

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/19/2010 12:20 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California League of Middle Schools -- n/a,n/a (U363A100116)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. N/A	45	44
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. N/A	25	23
Significance		
1. N/A	20	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. N/A	10	9
Sub Total	100	96
Total	100	96

Technical Review Form

Panel #12 - SLP Review Panel - 12: 84.363A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: California League of Middle Schools -- n/a,n/a (U363A100116)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project consists of a comprehensive plan that includes a description of-**
 - 1. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.**
 - 2. The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field.**
 - 3. The extent to which the proposed project is apart of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.**
 - 4. The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.**
 - 5. The extent to which project participants are to be selected on the basis of academic excellence.**

Strengths:

STRENGTHS:

1. The California League of Middle Schools has the capacity to successfully implement this project; the League has experience with similar projects and is a large affiliate of the National Middle School Association.
2. The proposal justifies the need for funding with demographic information and a description of the social context of the community, including persistent drug and gang activity. The proposal also describes community resiliency, which means the funding will not be "lost" in such a context.
3. The project is based on the nationally developed and respected Schools to Watch framework.
4. The Project Director is already involved in another arm of the Schools that Work initiative. This will provide a focus of initiatives.
5. The district Associate Superintendent of Middle Schools and High Schools will attend the training, thus gaining first-hand awareness of what principals are learning. This will enhance district support.
6. Principals will gain skills that enable them to be instructional leaders as a result of training that is typically targeted for teachers, not administrators (i.e., content area literacy, differentiated instruction, etc. p. 16).
7. Teacher buy-in will be enhanced as they are trained to do classroom walk-throughs and to develop collaborative professional communities. They will also be included in identifying school-wide strengths and weaknesses.
8. The district will require administrators to collect and use student achievement data to gauge their effectiveness as leaders. It is a district expectation--not an option.

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES:

1. Some goal outcomes are actually activities, not outcomes. For example, the outcome listed on p. 11: "At least 28 principals will receive 2 years of training in management and instructional leadership." The outcome would be the results of such training. An example of an outcome is on p. 12: "Principals will share a common language of school

improvement."

Reader's Score: 44

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers-

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

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

Strengths:

STRENGTHS:

1. The evaluation includes a balance of quantitative and qualitative measures.
2. A quasi-experimental design will be used for part of the evaluation.
3. The evaluation is based on a well-defined logic model.
4. The outcomes are measurable with criteria specified.
5. The evaluation includes feedback from parents, students, and staff.
6. The value-added analysis of student growth will allow for isolation of effects of the program on student achievement.

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES:

1. The evaluation states it will use a control group of principals who are qualified to participate but who are not in the program. The proposal implies that all principals in the district will participate. This appears to be conflicting information as to whether or not participation is required.
2. There is no indication of how qualitative data be analyzed (interviews, focus groups, observations). A specific protocol is not identified (i.e., Spradley's domain analysis, constant comparative analysis, etc.).
3. On p. 8 it is stated that the evaluator will report to the management team once a semester. On p. 9 it states the evaluator will meet with the management team at least 3 times per year. This is conflicting information.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors-

1. The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

2. The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

3. The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Strengths:

STRENGTHS:

1. The proposal focuses on systemic change.
2. The project will result in the development of a high school improvement model than can be replicated in other settings.
3. The project is the "newest targeted initiative" (p. 1) in an already established highly respected program--Schools That Work.
4. Since the California Department of Education has been involved in Schools That Work, it will be an advocate for the program.
5. The project has the potential to add to the knowledge base on turning around low-performing middle and high schools.

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

1. **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.**
2. **How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.**
3. **The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

STRENGTHS:

1. Parents and students will be surveyed regarding "confidence in school leadership."
2. The California League of Middle Schools is well-situated to lead this project with experience, expertise, and respect from the field.
3. Identified personnel have experience with large-scale projects.
4. The detailed timeline, listing persons responsible for activities, will enable an efficient implementation.
5. The Management Team represents diverse perspectives (p. 6--law enforcement, city government, parents, students, healthcare, etc.).

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES:

1. The evaluator should be part of the team budgeted to attend the yearly US DOE meetings.

Reader's Score: 9

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California League of Middle Schools -- n/a,n/a (U363A100116)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. N/A	45	41
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. N/A	25	21
Significance		
1. N/A	20	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. N/A	10	9
Sub Total	100	91
Total	100	91

Technical Review Form

Panel #12 - SLP Review Panel - 12: 84.363A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: California League of Middle Schools -- n/a,n/a (U363A100116)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project consists of a comprehensive plan that includes a description of-

1. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

2. The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field.

3. The extent to which the proposed project is apart of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

4. The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

5. The extent to which project participants are to be selected on the basis of academic excellence.

Strengths:

Strengths:

Proposed project reflects a 5-year partnership between the California League of Middle Schools and Compton Unified School District with focus on improving secondary student achievement as discussed on (page 1 and 3-10).

Background district information on schools and school achievement are adequately identified evidenced on (Pages 1-7)

Proposed activities to be carried out in the training of new principals and/or vice principals have been adequately addressed (pages 11 and page 15-20).

Principals involved in the training demonstrates buy-in

Principals are expected to measure student achievement.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

Proposed projects lacks a coherent, sustained program of training in the field for aspiring principals and/or vice principals.

Reader's Score: 41

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers-

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

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

Strengths:

Strengths:

Contracting with the Educational Resource Consultants (ERC) will aid in setting up a well defined system of evaluation using a logic model approach, producing qualitative and quantitative data to show results, referenced on (Page 1)

The experimental design is seen as strength

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

Vague in connecting the use of reported data usage indicating how progress is being made towards intended outcomes.

Reader's Score: 21

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors-

1. The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

2. The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

3. The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Strengths:

Strengths:

Building on efforts undertaken thus far helps to increase knowledge and develop effective strategies to obtain ultimate goals (page 1).

With assistance from a highly motivated Associate Superintendent the proposed project would move towards a system change aligning them with proposed project intended outcomes. (Page 2-4).

Building on past experience, project demonstrates the ability to improve in teaching and student achievement.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:
None Found

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

- 1. 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.**
- 2. How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.**
- 3. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

Strengths:

Management plan is built on a strong base with clearly identified individuals involved including clearly defined responsibilities, (pages 1-3).

The proposed project includes a diversity of perspective representation, list involvement of parents, teachers, students and the business community,(page 6).

The system of feedback offering suggestions for improvement is well-defined on page 7.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

Evaluator should be part of the team.

Reader's Score: 9

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California League of Middle Schools -- n/a,n/a (U363A100116)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. N/A	45	42
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. N/A	25	25
Significance		
1. N/A	20	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. N/A	10	10
Sub Total	100	97
Total	100	97

Technical Review Form

Panel #12 - SLP Review Panel - 12: 84.363A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: California League of Middle Schools -- n/a,n/a (U363A100116)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project consists of a comprehensive plan that includes a description of-**
 - 1. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.**
 - 2. The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field.**
 - 3. The extent to which the proposed project is apart of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.**
 - 4. The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.**
 - 5. The extent to which project participants are to be selected on the basis of academic excellence.**

Strengths:

Strengths: 1. The framework for the proposed project is grounded in a well-respected body of work conducted by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform (pp 6-8). In addition, the California League of Middle Schools (CLMS), that will partner with the school district to implement this project, has been involved in efforts in the State to translate the Forum's work into an operational program (pp.8-10). 2. Emerging data indicate that the proposed project design has potential to improve performance in persistently low-performing schools. 3. Some thoughtful modifications will be made to tweak the project design for high schools, e.g., the high school leadership team will include department heads as well as principals and assistant principals. 4. The project also will incorporate best practices for professional development.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses: 1. There is a brief reference to the California League of High schools (p. 1), but it is not clear that the applicant has consulted with such organizations to thoroughly consider the differences between middle and high school culture and practice and to ensure the design meets the needs of high school leaders. 2. There is no selection process for project participants since all school leaders at the middle and high levels will participate (p. 21). However, it would have been helpful to survey participants to gain insight about their receptiveness to the project.

Reader's Score: 42

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers-**

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

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

Strengths:

Strengths: 1. The performance objectives and measures are aligned with the project goals and the evaluation methodology is sound. 2. An external evaluation organization has been identified that specializes in professional development and school improvement evaluation. 3. Clearly defined reporting requirements and timelines are specified for qualitative and quantitative evaluation feedback. 4. On a less formal level, feedback and improvement strategies on a peer-to-peer basis among school leaders is structured into project activities.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors-

1. The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

2. The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

3. The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

Strengths:

Strengths: 1. The project will expand upon prior work in the state and district in clearly defined ways, thus offering opportunities for new knowledge and insights. 2. The school district is an active and avid partner and has committed resources and a supportive environment for implementation. 3. The project is being implemented in persistently low-performing schools and has the potential to have a significant impact on teaching and learning.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

1. 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.
2. How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.
3. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

Strengths: 1. Responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks are clearly defined. 2. A broadly constituted management advisory committee will receive information on project implementation and provide input based on the various perspectives represented. 3. The self-study and rating rubric, peer network meetings, surveys and focus groups are impressive strategies to ensure systematic feedback and improvement.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted
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