

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Leaders, Inc. (U363A080113)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Overall Comments		
Overall Comments		
1. QUESTION 1	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Evaluation Criteria		
A) Quality of the Project Design (40 Points)		
1. QUESTION 2	40	40
B) Quality of the Project Evaluation (25 Points)		
1. QUESTION 3	25	21
C) Quality of Project Services (20 Points)		
1. QUESTION 4	20	20
D) Quality of Management Plan (15 Points)		
1. QUESTION 5	15	13
E) Competitive Priority (15 Points)		
1. QUESTION 6	15	15
Sub Total	115	109
Total	115	109

Technical Review Form

Panel #15 - Panel 15: 84.363A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: New Leaders, Inc. (U363A080113)

Questions

Overall Comments - Overall Comments

1. Overall Comments: Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - A) Quality of the Project Design (40 Points)

1. A) Quality of the Project Design

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

(a) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(b) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(d) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to , and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

(e) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

Strengths:

The goals and objectives of the project are clearly specified and indicate a comprehensive understanding of what is required to positively impact the target area. The proposed leadership training is grounded in best practices in effective school leadership and school improvement research (pg. 3). The focus of the project - "leadership practices necessary to improve historically low achieving schools" (pg 4), is appropriate to the needs of the target population. The project will employ a rigorous selection process to ensure that high-quality candidates are chosen to participate. Participants will be required to commit to six years in the urban schools which will address the issue of administrator retention in the high needs schools.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 40

Evaluation Criteria - B) Quality of the Project Evaluation (25 Points)

1. B) Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(a) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(b) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

Both short and long term objectives are clearly specified. The proposed evaluation is comprehensive and robust (pg. 11) and incorporates both formative and summative evaluation methods that will yield qualitative and quantitative data. The evaluation strategy builds on existing evaluation systems.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear how separation of data will be achieved. Because the evaluation plan builds on existing strategies, strategies that evaluate existing programs, it is unclear as to how only those factors relating to the funded project will be identified and analyzed.

Reader's Score: 21

Evaluation Criteria - C) Quality of Project Services (20 Points)

1. C) Quality of Project Services

The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment of eligible project participants who are members of groups that have been traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. In addition the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(a) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services.

(b) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(c) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(d) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

Strengths:

The proposed project will offer participants upon completion, the only non-university full principal certification in the state. Proposed project services are focused on the specific needs of principals in low income, low achieving, urban, public schools. Increased contact hours will also address the need for more intense and focused training. Based on the services to be provided it appears that principals, teachers and students will benefit from the project's services.

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 20

Evaluation Criteria - D) Quality of Management Plan (15 Points)**1. D) Quality of Management Plan**

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the design for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(a) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(b) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

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

Strengths:

The roles and responsibilities of proposed project staff and clearly defined. In addition the proposed staff possess a wealth of background experience, which is necessary to adequately manage the project. A plan for monitoring benchmark achievement is in place (pg. 20). The timeline presented in the management plan clear and concise.

Weaknesses:

While the management plan is concisely written, it appears that, because of the project's expansiveness, additional personnel would be necessary to effectively manage the project.

Reader's Score: 13

Evaluation Criteria - E) Competitive Priority (15 Points)**1. E) Competitive Priority**

Applicants can be awarded up to 15 points, depending on how well the application meets this priority.

School Districts with Schools in Need of Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring. Projects that help schools districts implement academic and structural interventions in schools that have been

identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under section 1116 of Title I, part A, of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Strengths:

The proposed project will focus on the needs of the "highest need LEA in the country" (pg. 1). All schools in the Recovery School District have been taken over by the state and under federal regulations to Restructure because they were categorized as failing. In addition a strong focus is placed on schools identified for improvement, corrective action or restructuring (pg. 20).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 15

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Last Updated: 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

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Applicant: New Leaders, Inc. (U363A080113)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Overall Comments		
Overall Comments		
1. QUESTION 1	0	
Sub Total	0	
Evaluation Criteria		
A) Quality of the Project Design (40 Points)		
1. QUESTION 2	40	38
B) Quality of the Project Evaluation (25 Points)		
1. QUESTION 3	25	25
C) Quality of Project Services (20 Points)		
1. QUESTION 4	20	18
D) Quality of Management Plan (15 Points)		
1. QUESTION 5	15	10
E) Competitive Priority (15 Points)		
1. QUESTION 6	15	15
Sub Total	115	106
Total	115	106

Technical Review Form

Panel #15 - Panel 15: 84.363A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: New Leaders, Inc. (U363A080113)

Questions

Overall Comments - Overall Comments

1. Overall Comments: Summary Statement (Optional)

Reader's Score:

Evaluation Criteria - A) Quality of the Project Design (40 Points)

1. A) Quality of the Project Design

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

(a) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(b) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(d) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to , and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

(e) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

Strengths:

There are several strengths found in this section. For example, The Recovery School District is run by the state and consists solely of underachieving public schools in Louisiana. High quality leadership is a critical priority in rebuilding these schools and clearly supported in this proposal. The proposal is aligned to the intent of the grant and seeks to recruit, train, place, and retain principals. The proposal includes a rigorous selection process, and is supported by a strong six-year commitment expectation for the participants. The proposal contains five specific goals with measurable outcomes. Overall, the design of the proposed project is totally appropriate to, and will successfully address the needs of the target population.

Weaknesses:

A concern was noted regarding the extensive goals being obtained within the given time of the project. Another concern was that there were no specific qualifications for the leader coaches.

Reader's Score: 38

Evaluation Criteria - B) Quality of the Project Evaluation (25 Points)

1. B) Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(a) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(b) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

The project evaluation plan is solid, rational, and clearly defined. All goals contain measurable indicators. Formative and summative data will be gathered to measure progress and success of all project objectives. The RAND Corporation is conducting longitudinal analysis of the impact on student achievement related to principal behaviors and skills. There is a far-reaching goal of analyzing school practices and principal actions in schools that are making dramatic achievement gains and adjust that analysis to create a revised framework for the principalship in the district.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Evaluation Criteria - C) Quality of Project Services (20 Points)

1. C) Quality of Project Services

The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment of eligible project participants who are members of groups that have been traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. In addition the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(a) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services.

(b) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(c) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(d) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

Strengths:

The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients is clearly defined. This proposal is specific to the needs of principals in low-income, historically low-achieving urban public schools. The project's focus on carefully selected, well trained principals will have a strong impact on the high needs school in New Orleans. Professional development activities will be led by local and national staff with expertise in training, data analysis, evaluation, and program review. The program model is explicitly rooted in developing the transformative principals who is able to drive dramatic achievement gains in schools characterized by underachievement. A unique aspect of this proposal is that it provides nearly three times the training hours as traditional programs which include a minimum of 500 contact hours during the training, and also includes over eight weeks of national coursework. Increased training requirements for the participants, and mentoring are appropriate, and geared to match the mentee with the appropriate mentor.

Weaknesses:

A concern is noted in that mentor principals will be identified based solely on a recommendation by education leaders in the city. A mentor principal criteria or rubric would assist in identifying high quality, mentor principals.

Reader's Score: 18

Evaluation Criteria - D) Quality of Management Plan (15 Points)**1. D) Quality of Management Plan**

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the design for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(a) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(b) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

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

Strengths:

The management plan of the project will be provided by an expert team of educational professionals, support staff, and consultants. These individuals will come from both the Recovery School District, a state-run high need district consisting solely of underachieving public schools in New Orleans, and New Leaders for New Schools, a nonprofit organization nationally recognized for recruiting, selecting, training, and supporting leaders in urban public schools. This is a strong partnership and will provide expert guidance in all areas of the management plan. Clear procedures are in place to respond if results are not aligned to the goals. Various benchmarks will be monitored on a bi-weekly basis to ensure timely feedback. Timelines are subject to change based on evaluation findings, so the project itself is open and flexible and will be able to respond appropriately to feedback.

Weaknesses:

Timelines indicate a start date of September 2007; confusing and unclear as to the actual start date of the program of if the program is already underway.

Reader's Score: 10

Evaluation Criteria - E) Competitive Priority (15 Points)

1. E) Competitive Priority

Applicants can be awarded up to 15 points, depending on how well the application meets this priority.

School Districts with Schools in Need of Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring. Projects that help schools districts implement academic and structural interventions in schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under section 1116 of Title I, part A, of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Strengths:

Goal 3-G is to place 90% to 100% of the participants in schools identified as in need of improvement, corrective action, and/or restructuring.

Weaknesses:

No weakness are noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Leaders, Inc. (U363A080113)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Overall Comments		
Overall Comments		
1. QUESTION 1	0	
Sub Total	0	
Evaluation Criteria		
A) Quality of the Project Design (40 Points)		
1. QUESTION 2	40	35
B) Quality of the Project Evaluation (25 Points)		
1. QUESTION 3	25	21
C) Quality of Project Services (20 Points)		
1. QUESTION 4	20	16
D) Quality of Management Plan (15 Points)		
1. QUESTION 5	15	12
E) Competitive Priority (15 Points)		
1. QUESTION 6	15	15
Sub Total	115	99
Total	115	99

Technical Review Form

Panel #15 - Panel 15: 84.363A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: New Leaders, Inc. (U363A080113)

Questions

Overall Comments - Overall Comments

1. Overall Comments: Summary Statement (Optional)

Reader's Score:

Evaluation Criteria - A) Quality of the Project Design (40 Points)

1. A) Quality of the Project Design

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

(a) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(b) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(d) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to , and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

(e) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

Strengths:

The goals and objectives have been developed to meet the identified needs as described in the proposal. Major goal components in the proposal are recruitment, retention, preparation and development of leader, which are addressed within the project. Additionally, the proposal identifies the need to increase student achievement, matching project participants in targeted positions, providing coaching support to principals, and transforming the principal leadership district-wide as identified areas for improvement through goal development for the project. The proposal is a comprehensive effort to dramatically improve the district by recruiting and training effective leaders; match personal with targeted/identified needs.

Current research can be found embedded through the proposal that has helped to facilitate the development of the project's goals and objectives. The RAND corporation is an integral partner with the external evaluation.

A five-year plan details the desired performance competencies to be achieved by all participants upon the completion of the process. These proposed goals are aligned with school practices and principal actions specific to school stages of development. These stages align the core elements of instruction, culture, and operations. These stages are also built on

consistency of practicing leaders. Each stage is designed to focus on five specific school practices and principal actions as listed within the proposal.

Within this five-year plan, a principal leadership development plan was created. Beginning with a residency and mentorship designed to provide a desired pathway/roadmap to success and to acquire the necessary skills and abilities deemed necessary for effective leadership, the plan also provides for summer foundations and certifications. Provisions are also made for ongoing support beyond the beginning years to assist with the transformation of the principalship

Weaknesses:

Although there are five extensive and focused goals, it appears very ambitious within the specified time frame of the project. (Page 2-3) The basic goal of recruitment, retention, and professional development focuses the identified need of the proposal. With the additional four goals and objectives, the focus is narrowed on each component.

The qualifications and/or requirements are not specified for the key position of leadership coach. (Page 6)

Reader's Score: 35

Evaluation Criteria - B) Quality of the Project Evaluation (25 Points)

1. B) Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(a) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(b) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

This project focuses on a comprehensive evaluation strategy that partners with the school district and builds on two premises, (1) formative data is used to inform adjustments to the program, and (2) summative evaluation of the progress made on the project's desired outcomes.

The RAND corporation is doing a longitudinal statistical analysis of the New Leaders impact on student achievement. (Page 11) The assessment will determine short and long-range successes; identify factors that hinder success, and identify characteristics of effectiveness. Specific benchmark levels of success have been established. (Page 14-15) Evaluation teams will assess the project's goals and outcomes.

There is a two-prong analysis of data from the internal school level and external evaluation. A partnership has been established to obtain all objective data and relevant data needed to assess the effectiveness of the proposal to then establish a process for monitoring, providing ongoing feedback, and sharing knowledge.

Predetermined outcomes are linked to each project goal. Specific targeted performance objectives have been developed and are associated with the basic five goals of the proposal.

Weaknesses:

No specifics of how this information is shared with the stakeholders and utilized to improve leadership effectiveness. (Page 15) Measuring first year participants' effectiveness utilizing student achievement as baseline data will help to set

new levels of desired outcomes.

The evaluation team is essential to maintain and improve each component of the project. The project lacks the requirements for selection of the essential assessment/ evaluation team members. (Page 15)

Reader's Score: 21

Evaluation Criteria - C) Quality of Project Services (20 Points)

1. C) Quality of Project Services

The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment of eligible project participants who are members of groups that have been traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. In addition the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(a) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services.

(b) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(c) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(d) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

Strengths:

One basic premise of the New Leaders project is that it focuses carefully selected well-trained principals and their impact on student achievement. The program is an intense program providing five weeks of training seminars in the summer for participants. The established partnership provides schools with a leadership program that has been developed with thousands of hours of research and development into each step of the project.

The program model explicitly rooted in developing the transformative principal. There are also 500 contact hours that take place in five week and a three and one half week professional development sessions for participants. Participant ratio to instructors is 10:1. This is a citywide effort to utilize the 45 principals and 170 teacher- leaders to lead the school system to AYP for the failing schools.

A unique principal certification has been developed as part of this proposal working together with the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to allow for the direct recommendations of candidates for full principal certification upon the completion of the program.

Weaknesses:

The criteria for the well-trained and carefully selected principals does not appear within the proposal. (Page 16) As an essential component of the proposal, a delineation of the requirements for selected principals and the definition of 'well-trained?' should be defined clearly and concisely to help further to comprehend the direction of the proposal.

The description of the 'charter-like?' schools is not concisely defined. Principals of these schools were given a great degree of independence receiving this authority for 'charter-like?' schools. (Page 16) The specifics of independence were not clearly and concisely presented.

Reader's Score: 16

Evaluation Criteria - D) Quality of Management Plan (15 Points)

1. D) Quality of Management Plan

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the design for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(a) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(b) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

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

Strengths:

The project will be managed by an expert team of educational professionals including support staff, full-time and part-time consultants, and Recovery School District. This team will oversee the integrated team of district and NLNS personnel.

New Leaders for New School Leadership will help to oversee the project along with the NLNS Executive director. Specific personnel and their responsibilities are included within the proposal.

There is a principal investigator that will direct efforts to evaluate the New Orleans project's ability to place and retain new principals. The evaluation team will be using both qualitative and quantitative data for analysis of the programmatic goals to provide accountability and performance information through a variety of styles of meetings.

The proposal describes in a timeline each activity and date for accomplishing each component on the timeline.

Weaknesses:

One specific office or person is responsible for the management of the project's performance, student achievement, recruitment, placement, quality of the candidates, and operational excellence. (Page 15) This is an extensive project covering many aspects of leadership incurring a large amount of time to be dedicated to promoting the success of the proposal.

No method is defined within the project for implementing a change in the project if a particular component fails to yield the desired responses.

Reader's Score: 12

Evaluation Criteria - E) Competitive Priority (15 Points)

1. E) Competitive Priority

Applicants can be awarded up to 15 points, depending on how well the application meets this priority.

School Districts with Schools in Need of Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring. Projects that help schools districts implement academic and structural interventions in schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under section 1116 of Title I, part A, of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Strengths:

This project does address the restructuring of the schools and school district. The proposal allows for a very short-term rebuilding of the educational system within the needy areas of the districts. The competitive requirements are met.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 15

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

