

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/17/2014 03:47 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	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	16
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	79

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 1: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

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:

The applicant clearly aligns their project with the absolute priorities (rural and teacher effectiveness, subpart b equity access). They provide geographic and demographic information to support the rural priority and background on the Colorado teacher evaluation and data management systems e18-20. Project SEED is designed to integrate teacher evaluation with a professional development system to provide geographically isolated educators with a tool to improve their effectiveness stemming from their evaluation feedback (e18). The visual (Exhibit 1, e19) provides a clear graphic of the state teacher evaluation context and how the proposed i3 project extends the current state system to link teachers a locally developed blended learning PD link.

The applicant further presents a strong case that their proposed approach is novel by providing examples of current practice juxtaposed with their proposed innovation. Often lacking from state developed teacher evaluation systems are the critical follow-up processes of providing individualized teacher professional development based on evaluation ratings. BOCES proposes to build upon the RANDA one size fits all by personalizing PD and adding two new blended learning PD components: Personalized Accessible Knowledge (PAK) accessed on-line, and Teacher Learning Communities (TLCs) in-person with on-line facilitation by coaches (e21).

The applicant's proposed project is based on strong theory. Their proposed approach has the potential to inform and

provide a workable solution to the challenge current teacher evaluation systems face – that of using evidence gathered from evaluation to inform professional growth.

RANDA provides evaluation data management to states and districts across the country. Their engagement with this project at both the state and with 7 rural districts lends credibility to the potential of further dissemination (e23 & 25). They provided examples of how their current efforts with the SEED model have been successful and will inform and model the proposed expansion (e 24). Appendix D (e98) provides an extensive discussion of their Theory of Change (strong theory) supported by research that more than meets the criteria.

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 has six measurable goals that are reflected as short-term outcomes in the project logic model (e 26-27). They further delineate 5 project phases with related activities for each phase. They have provided a thoughtful and realistic roll out plan for the project. Establishing that the technology is in place to support the integration of student, teacher ratings with PD resources and administrator - teacher access is a crucial first step (e27-28). Using current educator effectiveness evaluation data to inform content development (e 29) will reinforce principal and teacher buy-in.

Even more significant to ensuring school faculty buy-in, is the inclusion of teachers on the Content Development Teams (e 29). Also, the inclusion of a Sustainability phase shows thoughtful planning and a seasoned understanding of project design (e 31).

Detailed under each project phase were activities that constitute a clear plan for achieving the project goals. A table showing how their planned content development phase aligned with CO Teacher Quality Standards (e28) reinforces the project's alignment with current context and thus likelihood for success.

A review of potential risks to project success is outlined in Exhibit 7 (e 32). They touch on two key potential issues – lack of school and teacher participation. Notable, are the creation of teacher leader roles and the understanding of the need for compensation and release time to address this issue.

Comment: Consider including standards and indicators for SEED implementation in administrator evaluation ratings.

Weaknesses:

Not adequately explained was the reasoning behind giving teachers an option of full participation in the TLC strand. It seems this is a critical program component (one of two) embedded in the design that weakens the impact on the desired outcome of improved teacher effectiveness.

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 provided a succinct overview of key project responsibilities and assigned personnel by project role (Exhibit 8, e32-33). Exhibit 9 (e 33) clearly delineates project objectives that are aligned with the 5 project goals, the metric by which they will be measured and the timeline for measurement (indicating YR 1 as baseline). An inclusive timeline with critical project tasks (milestones) and identified responsibly party includes initial planning tasks followed by the tasks broken down by the previously discussed project phases (e33-35). This timeline provides a strong "road map" to guide and monitor project implementation.

The key partners are described noting that the 7 participating districts are core to the project. Letters of support (e 63-72) are provided by the superintendents from each participating district, technology partners, and BOCES. A letter from McREL is not included but explained in the narrative (e35). The letters provide individual perspectives of the partner enthusiasm, perceived benefits and commitment to the project.

The project's process for continuous improvement includes regular oversight, review of information, data and reports, evaluation findings by key project staff who have decision-making authority (Project Leadership Team) and the PD Committee who have "boots on the ground" insight into daily project activities (e36). Performance targets (Exhibit 9, e33) are preliminary and will be reconsidered after benchmarks are established.

The project director is identified and appears to have the requisite experience to manage a project of this scope and size

(e 36). Her resume, as is the designated project evaluator, are included (e57-62).

Weaknesses:

Not provided under key personnel is the amount of time the designated project director has available to commit to project management and oversight. As Director of BOCES, her plate is already full. Other critical project staff were not identified or the competencies required for their role, e.g. PD and Tech Coordinators, Innovation Coaches.

Reader's Score: 16

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

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

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

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

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/17/2014 03:47 PM

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	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	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	82

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 1: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

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:

The applicant was on target with the absolute priority as project is designed to develop the effectiveness of teachers in rural areas. Compared to teachers within the city limits, there are obstacles that this audience faces that are not common to educators in urban areas. As the applicant states, rural areas have a disproportionate number of new teachers that need additional support as they learn about their profession, (p. 19). Because of the lack of support given, teacher turnover in rural areas is higher than in the city limits. Beginning teachers, though interested in growing in their profession are limited in their disposable income and therefore do not always have the resources to travel to PD opportunities.

The project is unique in its blended learning model to Professional Development, addressing innovative strategies that address teacher effectiveness for all teachers, not just those that are struggling. The blended learning model is flexible, available to teachers 24/7, is evidence based, includes a teacher evaluation component, and allows for face to face and online collaboration with colleagues, (p 21). Because of the online feature, they can connect with more experienced educators and not be limited to the experience inside their environment.

Through practical components to include high quality PD, integrated with teacher evaluation and a blended learning PD model for teachers, the program ensures effective teachers in every classroom. Teacher performance must be tied to measurable outcomes and this model seeks to provide a plan to accelerate professional growth. As outlined on p. 24, the

plan details how the project adopts elements of PD and builds upon them and highlights the intended advancements to the existing practices.

Weaknesses:

No weakness addressed.

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 management plan addresses six measurable goals and identifies the project's five stages with the input sharing what will be provided; output or action steps to achieve the goals; what will be done and who will be target; and the long and short term outcomes, p. 27. The plan is clear and coherent, providing goals that align with the purpose of the project, p.26.

To avoid any potential risk, upon careful review boldly list six areas of concern. For every potential risk, mitigation strategies are established to lessen the degree of failure on p. 32 in exhibit 7. The risks identified involve all parties, further establishing the level of commitment from all participants.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

Development and access to technology, if not properly developed could pose a problem for teachers in outlying areas. The technology development one of the most important factors of the program's activities and key partners are teaming up for a yearlong phase to develop the platform. Not only will the technology be used by teachers, but support principals

will also utilize technology to access student achievement data.

For full implementation, it should not be an option for participants to opt out, p.30. Considering all the planning and development that is shaping the learning model, teachers should not have the option to not fully participate in portions of the model. This practice could change the results of the project greatly.

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:

The management plan specifically outlines key responsibilities of all parties involved with the implementation. Objectives are clearly defined along with annual performance targets. Milestones, with lead and deadlines are provided for each stage of implementation. The frequency of meetings and follow up of each person responsible for action is stated, pp. 32-34.

There are seven participating school districts and all principals have pledged their support to the project. All stakeholders involved pledged their support. Letters are included from all participating districts and private sector in support of the project.

To assure continuous improvement, committees will meet quarterly to review project's implementation through various communication channels, to include videoconferencing, online sharing, and face to face meetings. With the frequency of meetings, action steps can be altered if needed.

Weaknesses:

No weakness identified.

Reader's Score: 20

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 reviewer"

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/18/2014 08:53 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/18/2014 10:07 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	16
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	77

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 1: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

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:

The project entitled SEED proposes to develop a blended system of professional development to improve the effectiveness of teachers in seven rural school districts in Northwest Colorado. The project therefore addresses the selected Absolute Priorities 6 and 1B, the combination of which calls for increasing access to effective teachers for low-income, high need students in rural areas. The project's approach is especially appropriate for meeting the challenges of education in rural areas, in view of the disproportionate numbers of young and inexperienced teachers hired for positions in rural schools as well as the need to address conditions of rural isolation as explained by the applicant on pages e19-e20.

The project proposes a uniquely comprehensive integration of professional development and teacher evaluation through a combination of online and face-to-face strategies to promote professional growth. Though elements of the proposed project are in widespread use, the totality of the applicant's approach is novel through its focus on developing an efficient model of data-driven professional development that seamlessly includes tools and measures for teacher evaluation, as explained by the applicant on page e21. The approach may also demonstrate an exemplary model for meeting the challenges of teacher development in rural areas where access to the quality of resources and interaction proposed by the applicant is often limited.

The implementation of the proposed blended system has potential for contributing to professional development theory and practice with regard to the question of whether the proposed blend of online and face-to-face activities can be successfully implemented when teacher evaluation is included as an integral part of the whole system.

Weaknesses:

There are 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 goal of the project to "invigorate teachers as learners" (p. e26) in 30 Northwest Colorado schools to improve student learning and engagement, supported by principals and including ongoing support to teachers, through the proposed SEED plan of action is both clear and coherent in its objectives as summarized in the project's logic model on p. e27. Especially important is the applicant's plan to engage principals in teachers' professional growth process, without which leadership the model would be less coherent.

The applicant provides a complete plan for project implementation through phases for technology development, content development, full implementation, data collection and evaluation, and sustainability. Each is described with a detailed narrative (pp. e26-e31), with examples and discussion of overlapping or interrelated activities from phase to phase. For example, content development in Stage 2 also references (p. e29) the later work of Teacher Learning Communities in determining appropriate online resources.

Weaknesses:

The applicant's discussion of risks to the project's success is notably minimal (table, p. e32) in comparison with the number of potential obstacles to implementing activities as planned. For example, the three Innovation Coaches spread across ten schools each may not have sufficient opportunity to work with teachers at the depth necessary to accomplish project goals. Teachers, despite initial buy-in through stated incentives, may need more time to integrate the new system into their routines as envisioned by the applicant. Possibly even more serious, many teachers may resist the evaluative tracking of their learning that lies at the center of the project's design. Further planning with regard to these and other risks is necessary to ensure successful implementation.

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project 's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

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

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides clear descriptions of the project's lead personnel and teams with regard to their specific responsibilities (p. e32-e33). The applicant's timeline (p. e33-e34) also shows major activities linked with the lead individual or group responsible. The applicant's table on page e. 33 includes the measures for assessing annual progress. The list of project milestones presented by the applicant on pages e33-e35 is well-developed, with specific details identified for implementation within each phase of the project's design.

Evidence of commitment to the project is strong, as summarized on page e35. The project has been discussed and approved by the leadership committees of the applicant organization and key technology partners (e.g., RANDA). The individualized and personalized nature of the support letters from superintendents in the Appendix indicate that these major stakeholders both understand the design of the project and are committed to its successful implementation.

Weaknesses:

Though the project director has fifteen years of experience in managing programs of similar size and scope as the proposed project, it is not clear that the proposed project director will have adequate time for managing the proposed project given her existing responsibilities as executive director of Northwest BOCES

Though the applicant describes (p. e36) opportunities for reviewing progress, the proposed monthly meetings of the PD Committee and project leadership team do not appear adequate for ensuring that all elements of an ambitious, multifaceted project are on track and for addressing likely challenges to successful progress. It is not clear what "reports and data" (p. e36) will be reviewed by "SEED project staff, partners, and stakeholders" and whether the feedback opportunities for two of the most critical stakeholders - teachers and principals - will be adequate to ensure the project's ability to make needed adjustments for continuous improvement.

Reader's Score: 16

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

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

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

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

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/17/2014 09:32 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

Reader #4: *****

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

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 1: 84.411C

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

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:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The 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

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The 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

Weaknesses:

n/a

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:

Overall, the evaluation plan in this narrative was well-written and appropriately designed (pgs. e32-e42). The authors present a chart pages e37-e38 which clearly and concisely links project goals to research questions, and data metrics. These links are appropriate and will ensure that the outcomes of data used in analyses do allow investigators to respond to the research questions and to address whether goals are met

The analysis plan includes both formative and summative analyses ensuring that the program is implemented with fidelity, that changes can be made over time in response to the data, and that the outcome of the analyses will allow evaluation of program success. Details for a reporting schedule as well as plans for feedback to project administrators show that project administrators have thought about the importance of using data to govern project implementation (pg. e36, pg. e42).

Research design includes treatment and control groups. Group differences in demographics, attrition, and beginning achievement level are addressed (pg. e39-e40). These considerations strengthen the design: the control group allowing clarification of which effects seen during implementation are due to the SEED program and consideration of demographics allowing examination of how these effects vary for students and teachers of differing backgrounds.

Sample size, effect size, and anticipated data changes that result from the project are all discussed in detail. Analyses as well as the rationale for choosing the various analyses are provided and are appropriate for the project (pgs. e39-e41) ensuring that outcome is likely to capture effects of significance.

Resources are set aside for an external evaluation. The budget narrative provides details on the amounts going to salaries and fringes for the evaluators. Individuals identified who will be working on the evaluation do have extensive research experience and were involved in the development of this evaluation narrative (pgs. e35-e42, budget narrative).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/17/2014 09:32 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/16/2014 03:09 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	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 #1 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 1: 84.411C

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: Northwest Colorado BOCES (U411C140048)

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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The 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

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The 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

Weaknesses:

N/A

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 applicant has included a complete Logic Model (p.10) that connects inputs with five short-term and three long-term outcomes.

The applicant has named an external evaluator to provide the external evaluation for the project, clearly including a detailed description of staff qualifications (p.25 & Appendix F). In addition, the application includes a budget of approximately \$350,000 allotted for the evaluation, which would be sufficient to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

The project proposes that the external evaluations will participate in quarterly meetings (p.19) and bi-annual process evaluation reports, enabling shared communication between the evaluators and PIs, improving the ability to provide relevant feedback necessary for formative evaluations to be effective.

The applicant clearly articulates 6 measurable goals (p.9, 20-21) with associated relevant evaluation (key) questions and accompanying data sources (such as interviews, CSMPMS teacher evaluations, and student NW BOCES data). The stated objectives of the project include measurable thresholds for acceptable implementation in the form of annual performance targets percentile points (p.16).

The applicant proposes a sample size of 30 schools (assigned randomly to treatment and delayed-treatment control conditions in a randomized block design (p.22)) which includes a detailed discussion of a minimum detectable effect size (p.23-24) including in a footnote an adjustment of using a target power of .83 to account for the unbalanced design.

The proposed data analysis appropriately uses a randomized block design and analyzes the data using hierarchical linear modeling framework with latent growth curve models (p.23) incorporating the use of school-level covariates. In addition, the planned use of FIML (p.23) to account for missing data due to attrition is appropriate.

Weaknesses:

Under outcome evaluations, it is unclear (p.22) why it would be necessary to utilize a tool for “validating univariate analysis of student and teacher data.”

In addition, it is unclear which, if any, “portions of Goals 4 through 6” would be addressed in “exploratory analyses” or of what these analyses would consist (p.24).

Reader's Score: 14

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/16/2014 03:09 PM