

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 09:17 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	30
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	17
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	72

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 7: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

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 minimally meets absolute priority 3 as it proposes to implement a development and evaluation model to improve the reading skills of students with disabilities in restrictive settings to the extent they can receive reading instruction in inclusive educational settings (page 2).

1,024 students identified along with 136 special education coaches (Abstract Narrative e13) will be impacted by the study. The proposal also meets the absolute priority because it is designed to lessen the achievement gap between students with reading disabilities and their typically developing peers (page 3).

The applicant cites the lack of empirical evidence to validate the need for the project. For example, only 1 study found instructional reading practices positively impacted students' reading abilities in general education settings. There were no comparison studies on students with reading disabilities (page 3). In that regard, this study is considered a novel approach to identify how specific instructional curriculum strategies impact the literacy development in these students.

The applicant articulates the project will examine 5 instructional practices that produce better academic outcomes than previously studied (page 3-5) and is therefore considered a novel approach. For example, previous studies examined only two factors known to improve academic outcomes, fluency and comprehension. This study is predicted to be "substantially

more effective” (page 5). To address this deficit, the applicant intends to examine 5 influential factor which are: fluency, word recognition, letter identification, phonemic awareness and decoding strategies (page 5) which extend previous studies that only examined fluency and comprehension (page 3).

Weaknesses:

Parental involvement would seem critical to children’s academic development particularly during the early years. The application did not provide any information on carry-over activities or any level of parental involvement, including at home reading to improve literacy development.

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:

Goals and subsequent activities are clearly stated and a plan of implementation articulated by the applicant (page 1-3).

Potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks were articulated. One such potential risk to project success is attrition of schools, districts and students. To mitigate those risks, the applicant will seek MOU’s from partners and work with partners who have identified a larger population of students than necessary for project implementation (page 15).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide sufficient information to determine how other critical factors such as individual student aptitude, learning style, degree of disability, or attention span may impact the “one on one” lessons. Lack of this critical information may impact overall implementation of the project.

The applicant articulates that 1,024 students will be taught (Appendix e13) but has provided little information regarding how the project will sustain an adequate and consistent pool of teachers or coaches which also mitigates project success.

Reader's Score: 25

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 includes objectives and key responsibilities of the management team, which consists of 3 principal team members, a Director and co-director and external evaluator (page 15).

Letters of support were included from each of the participating partners (Riverton Elementary, South Western City School District, Spartanburg School Districts One and Three and Tift County Public Schools (Appendix G). Each of the key partners articulate their strong commitment of on-going support of project implementation and sustainability.

The applicant provided a schematic depicting lines of communication to ensure feedback and continuous improvement, beginning with the Project Director and concluding with the school districts (page 19).

The Project Director, [REDACTED] has previous experiences managing projects of similar and larger size and scope than the proposed project. For example, she currently is the co-director for i3 scale up grant (page 20) and has other pertinent experiences as an Assistant Professor for the applicant (Ohio State University). These elements are predictors of her ability to successful lead and monitor project activities as well as facilitate collaboration with project staff.

Weaknesses:

Only 30% of the time of the Project Director is designated toward project activities. This does not appear to be sufficient time to comprehensively monitor legal and fiduciary aspects of the grant.

Reader's Score: 17

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 scored by another reviewer.

Weaknesses:

This section was scored by another reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/19/2014 09:17 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 03:49 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

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	19
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	81

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 7: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

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 addresses a particularly difficult and prevalent problem for students with exceptionalities: severe reading deficits (pg. 2). Current research is used effectively to make the case that a new approach to this issue is needed.

The proposal provides a clear and convincing argument for the focus of the project, the need to determine how evidence-based strategies should be used (pg. 4). More specifically, focusing on determining delivery format and intensity is unique and very timely. In particular, the ability to prescribe a specific instructional format and the amount of time that would be used with a student would be very helpful for educators.

Prescribed reading instruction has become a vital part of elementary school curriculum with success, but has not been widely used with special needs populations. This novel perspective has real potential to advance reading instructional practices in the field of special education.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(2) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

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

Strengths:

The project follows a well-developed logic model (pg. 4) that reflects a well-designed and effective plan. The proposal details the implementation of an experimental research design (pg. 8 – 15). Very specific information is provided with regard to the instructional model and content to be used, the delivery method, and how the delivery will be differentiated to test different delivery modes.

This proposal provides a level of detail that is transparent and replicable. It is aligned systematically from the goals to activities. The design is thorough and complete using a Four Stage Development Plan (pg. 14) that provides opportunities for review and revision, increasing the potential for success.

Weaknesses:

Mitigating factors are identified but need to be addressed proactively rather than reactively. Student and teacher attrition is a big problem for these kinds of projects. Simply having a large participant pool is not a response to attrition. What will you do to prevent or reduce attrition?

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:

A chart (pg. 16) is included that delineates the objectives, key responsibilities and the project timeline as well as a table reflecting the annual performance targets and progress metrics. It is a clear and reasonable plan for accomplishing the goals of the project.

Vita are provided demonstrating that the project staff are very experienced and are experts/leaders in the field, the project director has experience with i3 grants. The quality of the staff would suggest a successful implementation of the project goals.

Letters of support are provided by partners and participating schools suggesting that the project is responsive to the school and community's needs and that all key stakeholders are fully ready to participate (Appendix).

Weaknesses:

Procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement are unclear (p. 19). There is a general plan, but not enough detail to understand how the process will occur. No information was provided on how to insure that parents are informed and support the program. It would seem that parents would be critical stakeholder in this project.

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

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

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

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

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

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the

project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

n/a scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 03:49 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/17/2014 10:01 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	83

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 7: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

none noted

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths:

The applicant addresses Absolute Priority 3 by supporting the development and initial evaluation of an instructional model based on strong theory to improve literacy outcomes for students with disabilities (Abstract). The novel approach that will be utilized is a reading intervention designed specifically for students who are already receiving services as a student with a learning disability in reading. This project hopes to address the problem that little is still known about the intensity and content of instruction that will support reading disabled students in making sufficient progress to catch up to their peers (p. 4) and transition out of restrictive settings. The project will be replicable so the impact can be far reaching. The applicant will disseminate all results.

Weaknesses:

no weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(2) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

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

Strengths:

The project has a clearly developed and comprehensive logic model to support the project's goal of improving literacy instruction for students with disabilities by intervening early with a program specifically designed for students with a learning disability in reading so that they can catch up with peers (Appendix D). The applicant clearly details all of the activities to be undertaken. They provide details regarding the targeted population, the instructional setting to be utilized, and a four stage development plan to be implemented (p. 8 -12). The applicant addresses the potential risks to their success and includes strategies to mitigate. One strategy they have utilized is to partner with large school districts who have been identified as capable of implementing the interventions. They will also hope to address attrition by utilizing Memorandums of Agreement to establish clear communication at the onset of the project (p.15).

Weaknesses:

no weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 30

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 includes a detailed management plan with clearly articulated objectives and activities and the responsible party with timelines and milestones (p. 16-17). The project is further broken down into 5 stages and the performance targets and metrics are detailed to assess progress (p. 17-18). Letters of support are included from the 4 participating colleges and universities and the associated school districts articulating their commitment to the project. Detailed vitas for all personnel involved in the project are included and provide evidence of the necessary skills and qualifications to complete the project. The applicant demonstrates experience with similar type grant programs that they have successfully managed. Details of the process they will utilize for feedback and support are included (p. 19). The process includes the Director having responsibility to monitor the budget and the implementation plan and the Co-Director will assume responsibilities and oversight to the evaluative processes (p. 19).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide details on what specific procedures will be employed to ensure that feedback and continuous monitoring of all of the project activities occurs.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths:

n/a scored by another reviewer

Weaknesses:

n/a scored by another reviewer

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/17/2014 10:01 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/21/2014 08:31 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

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	9
Total	100	9

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 7: 84.411C

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

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

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:

The program goals and outcomes are presented (p. 11). These goals include improved literacy performance which is appropriate for an impact evaluation of this project. The proposal includes a thorough and detailed analysis plan which is appropriate for the evaluation goals (p. 25-26). The evaluation plan employs a randomized control trial and hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) for the statistical analysis. The randomized control trial if conducted properly will strengthen the assessment of program impact. HLM is typically the strongest method for analyzing nested data which this project will have. The sample size is provided and sufficient (p. 25). The measures are described and appropriate for the outcomes selected (p. 24). The proposal also includes a detailed power analysis with the minimum detectable effect size (p.25).

Weaknesses:

Although the program goals and outcomes are provided in the program design section of the proposal, there are no evaluation questions presented throughout the proposal. The proposal also estimates a 10% attrition rate but it is unclear why the attrition rate is expected to be 10 percent (p.23). The proposal would be stronger if the rationale or method for calculating this attrition rate was also provided. Finally, the level of involvement of the internal team in the external evaluation is concerning. The external evaluator is not at all involved in the data collection process. The external evaluator is simply analyzing the data and then providing a report. The internal team is responsible for all data collection (p. 22). It is also important to note that the teachers conducting the intervention will be responsible for entering student data (p. 22). The scale of this project warrants more involvement from the external evaluator to ensure that the evaluation is in fact independent. While the external evaluator selected seems qualified to conduct this evaluation (Appendix D – Curriculum Vitae), their level of involvement in the evaluation is not sufficient.

Reader's Score: 9

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/21/2014 08:31 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/16/2014 01:06 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	0
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	8
Total	100	8

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 7: 84.411C

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: The Ohio State University (U411C140095)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths:

n/a

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:

(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.

Key questions were not included in the evaluation plan but five objectives were identified at the beginning of the proposal in the 'Significance' section. A formative and summative (external) evaluation are proposed which will provide data to inform the process of implementation as well as the outcomes. A logic model that can be used to guide the evaluation is provided supported by relevant literature. A randomized control trial (RCT) is proposed for the external evaluation where 8 eligible students are identified per school (40 schools in year 1, 320 students) and ranked from lowest to highest on pretest scores. The lowest two students are then randomly assigned to either the intervention or comparison group, as well as each remaining pair, creating four block-randomized student pairs (pg.23). This approach is used for year 2 and 3 as well. The evaluation approach is appropriate for the identified objectives.

(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 analysis plan has addressed most of the key areas of concern for example sample size, selection and power calculation, issues of attrition, baseline equivalence for intervention and comparison groups, minimum detectable effect size, and the issue of multiple clusters by addressing the intraclass correlation among teachers (pg. 23-25). Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) is proposed for data analysis which is appropriate since it takes into account the nesting of data within clusters in this case students within teachers (and within schools) and uses pretest scores as covariate. Appropriate outcome measures are proposed such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills which is a standardized test (pg. 24).

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

The key components and outcomes of the project are outlined in the 'Project Design' section of the proposal and the logic model but not in the evaluation plan (pg. 5-6, 9-11). The proposed instructional model consists of 5 lesson elements (fluency instruction, word recognition, letter identification, phonemic awareness, and decoding strategies) to be fulfilled in 3 activities (reading connecting text, writing connected text, and work in isolation) pg.5-6. Implementation is described in 3 stages beginning with stage 1- lesson development, stage 2- natural variation, stage 3- planned variation, and stage 4- replication (pg. 10-13). Thresholds for acceptable implementation are also described.

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

This information is not included in the evaluation plan however the budget narrative includes the cost of the external evaluation (pg. e147) and the curriculum vitae of the external evaluator is provided (pg. e111).

Weaknesses:

Evaluation design: This study has potential confounding factors (one teacher per school for the intervention condition) for the intervention group as acknowledged by the applicant. Even though the applicant has attempted to control for potential differences across teachers through data analyses, this may not be sufficient to account for school differences therefore the measures of effectiveness cannot be attributed solely to the intervention.

More information is needed on the comparison condition. The applicant described only the intervention condition.

Qualitative data analysis: The applicant did not discuss how qualitative data from teachers. lesson records of their instructional changes will be analyzed.

The evaluation section lacked most of the requested information which was scattered in different sections of the proposal making it difficult to assess the quality of the evaluation plan. Examples include key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, key components and outcomes of the project and threshold for acceptable implementation, and information on sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation.

Reader's Score: 8

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