

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 12:27 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	28
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	19
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	82

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 9: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

This 4 year project is requesting \$2,999,964.95 to serve 2000 pre-K–1 students in two school districts. Expected outcomes for approximately 99 teachers include increased quality of literacy facilitation and science instruction for English Learners (EL); for coaches, increased capacity to support teachers of ELs; for schools, district-level changes in EL instructional practices; for ELs, improved speaking & listening, reading, writing, language, and science skills. The intervention will impact approximately 792 ELs and 1,188 non-ELs (approximately 2,000 students) and result in the greater engagement of families with school and community resources (e20).

The applicant addresses all the factors, while demonstrating a clear understanding of the criterion requirements, with a strong alignment between what is proposed, how it will be carried out and the subsequent impact.

See the comments for each criterion for more details.

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 provides a clear discussion of the specific issues it will address with research-based strategies for addressing the identified areas of need. Also, the applicant describes these issues from the perspective of the school and instructional staff, the families and students, as well as the educational system (e17).

The applicant describes its collaborative approach, which is a novel blend drawing upon four research-based ideas (e17). The project's model blends face-to-face and online professional development/coaching for pre-K–1 teachers with online

training for coaches, and resources to support lesson planning and assessment to improve, focus, and connect instruction and family supports to positively impact young ELs (e17).

The applicant describes how the project will offer other dimensions of innovation to support the project's success. For example, it will: integrated supports for ELs across content domains, contexts (school, home, community), and grade levels to ensure coherence in learning and build on language gains made in preschool; use technology to support professional development with a cross-site, cross-grade online professional learning community (PLC) and virtual training and support of coaches, to help establish a lasting professional development infrastructure; and form a Leadership Alliance of district and state leaders, EL literacy experts, and Connecticut early learning system investors to review the project implementation, suggest enhancements, and support sustainability and statewide scaling.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The 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 applicant provides a clear overall goal with specific, supporting sub-goals (e21). The project's overall goal is to harness the combined power of school, home, and community, and the engaging context of science, to bolster preK-1 ELs' language, literacy, and academic outcomes and to build system capacity within schools to consistently utilize research-based literacy practices with ELs (e21).

The applicant provides a detailed logic model (e22) linking inputs and key components with short and long-term outcomes. The logic model is supported with a clear discussion of how the inputs and outcomes link with the project goals, its components and activities (e23).

The applicant provides a thorough description of the curriculum and instructional models to be used, plus a discussion for how teachers and coaches will be trained and supported to successfully implement them in all three years of the project (e25). For example, to support teachers' pedagogical approaches to integrating literacy and science learning (NSTA, 2009), the project will develop protocols for small-group and individual coach meetings, taking advantage of the approach used by Regional Education Council coaches who engage teachers in videotaping and reflection (e27). The applicant continues with the same attention to detail for each component of the project, such as Family Supports and Wrap-around services (e28) and the LeaderShip Alliance (e30).

The applicant clearly identifies and addresses several factors which may pose risks to reaching project goals (e30). Examples include successful recruitment and retention of teachers, oversampling to ensure a minimum sample of 30 teachers in each cohort, and offering in-person support to supplement the online training and support services. The applicant provides a detailed discussion for the specific strategies and approaches it will use to address the factors

making families reluctant to engage with a school-based program. For example, the project will have a bilingual Family Engagement Specialist onsite to reach out to families and be present at all EL family events (e31).

Weaknesses:

The applicant lacks measureable outcomes for its objectives and goals, which are necessary to assess project success in meeting its goals (e17 and e109). The applicant lacks a clear discussion of the milestones to be used to assess progress towards meeting its goals.

Reader's Score: 28

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 applicant has included a Gantt Chart laying out a clear timeline for carrying out the key program components (e32) in the narrative which includes the metrics for their assessment. The applicant includes an expanded, detailed Timeline with Milestones/Products in the attachments.

The applicant describes the commitments of the key partners with both a description of how and when the various teams and personnel will meet, as well as strong letters of support for the project.

The applicant includes letters of commitment from partners offering a broad range of services to support the program and EL families. The project partners intend for the network of services provided by this project to be integrated into family empowerment initiatives currently underway in the community and the state (e20).

The applicant provides strong evidence for how the project is designed to building internal capacity to better serve EL learners and scale within partner organizations. The project includes a specific list of project partners, including district and state education leaders, (e32) which are supported with strong letters of support. The project partners intend for the network of services provided by this project to be integrated into family empowerment initiatives currently underway in the community and the state (e20).

The applicant provides a succinct and convincing table of the qualifications, roles and time commitments for Key

personnel (e34-35). The descriptions are further supported with a clearly delineated Project Organizational chart. The applicant has a policy of assigning a technical monitor at no cost to projects to oversee all project activities. The technical monitor for this project is identified by name and qualifications (e35).

The applicant provides a detailed discussion of its Quality Control and Continuous Improvement processes. For example, during its monthly conference calls, the leadership team will coordinate and manage the upcoming month's activities and resolve any issues. The evaluator will join calls quarterly to present and discuss evaluation data. The project will use these data to make operational and managerial adjustments (e33).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly describe the qualifications for the contracted technology vendor (iCohere) or indicate if it has worked with this vendor on previous projects with success.

Reader's Score: 19

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. Scored by another peer reviewer.

Weaknesses:

N/A. Scored by another peer reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 12:27 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/21/2014 08:41 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	24
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	77

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 9: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project 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 application addresses Absolute Priority 4, subsection B. The project is novel because it seeks to both create an alliance across the state and to integrate EL student learning across domains, including the school, home and community. The teachers will provide science content as they teach language and literacy skills. The project also hopes to increase the capacity of all teachers to teach ELs. This will contribute to the field by utilizing two unusual strategies – science in pre-K/grade 1 and EL support across settings. They ultimately hope to scale the model across the state. There is ample evidence of need, and ELs are a sizeable portion of the school population.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The 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 will utilize STEM as a means to support EL learning, and will use a wraparound support system to reinforce learning at home, in the community, and at school. The proposal has clear goals with narrative describing the strategies to achieve the goals. The logic model is aligned to the goals and shows that the project has four key components, with action steps tied to each one, and then six short-term and five long-term outcomes. These outcomes span from students all the way to the state. The size and scope of the project is large and so the use of virtual training of coaches will be beneficial to the large number of teachers involved in the work. There will also be protocols for small-group meetings and individual coaching sessions.

The plan to scale this project across the state is a model that will need considerable statewide support and expertise. The plan will create an Alliance that will make recommendations and create supports to scale up this process.

The project aligns the Common Core state standards to the science modules that are to be utilized in the proposed classes. They have tied the science that they will teach to the four Common Core strands.

There is detailed narrative explaining several examples of family nights and community nights that will be offered to support family learning.

The proposal recognizes the risks associated with the virtual learning, family engagement and teacher turnover and has strategies listed to mitigate risks.

Weaknesses:

This is a relatively large project with 12 schools participating and 36 teachers per year. This is a large number of sites and staff, with teachers receiving targeted supports as they learn. The virtual training of teachers and coaches may be a challenge to fidelity of implementation.

The logic model outcomes are not measurable.

Reader's Score: 24

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:

There is strong detail about the roles and responsibilities of individuals, partners and partner organizations. There is a plan for communications across sectors of the project, and for reporting to one another. The staff members that are listed as primarily responsible for the grant have adequate experience to run a project of this size. There is an organizational chart reflecting relationships between individuals and how their work ties together.

There is a detailed timeline and work plan for the project, with sections divided by activities and tasks.

There are adequate letters of support from staff in participating school districts, partners, local and state civic leaders, universities, and funders.

Weaknesses:

The evaluator only meets with the team quarterly.

Many of the scales listed in the measurement tools section that are to be used to evaluate the project have not been created yet.

There is a large portion of the budget dedicated to contracts with software and hardware vendors, and these make up the largest share of the cost after personnel. The type and quantity of technology may be out-of-date by the end of the grant period, so planning for upgrades should be incorporated into the plan.

Reader's Score: 18

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 Reviewed by a different peer reviewer.

Weaknesses:

N/A Reviewed by a different peer reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/21/2014 08:41 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2014 08:15 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	27
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	19
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	81

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 9: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project 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:

1.) The applicant proposes a sound development grant to address Absolute Priority 4, subpart b. The applicant proposes to work with Hartford Public Schools (HPS), Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) and Connecticut Science Center (CSC) to combine school, home, and community to serve 2,000 students. The project is aligned with the Connecticut Early Learning and Development standards (CT ELDS), Common Core ELA (CC), and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). This comprehensive plan features a collaborative approach based on four researched approaches across grade levels and is designed to provide long lasting infrastructure for the school district. (pp. 1, e13, et. al.)

2.) The wrap-around support proposed is both novel and likely to lead to positive impacts and a sustainable system for producing positive impacts. The approach will be collaborative including a blended model of face-to-face and online PD/coaching for teachers, online training for coaches, and resources to support lesson planning assessment to positively impact young ELs. The approach draws on four research-based ideas found in Appendix D. (pp. 2-4, Appendix D)

3.) The three features of LASerS will likely contribute positively to the national dialogue on supporting ELs' learning. The proposed project has potential to be integrated into family empowerment initiatives. Recommendations for other schools

to provide integrated, cross-grade language supports for ELs will be provided by the project's end. The applicant states that the research-based literacy practices to support ELs can be scaled statewide via the CREC and five other Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs). (pp. 1, 4-7)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The 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:

1.) The proposal provides a sound plan to achieve the proposed project goals through their proposed Literacy and Academic Success for English Learners through Science (LASErS) program. The proposed activities align with the project goals, objectives, and the projected outcomes. The logic model proposes the following outcomes: improved literacy skills for ELS; greater engagement of EL families in school/community; increased quality of teachers' EL literacy instruction; increased coaches' capacity to support teachers of ELS; district level changes in EL instructional practices. (pp. 6-16, D-109)

2.) The application clearly described project activities that constitute a well designed plan for completing project goals. The clearly identified potential risks to project success include transportation access. The Family Engagement Specialist will troubleshoot transportation challenges, with access to funding to support needed transportation. (pp. 15-16)

Weaknesses:

1.) The measurability of the objectives described in the logic model could be clearer. (pp. 7, D-109)

Reader's Score: 27

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:

1.) The well-defined management plan clearly articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities. The timeline of management activities is complete with a metric for the assessment of management activities. The annual performance targets provided clearly show how the applicant will monitor project goals. A comprehensive network of services for ELs and their parents is built into the project design and is a strong component of the proposal. (pp. 2-4, Appendix J)

2.) The proposal clearly demonstrates the commitment of key partners to ensure long-term project success. LASERs has commitments from district and state education leaders and the Yale Child Study Center. Commitment letters are provided in Appendix G, including cost-share commitments. (pp. 17-18)

3.) Benchmarks for success in establishing feedback and continuous improvement in project operation include monthly leadership team conference calls, with the evaluator joining quarterly. Data will be used to make operational and managerial adjustments. (pp. 17-19)

4.) The proposed project director has 10 years of experience in leading large scale similar efforts and decades of content knowledge in language acquisition and cognitive development. The combined leadership team is presented in a Project Organizational Chart as well as in Appendix F for resumes. The applicant has an existing policy of assigning a technical monitor and a detailed discussion for fidelity is included in the proposal. (pp. 19-20, Appendix F)

Weaknesses:

4.) Contracted software/vendors included in the budget are not clearly identified in the narrative.

Reader's Score: 19

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. Scored by another peer reviewer.

Weaknesses:

N/A. Scored by another peer reviewer.

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/20/2014 08:15 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/16/2014 04:22 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

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	13
Total	100	13

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 9: 84.411C

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project 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:

N/A. Scored by another peer reviewer.

Weaknesses:

N/A. Scored by another peer 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:

N/A. Scored by another peer reviewer.

Weaknesses:

N/A. Scored by another peer 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:

N/A. Scored by another peer reviewer.

Weaknesses:

N/A. Scored by another peer 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:

- This section is well organized and provides sufficient details to rate the quality of the project evaluation.
- The key questions outlined on p. 21 are clearly stated and address important elements of the impact and implementation of the project and include an exploratory element. The use of a mixed-method, quasi-experimental approach with qualitative and quantitative data is appropriate for this evaluation. The sample is appropriate for the scope of the study and includes an over sampling plan to account for attrition. The non-random comparison group consisting of students from the participating teachers from the year prior to coaching/training is appropriate. Outcome and fidelity measures are aligned with the questions and include a multi-method and multi-reporter approach.
- The analysis of impact includes an HLM model with students nested within teachers/classrooms. The implementation analysis is well detailed and appropriate for the project. The authors use an appropriate sample size and relevant data to specify a minimal detectable effect size.
- The evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project.
- The use of the Yale Child Study Center for the evaluation appears to be appropriate, and a letter of support is included in the supporting materials.

Weaknesses:

- One concern is that the HLM model outline on p. 24 does not account for nesting within schools (there are 12 schools total). Variation at the school level is important to take into account for a project evaluating classroom and student outcomes across schools.
- The proposal would benefit from additional information regarding the Yale Center such as a summary of similar projects evaluated by the Center or details regarding the expertise of staff assigned to complete the evaluation.
- While the evaluation plan refers to defining thresholds or acceptable implementation prior to starting the project, specified thresholds are not included in the proposal.

Reader's Score: 13

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/16/2014 04:22 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 02:05 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

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	14
Total	100	14

Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 9: 84.411C

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: Education Development Center, Inc. (U411C140033)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

NA 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:

NA Scored by another peer reviewer

Weaknesses:

NA Scored by another peer 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:

NA Scored by another peer reviewer

Weaknesses:

NA Scored by another peer 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:

NA Scored by another peer reviewer

Weaknesses:

NA Scored by another peer 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:

The proposal authors identify an intervention, titled "LASErS", designed to improve academic outcomes for preK-1 English Language learners by targeting a blended model of face-to-face and online professional development for teachers and coaches, as well as targeted interactions with EL families (pp. 2-3), both robustly supported by district wide, systematic supports. They propose the use of science as a driver to support literacy development for EL students (p. 3). Their comprehensive intervention is clearly described and evidence based (pp. 2-5, 11).

Both the comprehensive design of the intervention, to be implemented at home, at school and at the district level, and the narrowly targeted age group of the students (preK-1) make this project well designed. The goals and key components of the project design (p. 6) are clearly presented both in the text and visually in table format.

The alignment between goals, key components (p. 7) and evaluation questions (p. 21) is excellent. Evaluation questions are sufficiently narrow and clearly structured in ways that support the analysis plan. The measures identified and described on p. 23 and Appendix J, are productively connected to the logic model (p. 7). The project objectives are aligned with the project design and target both preK -1. This preK through 1st grade target is a powerful way to focus on EL issues, early in the educational trajectory.

The authors propose a mixed methods design (p. 22), which is appropriate for the proposed implementation and evaluation analyses. All components of the fidelity of implementation assessment are identified (p. 23, Appendix J). Authors provide information about how they will collect and analyze innovative data, including the passport samples and web analytics and video observation using iCohere tool (p. 23). They describe the methods they will use to analyze qualitative data in detail on p. 25.

The proposed use of HLM analysis is appropriate for the evaluation of outcomes (p. 24). The discussion of the sample (p. 22) is well illustrated in the implementation table provided. Authors productively account for attrition rates of teachers. Oversampling plan is well conceived.

The proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively, through Yale Child Study Center, which has extensive evaluation experience. The project management tables provided in the proposal (pp. 17-18) provide good clarity for how the data will be collected and managed.

Weaknesses:

While the authors propose to measure the variance of implementation across schools in their implementation fidelity, they do not control for school level variance in their design. The schools vary, with 10 HPS schools and 2 CREC schools. More discussion about why these 12 schools were selected and possible issues with the variation across type of schools would strengthen the proposal.

Reader's Score: 14

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/19/2014 02:05 PM