “establish the various skills and expertise of all the adults in the school community in a coordinated manner centered around student learning (p.2-3).” The applicant plans to develop an innovative PreK-12 pathway of Teaching Academies to serve as a replicable model for improving low-performing schools to address the Absolute Priority 2a by restructuring the teaching and learning system to emulate a high effective teaching hospital design found in the medical field.
- This project represents a novel approach by transitioning the unit of change from individual teachers to a system of teaching, which will require a substantial change in elements of the school's organizational design to differentiate staff roles and extending and enhancing instructional time to improve instruction.
- The design is grounded in research, theory and practice with evidence that supports the efficacy of such an approach to impact student achievement and pedagogy. The approach is supported by research from Bryk, Hassick and others. Thus, this project will builds on an existing body of knowledge while advancing theory and practice in the field. p.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

- While the applicant does provide a strong, evidence based track record of scaling up projects, it was unclear regarding the extent to which this project can or will be scaled. In reviewing the budget and the number of students the applicant plans to serve, the cost would be approximately \$3,500 per student with the foundation contributing only \$450,000 as compared to \$3M in federal funds.
- Furthermore, the projection shows it will take until 2018 to serve 1000 students and 40 teachers per year or 5000 students and 200 teachers. The applicant primary expected outcome is (2) Train 120 new, highly-effective teachers within Teaching Academies (p.6). The scalability, budget and service populations information further complicates understanding the distribution of potential impact this project will have on the targeted populations and service areas.
- While the novelty features of the approach are grounded in research, the extent of diversity of the members and roles was not clear in relation to current roles and new roles. Therefore, this lack of clarity and broad generalizations in language inadequately supports the claim about how this approach is substantially different from other more traditional national clinical models that have been implemented in high needs population schools with a large percentage of minority students.

This information is critical to further determine how this project will serve as an exemplar for new practices in the field.

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 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).

(2) 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.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

Strengths:

- The project design has three clear goals guiding the Teaching Academy Model that is supported by an explicit logic plan with actions to achieve its goals and constitutes a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks. This is evident or demonstrated by a discussion on p. 16 and the potential risk involved in transitioning from traditional teaching role to a differentiated teaching role.
- The applicant addresses activities that will be undertaken in its proposed project, to ensure its project

implementation is successful in achieving the project goals. For example, the applicant explains that their differentiated and specialized staffing model, along with regular analysis of data, makes it possible to truly personalize learning for students. The academic classes will serve students in an inclusive environment that allows for mixed ability grouping and strategic team instruction, including teacher collaboration and flex scheduling to ensure high levels of differentiation and access to learning and teaching tools.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

- While the applicant provides a logic model, it is not a fully developed logic model of the proposed project full design. In the narrative there is a distinction made between teachers and educator. In the logic map, there are roles and activities defined for Educators and Students—yet it is unclear if the category educators also includes activities for teachers.
- The alignment between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes is not adequately articulated in the model description and little to no mention of technical support and training that will potentially become a major issue in this virtual learning academy. All of these elements are critical and must be accounted for to assess the completeness and coherence of the implementation plan.

Reader's Score: 26

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.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

Strengths:

- Strength of the management plan is found in a chart on p. 18 that articulates key project timelines, activities, responsibilities, and milestones. The extent to which the management plan responsibilities and well-defined objectives is

supported by criteria referenced in the Project Design section that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, including annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

- The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project is evidenced, in part, by the number of meetings and conferences the project will convene.
- The project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project is extensive. The director is highly qualified and will be supported by a BPE team that will lead and manage the project and provide capacity around data, research, operations, and instruction. The extent of the director's qualifications is evidenced by the appointment of [REDACTED], BPE's Chief Program Officer, to serve as the Project Director and who is the current Project Director for two other large federal grants. His experience serving as the principal of Gordon Tech High School in Chicago and as a BPS administrator and teacher for eight years provide him with the required knowledge, experience and leadership skills needed to manage this large complex project. P. 21
- In addition, the applicant also addresses how the project team will work with BPE's Office of Improvement that is charged with driving continuous improvement via innovation, better execution, and research. The applicant will use BPE's interim reports, external evaluators formative evaluations and the applicant's own data to identify areas in need of evaluation to assess the success or challenges of the project and will use that feedback to make improvements to the project by sharing it across all project stakeholders (Pp. 21-22).
- The partners' detailed letters of support in the Appendix 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.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

- Metrics and performance targets are somewhat explained in Project Design section, but are not integrated into the management plan narrative or discussion in the Management Plan to explain or clearly demonstrate the dynamic relationship between all elements in the design and plans to manage them to achieve goals and objectives. P 18-19.
- Another concern is that while the appointed director is highly qualified, it is unclear how much time Dr. [REDACTED] will have available to manage the projects on a highly engaged level given his current responsibilities as Chief officer and manager of two other large grants.
- Also, the management plan lacks clarity about how, when or if teachers will be included in the early preplanning stage, while the Attending Educator (AE) is included. AEs were described as content experts and professional development providers (p.8-9). Therefore, the overall concern is that in order to have a broad-based support at the startup consideration, participation by all critical participants is most often required to thwart the perception of a top down system to ensure successful implementation.

Reader's Score: 15

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 measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

This section was reviewed and scored by a different reviewer.

Weaknesses:

This section was reviewed and scored by a different reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/18/2014 09:11 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 12:03 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	0
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	11
Total	100	11

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 5: 84.411C

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Another reviewer reviewed and scored this section.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

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

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

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

Another reviewer reviewed and scored this section.

Weaknesses:

Another reviewer reviewed and scored this section.

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 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).

(2) 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.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

Another reviewer reviewed and scored this section.

Weaknesses:

Another reviewer reviewed and scored this section.

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.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

Another reviewer reviewed and scored this section.

Weaknesses:

Another reviewer reviewed and scored this section.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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 measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

(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.

The applicant describes a plan to conduct an Outcomes Study to address research questions. For example, the first question addresses the impacts of attending a Teaching Academy on student performance on the state standardized test for math and English Language Arts. The applicant describes a plan to study this question through the use of a two-stage least squares regression to model the impact of attending the target schools as a function of time spent enrolled in these schools. The question and the proposed methods are appropriate for the project. The applicant also describes a plan to conduct an Implementation Study to address three well developed questions. Methods to address this question are mentioned in regard to the use of observations using protocols or rubrics, teacher and student surveys and interviews (page e39).

(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.

The applicant provides a clear plan for determining the minimum detectable effect size for the Outcomes Study on page e38, and includes a three year longitudinal cohort design. Details, such as the grade levels, numbers of students per year, and minimum detectable effect size requirements are described.

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

The applicant describes an well-designed evaluation plan that includes conducting an Implementation Study using multiple measures, such as surveys, interviews and observations (page e39). Details of this plan include the use of fidelity scores, in order to determine the extent to which implementation is varied across teaching teams (page e40).

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

The applicant provides a well-designed plan to hire a qualified external evaluator to conduct evaluation activities (page e40). Costs for these contracted services are specified in the budget at \$20,000. Internal resources are described and

include the services of two education researchers and an assistant (page e40). One researcher is specified in the budget for .25% time and the assistant is described as .5% time. The applicant plans to achieve a cost of less than \$900 per student at the end of the grant period (page e40). Budgeted evaluation expenses appear sufficient to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Weaknesses:

(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.

It is unclear what components of the Teaching Academy model will be addressed, and if the proposed methods of value added analysis will be sensitive enough to determine the impact of these components. Details are limited regarding the methodology to be applied to some of the research questions. For example, the details regarding the methods that will be used to determine expected student achievement on PARCC and benchmark assessments are not fully described. One concern is that, since the PARCC test will be administered for the first time in 2015, the applicant will have only one year of available prior results on test scores to utilize in this value added analysis, which may not provide enough stability for predicting students' expected scores. It is also unclear how the applicant will determine (with adequate precision) differences in the degree of student exposure to differentiated instruction and extended learning opportunities. Details are limited regarding instrument development, such as protocols or rubrics for observations. It is unclear how these instruments will be validated (page e39).

The methods used to address the questions for the Implementation Study are not clearly specified. While the applicant describes the use of fidelity scores (page e40), details are limited regarding the measures that will be used to calculate fidelity scores. This makes it difficult to determine the appropriateness of the measures for both studies, since the applicant mentions that the Outcomes Study will utilize some of the Implementation measures.

(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.

The applicant mentions the issue of student mobility; however, a plan to control for attrition is not clearly described. For the Outcomes Study, a plan to include only students who are enrolled based on random assignment by lottery is provided (page e37). Details regarding methods of analysis are limited in regard to the Implementation Study. For example, it is unclear what methods will be used to analyze interviews, student surveys, and data from administrative records (page e39).

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

It is unclear if the applicant plans to calculate fidelity scores for students, in order to determine the dosage of Teaching Academy elements that students receive. A clear plan to determine a specified, acceptable threshold for fidelity is not described.

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

Details are limited regarding the qualifications of a third party evaluator that will be hired to conduct evaluation activities.

Reader's Score: 11

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 12:03 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 09:09 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	0
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	11
Total	100	11

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 5: 84.411C

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Foundation (U411C140016)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

This section was reviewed and scored by another reviewer

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

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

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

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

This section was reviewed and scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

This section was reviewed and 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 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).

(2) 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.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

This section was reviewed and scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

This section was reviewed and 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.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

This section was reviewed and scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

This section was reviewed and scored by another reviewer

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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 measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

1. The project outcomes questions (p. e36-37) described in the evaluation plan center on the improved academic performance of students enrolled in a Teacher Academy school and how "exposure to various components" of the model may impact student performance. These questions are linked to the projects described activities and implementation. The use of non-selected applicants as controls and the application of statistical multiple regression to isolate "instrumental variables" are effective strategies.

The applicants recognize the need to establish and measure program fidelity in the evaluation. They also discuss the plans to create measures to capture teacher differentiated roles, coordination, data use, and professional development (p. e39). Student level exposure to these teacher differentiated roles is also discussed as a planned measure.

Weaknesses:

1. The evaluation questions are not explicitly linked to the logic model provided on p. e22. The evaluation plan in general suffers from the lack of specificity about its implementation in regards to the evaluation timeline and evaluator requirements. Questions remain in regard to when evaluation expertise be provided and what qualifications will be sought. The reporting, data collection, and dissemination obligations of the evaluator(s) are also unclear. The evaluation plan provides for only limited feedback from the evaluators (annual report) without provision for ongoing communication about the project. Given the late entry of the evaluator (hired in July 2015), after initial planning is completed and implementation eminent, the impact of evaluator expertise into the development of instrumentation is likely to be limited.

2. The sampling model presented is unclear. The discussion on p. e36 of TOT and ITT students does not sufficiently clarify which students will be included in control and treatment groups. The instrumentation (the instruments and means for collecting data regarding program fidelity and instructional roles are not presented. The means for establishing their reliability/validity are not discussed. In school observation and training for observers is not included

3. The level of complexity of attempting to capture teacher and student differentiated role interactions in a "highly flexible" instructional environment is highly challenging. Given the lack of instrumentation, the non-participation of evaluation expertise in the planning phase, the absence of technological applications to assist in data collection success in capturing this information seems unlikely.

4. The unknown qualifications or identity of the evaluator, the level of funding applied early in the grant during planning and relatively low overall funding of the evaluation make the resources dedicated to this project's evaluation less likely to be successful.

Reader's Score: 11

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 09:09 AM