

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/21/2014 09:50 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	34
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	29
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	15
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
<b>Total</b>	100	78

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

## Questions

### Summary Statement - Summary Statement

#### 1. Summary Statement (Optional)

##### General:

This project seems to get at the heart of what may be holding students of poverty and underrepresented students back, the students' ability to deal with an overdeveloped response of flight or fight due to toxic stress. The proposal uses brain and social emotional research and preliminary success to lay a foundation of why a treatment of mindfulness may be helpful to increase K-2 student attention and regulation. The goals, plan, actions, and metrics all promise to have the opportunity to advance theory and practice throughout early elementary in a cost effective way.

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 application addresses the absolute priority of impacting low-performing schools by focusing on non-cognitive abilities. It is a novel approach and has promise as a cost-effective way of advancing theory, knowledge, and practice in primary education. First, the proposal will work with Chicago Public Schools which has 90+% minority and 85+% free and reduced lunch (e16) and select 16 randomized low-performing schools (e24). Second, the proposal will attempt to use mindfulness practices to reduce stress, increase self-regulation, attention, improve interpersonal climate, and decrease behavior management challenges (e16).

The proposal discusses prior efforts of Social and Emotional Learning and the background of how mindfulness will instill calm, replenish attention, and help cognition (e17-e20). While mindfulness is relatively unique in schools, current programs concentrate on inner focus. The program goes further in that it adds outer focus and specific lessons, tools, and measurements that can be shared with other K-2 practitioners (e18 and appendices).

The program application offers promise for wider implementation throughout the country if successful because of the following:

- The implementation has low resource needs (2.5 hours of initial training, 10 minutes per day for most children).
- Current teachers in the pilot program said students were less disruptive and more focused and even helped the teacher's themselves relax (e23)
- There is research showing the benefits of mindfulness for students (e24).

#### **Weaknesses:**

The outline and structure could have been stronger to more clearly address the absolute priority in an A1 section. A few more details describing support for how this is novel, how the applicants have and will disseminate their results in order to advance theory or practices would have earned this section a perfect score.

**Reader's Score: 34**

#### **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 has clear and coherent goals and actions with an adequate logic model, including potential risk and strategies to mitigate the risks that were mentioned. The goals (and actions) include specializing the Calm Classroom approach for K-2 students (creating curriculum, Calm Spot, At Your Desk Anytime strategies, classroom signage and meetings), improve awareness of mindfulness (written materials, meetings, modeling), sustainable culture (meetings, leadership, co-facilitation, train-the-trainer), and replicability (collaboration, tools, scholarly publications, program evaluation) (e25). The logic model describes training, implementation support, impact boosters, and core components (universal and targeted), proximal effects, and non-cognitive and academic outcomes) (e25). The application mentioned the following key risks:

- Adult implementation to be mitigated by implementation support and "impact boosters",
- The mindfulness computer app is not currently completed but is expected by the time of implementation.
- Multiple students may need the Calm Spot at the same time so the At Your Desk alternatives would be trained
- There were also a table of nine additional risks and mitigating factors (e31-e32).

#### **Weaknesses:**

There are minor concerns that a couple of risks may not be addressed adequately in this proposal. Teachers are at the heart of adopting this program. There was not, however, enough discussion of how to overcome teacher's reluctance to implement this every day. While it is briefly mentioned that the program is not religious), there still is the risk that a group of conservative parents might misunderstand the program because of its roots in Eastern religion. This could have been added to the risk factors with thoughts on mitigation.

## 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 plan articulates key responsibilities of key personnel including: Principle Investigator – [REDACTED] .4FTE (e32), Intervention Director – [REDACTED] .4FTE (e33), Evaluation Director – [REDACTED] .3FTE (e33), Management Team Advisor – [REDACTED] 50 hours/year (e33), and [REDACTED] as full-time Project Manager. The four goals and with actions for each one are listed on page 25.

The timeline with milestones is on page e34 and continuous improvements are facilitated by a project management platform and proprietary database (e35) through tablet interface, downloading of tablet data twice per semester, review of metrics bi-weekly at team meetings, local project partners able to respond to anecdotal challenges, and Erickson's experience in tracking and reporting (e35).

The appendices identify key partners and stakeholders:

- Erickson Institute resumes (e53-e75, e93-143), letters (e256, e266)
- Chapin Hill resumes (e76-e90, e150-e162), letter (e254)
- Luster Learning Institute resumes (e91-e92), letter (e253)
- University of Chicago Public Policy resume (e144-e149), letter (e261)
- University of Miami Department of Psychology resume (e163-e181), letter (e257)
- University of British Columbia Dept. of Psychology resume (e182-227), letter (e258)
- University of Washington Dept. of Psychology resume (e228-250), letter (e259-260)
- Chicago Public Schools letters: Superintendent (e251), Principals (e252, e263), Office of SEL (e255)
- Mindfulness in Education Network (e262)
- Integral Yoga Academy (e264-265)

#### Weaknesses:

While the milestones are good in program content, there could be more intermediate details on hiring, fundraising, curriculum, professional development, and management benchmarks. The risks above regarding teacher implementation might have been managed by having a few letters from teachers who have tried the project and have agreed to mentor

and/or convince other teachers. The same is true for letters of support from parents who have been in a similar program. While the advisory panel is very strong in academia, it seems under-represented with current or former K-2 teachers who may offer practical advice. Also while the project director has grant and school experience, this seems to be mostly in the area of infants.

A key area that seems to be missing is actual matching funds for this project (aside from the in-kind funds mentioned on e253). All of the letters of support seem to be those that are direct partners of the project (on advisory board and given stipends or CPS) and do not include school personnel (administrators, district personnel, teachers, parents, students) with the exception of one principal (e263).

**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 another reviewer.

#### **Weaknesses:**

This section was reviewed and scored by another reviewer.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/21/2014 09:50 PM



Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/28/2014 04:20 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	33
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	28
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	15
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
<b>Total</b>	100	76

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

## 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 proposes a four-year project employing a mindfulness-based intervention to increase self-regulation and learning engagement in young children (grades K-2) in low-performing schools. The approach is innovative relative to traditional social-emotional learning programs as well as because it adds in elements designed to replenish students' focus on academic content, such as through very brief "brain breaks." There is relatively low implementation burden, with no need for instructors to master multiple lessons of discrete content. Instead, the focus is on three-times daily mindfulness exercises; tablet technology to help students relax using a "Calm Spot"; weekly small groups for students in the lowest-quartile of self-regulation skills (and their parents); and grade-specific communities of practice for teachers. (pages e16-24) The significance of this project is fully developed, presenting a strong research base ("evidence of promise"), developing a unique approach to toxic stress and non-cognitive approaches strongly aligned with absolute priority 2b, and making a strong case for the promise of this particular set of interventions as a potential contribution to the field building upon previous social-emotional learning initiatives. (pages e21-24, e51-52)

#### Weaknesses:

The discussion in Appendix C covering the learnings (improvement in academic achievement, etc.) from prior implementation of the Calm Classroom program in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) was fairly limited, despite it being

implemented in 3,640 CPS schools since 2007, including 1,260 PK-2 classrooms. (pages e16, e48-49)

**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 design is fully developed. Project goals are clearly and coherently identified, with explicit action steps under each goal. (page e25) The logic model identifies the inputs (training and professional development elements and implementation support steps), the core components of mindful culture in classrooms (both universal and targeted interventions), and expected outcomes (proximal effects, non-cognitive mediators, and academic outcomes). (page e26) Each component of the program is thoroughly described in the narrative, providing a complete description of program elements identified in the logic model. (pages e26-31) Nine potential risks to project success are identified, with detailed strategies to mitigate those risks. (pages e31-32).

#### **Weaknesses:**

The academic outcomes (grades and scores on standardized assessments) expected are not quantified. After years of Calm Classroom program implementation in the Chicago Public Schools, the application would have been strengthened by estimating realistic yet aggressive goals for both the non-cognitive mediators and academic outcomes expected from this project over the course of four years. (page e26)

**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:**

Applicant provides an implementation timeline that includes lead responsible partners for each action step and sequenced timelines. (page e34) A strong selection of letters of support are provided from the Chicago Public Schools and academic research community interested in the development of non-cognitive approaches in the classroom. (pages e251-266) Applicant provides a clear description of its process for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the management of the project over the course of the grant. (pages e34-35) The project director has a fairly strong background, having directed large-scale education intervention projects, designed and documented the effectiveness of curricula and learning assessment instruments, and overseen early learning and literacy research at an institute. (page e32)

**Weaknesses:**

The management plan would have been strengthened by the clear identification of key milestones at different points in the implementation of the project. For example, clearer professional development benchmarks would have been helpful. (page e34) Evidence of broad support from stakeholders would have been strengthened by inclusion of letters of support from teachers and parents of children who had been involved with the Calm Classroom approach in recent years. (pages e251-266) The project manager's past experience has largely been with infants, not grades K-2, and the size and scope of past budgets and grants that she has directed is, with one exception, significantly smaller than an i3 development grant. (page e32, e56-57)

**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 criterion was reviewed and scored by another reviewer.

**Weaknesses:**

This criterion was reviewed and scored by another reviewer.

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

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**Status:**           Submitted

**Last Updated:**   09/28/2014 04:20 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/18/2014 11:56 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	30
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	29
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	16
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
<b>Total</b>	100	75

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

## 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 extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority 2b the applicant is seeking to meet is demonstrated by the applicant's plan to employ the Calm Classroom project, a noncognitive approach to student engagement by integrating a relaxation response-based curriculum to train high need students and teachers to learn and practice cognitive restructuring skills, which addresses AP2b. p 2.
  - o For example, Calm Classroom K-2 (CCK2) employs noncognitive skills such as calming and replenishing mindfulness practices to reduce stress, increase self-regulation, attention, and absorption of academic content, as well improve interpersonal climate and decrease behavior management challenges in classrooms.

The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices is evident in the potential to advance in the SEL field of study.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses:

- While the applicant provides an extensive discussion, sharing research and features of this product or approach, the Calm Classroom, the applicant's response to the AP2b criteria was not clear, complete or coherent for presenting a novel approach.
- o For example, there were no references to other national models that have used similar approaches..

**Reader's Score: 30**

**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 clarity and coherence of the project goals are centered on a four-year project plan, CCK2 that will serve 16 low performing schools, 120 K-2 classrooms, and 3,000 students during three full implementation years.
- Applicant's proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals, which includes a fully developed logic model of the proposed project as evidenced by the map and discussion Pp. 10-11. The applicant's plan includes project goals and a description of project activities for achieving those goals (e25).
- The applicant identified nine (9) potential risks and mitigating factors including solutions to ensure project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses:

While the applicant did provide project goals and activities, the applicant did not provide a complete, clear or coherent discussion of how the project would link the noncognitive skills and academic skills curriculum in this project. This is an important component to ensure the fidelity of implementation of the product is design in a way that will support the applicant's intent to achieve goals and objectives, which includes student performance outcomes.

## 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:

The management plan is extensive and addresses all required criteria that includes a table with timelines and articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives.

- For example, the plan includes project start-up activities and one full implementation year (including continuous improvement targets).
- Timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities describe the intervention pattern that will occur three times during the first year and in addition, July-December 2018 will be used for full dataset analyses, and creation and dissemination of results and replication tools. p. 20.
- Erikson is the lead applicant, but the directors all have experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project (Director CVs Pp e53, e59 cv). The management structure and key personnel are detailed in Appendix J.2. As shown, there is a lead individual from each project partner (CPS, Erikson, Calm Classroom, and Chapin Hall) comprising the Management Team. CV's in appendix F)

The appendix J has letters with details on the demonstrated commitment of any key partners, which showed evidence of broad support from stakeholders (E.g departments of psychology) whose participation is critical to the project's long-term success.

- The applicant's details represent adequately developed procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. p. 20. For example, Bi-weekly team meetings for information sharing will serve as a metrics to assess progress on an ongoing basis. In addition, the applicant will employ annual performance targets to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals. Pp. 18-20
- Erikson Institute has a long history of improving student achievement, especially in CPS (see Appendix C).

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses:

- Two important concerns emerged in reviewing the management plan. First, the budget does not adequately identify appropriate levels of matching funds as required in criteria for this competition and under the AP2b priority.
- Second, the Project Director's description indicates the project director is a junior director without evidence of extensive experience in managing large-scale federal funded grant project of this magnitude. Such a lack of experience could impede the director's ability to implement a project of this size and scope successfully.

**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 a different reviewer.

**Weaknesses:**

This section was reviewed and scored by a different reviewer.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 09/18/2014 11:56 PM

Status: Submitted

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

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	0
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	0
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	0
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	15	13
<b>Total</b>	100	13

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

## 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 three evaluation questions that will address fidelity, proximal effects and non-cognitive mediators and outcomes, and effects of the project on teachers (page e36). Measures that will be used in the evaluation are described in a table on pages e36 and e37. Examples include the Woodcock Johnson assessment, standardized test scores, and grades for student level outcomes, and a teacher-level self-efficacy scale for teacher level outcomes.

(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 credible analysis plan that is designed to meet the What Works Clearinghouse standard without reservation. A proposed sample size is provided, along with a minimum detectable effect size (page 39).

(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 provides a plan that includes the key components of the project. Details are provided regarding a measurable threshold for the amount of variance that will be explained (80%) by 'between-school' variation, using pre-treatment covariates (page e39).

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

The applicant proposes to utilize sufficient resources to carry out the project. For example, a qualified evaluator from a local university will be hired to conduct evaluation activities.

**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.

Details are limited regarding how some of the measures will be analyzed and utilized. For example, it is unclear how interviews, focus groups and surveys will be analyzed to inform evaluation outcomes.

(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.

No weaknesses noted.

(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.

Details are limited regarding how some measures will be used to address key components. Measurable thresholds for acceptable implementation are not clearly described for some components of the project such as student assessments.

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

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 13**

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**Status:** Submitted

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 09:21 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
<b>Summary Statement</b>		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	0
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	0
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	0
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	15	14
<b>Total</b>	100	14

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Erikson Institute (U411C140130)

## 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 evaluation questions table containing the measures, schedule, responsibilities, and timeline is provided on pp. e36-37. This table comprehensively addresses the evaluation questions established in the program description and presented in the logic model (p e26). The evaluation is further strengthened by supplemental information provided in Appendix J-6 which provides rubrics and examples of protocols and surveys that are to be used as outcome and implementation measures.
2. The analysis of the quantitative data applying HLM is very appropriate for investigating the effects of program participation on students nested within schools and classrooms. The discussion of the MDE shows an understanding of the requirements for sampling to achieve sufficient power for significance.
3. This evaluation plan employs interesting and potentially highly effective means of data collection. The extensive use of electronic data collection (calm spot and teacher led activities) at the classroom level by teachers and students to record CC activities is integrated into the initiation of these activities by respondents (p. e29-30). Assuming respondent training and technology are effective this methodology should provide a highly accurate picture of the utilization of these CC techniques.
4. [REDACTED] (Evaluation Director and Co-Investigator) are very well qualified to carry out the evaluation of this project. Their specific experience in the evaluation of program related to early education and school improvement makes them ideal collaborators for this work pp. e76-83). The table on p.e31 very favorably emphasizes the independence of the evaluator and a focus on fidelity of the data.

**Weaknesses:**

3. Within the discussion of “classroom” effects there is no specific mention of teacher impact. This variable would be expected to be a powerful covariant in a project such as the one described as much of the implementation is directly dependent on teacher behavior and student/teacher interaction. The analysis plan would benefit from a discussion of how teacher variations in implementation, support for the project and other possible teacher-treatment interaction effects (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, experience, education, etc.) would be addressed.

**Reader's Score: 14**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 09/19/2014 09:21 AM