

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/18/10 3:27 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Delta Health Alliance, Inc. -- , (U215P100281)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1.Need for Project	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1.Project Design	20	20
Quality of Project Services		
1.Project Services	15	13
Quality of Project Personnel		
1.Project Personnel	25	23
Quality of the Management Plan		
1.Management Plan	20	18
Significance		
1.Significance	10	10
	Sub Total	94
	Total	94

Technical Review Form

Panel #21 - Panel - 21: 84.215P

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Delta Health Alliance, Inc. -- , (U215P100281)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers-
 - i) The magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators;
 - ii) The extent to which the geographically defined area has been described; and
 - iii) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities will be identified and addressed by the proposed project.

Strengths:

The Delta Promise Neighborhood seeks to develop a continuum of services to help improve the appalling circumstances in one of the poorest counties in the U.S. DHA describes conditions of the larger geographic Delta area and the smaller Sunflower County within that area. The needs are extensive. The school system, Indianola Public School District, in Indianola, the seat of Sunflower County and the city are targeted to pilot a Promises Neighborhood Program. The Indianola School District is under Conservatorship of the State of MS for persistent failure to perform at or above State standards. Approximately one quarter of Indianola families live in poverty (p.4). Health services are severely limited, obesity and its attendant diabetes percentages are high and there is a high percent of sexually transmitted diseases. In 2008, teens delivered 28% of the babies born in Sunflower County. The need for a continuum of solutions to help break the poverty cycle is strongly documented.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i) The extent to which the applicant describes how it will plan to build a continuum of solutions designed to significantly improve the academic and family and community support indicators in this notice;
 - ii) The extent to which the continuum of solutions includes a strategy, or a plan to develop a strategy, that will lead to significant improvements in one or more schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - iii) The extent to which the applicant describes strategies for using data to manage program implementation, inform decision-making, engage stakeholders, and measure success;
 - iv) The extent to which the applicant identifies and describes academic and family and community support indicators to be used for the needs assessment during the planning year;
 - v) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a commitment to work with the Department and with a national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national

evaluation of the Promise Neighborhoods Program during the implementation phase and of specific solutions and strategies pursued by individual grantees; and

vi) The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources.

Strengths:

The Delta Health Alliance plans to work with the Delta Promise Neighborhood Project Steering committee and Promise Neighborhood Partners to conduct a comprehensive planning process to build the Continuum of Care. (p.10). The possible and probable partners include the Indianola Public School District, the Mississippi Center for Educational Innovation, the University's Extension Program, MS Delta Early Learning Initiative, the Children's Defense Fund, Retired Education Personnel of Sunflower County, the Delta Workforce Investment Area Board, the Delta Council, several local colleges, the City of Indianola, Parents for Public School, and several healthcare service programs under the auspices of DHA. The Project strategy includes incorporating the Transformation Intervention Model currently used to help improve the IPSD. Project decision-making to guide planning activities will be data driven (p.24) based on data stored in the planned integrated management information system. A research group will be hired to design the needs assessment using input from project sources. The design also includes working with the State Education Department and National Evaluator also to assure that the data support the goals of each Department. The design considers processes for coordinating and cooperating with other organizations and exploring ways of leveraging other funding sources. (p.28)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers:
 - i) The extent to which the applicant describes proposed solutions to be provided by the proposed project that are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence;
 - ii) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards; and
 - iii) The extent to which the applicant explains how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis will be used to determine that children with the highest needs receive appropriate services to meet academic and developmental outcomes.

Strengths:

Existing services that are addressing community needs will be integrated into the continuum of planned services. Planned services are focused around currently identified needs and gaps, and those gaps that will be identified from the analysis of data from the needs assessment and segmentation analysis activities.

Weaknesses:

Two considerations arise as possible weaknesses to planning the services. First, the need documents significant existing gaps in the qualifications of personnel and resource capacity to deliver needed services. The plan addresses programs to increase capacity and expand services. However, it is noted that the underlying capacity limits will constrain the ability to deliver the services required to satisfy the needs. For example, the need for a local pediatrician is identified. However, the ability to recruit a pediatrician or develop services to substitute for a local pediatrician will take time; the interim

service gap is not addressed in the narrative. Another consideration of possible weakness is that the services yet to be identified through needs assessment cannot be assessed at this time. The planned services appear to be weighted toward young children, the narrative would be stronger if it included an expanded discussion of services for youth.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the project personnel who will carry out the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the project personnel, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the applicant, including the project director, and the prior performance of the applicant on efforts similar or related to the proposed Promise Neighborhood.
- c) Relevant experience includes the applicant's experience in and lessons learned by:
 - i) Working with the school or schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - ii) Serving the neighborhood and its residents;
 - iii) Collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making and ongoing improvement;
 - iv) Creating formal and informal relationships, and generating community support to achieve results; and
 - v) Securing and integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources.

Strengths:

Personnel for four of the five roles planned to work the project demonstrate high levels of expertise as well as significant experience relevant to the work they will perform. The position of Community Organizer is defined and the ideal candidate is described (p. 32) however this individual is not on staff yet.

Weaknesses:

The position for a Community Organizer is described. However, because that individual is not on staff no resume is included. The quality of personnel would be stronger if all key project personnel were included in the narrative.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the management plan of the proposed project, the Secretary considers--
 - i) 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;
 - ii) The extent to which the memorandum of understanding described in paragraph 5 of Absolute Priority 1 describes each partner's financial and programmatic commitment; how each partner's existing vision, theory of action, and theory of change, and existing activities align with those of the proposed Promise Neighborhood; and the governance structure of the proposed Promise Neighborhood;
 - iii) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of families, school staff, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate; and
 - iv) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to sustain and scale up the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

Strengths:

The management plan presents a timeline with project milestones mapped against quarters for the first, planning year and projected for the second implementation year. Dr Fox, who is the Executive Director of the Delta Health Alliance will serve .50 as the Principal Investigator. In that role she will maintain overall project responsibility, including budget oversight and accomplishment of project objectives within specified time periods. Dr Fox will also supervise all project staff and execute contracts and MOUs.(p. 34) The Project Director will be based in Indianola project headquarters and carry out daily activities.

Weaknesses:

The project milestones identified in the timeline are categorized as Admin, Early Childhood and Evaluation. The plan to plan would be stronger if it also included planning milestones for other segments of the target population. For example, the transition from high school to college or career is not included in the management plan.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Significance

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.
- b) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers
 - i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in long-term systems change or improvement;
 - ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population;
 - iii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies; and
 - iv) The potential to sustain and apply the model of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation of the model in a variety of settings.

Strengths:

The vision is that the city and school district of Indianola will be an incubator and pilot for the Delta Neighborhood Programs, and the Delta Health Alliance will build on that success and expand the program to other similar communities in the Mississippi Delta. The Delta Health Alliance plans to take an active role in Delta Promise Neighborhood operations for an expected ten year minimum, training Indianola residents to take an increasingly active role in self-management of their own concerns.(p.-37) DHA will work with the City of Indianola to identify multiple funding sources. External partners are expected to include federal grants, MS Dept. of Education and Health, the MS Center for Education Innovation and foundations including Entergy, Kellogg and Robert Wood Johnson.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/25/10 2:51 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Delta Health Alliance, Inc. -- , (U215P100281)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1.Need for Project	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1.Project Design	20	20
Quality of Project Services		
1.Project Services	15	13
Quality of Project Personnel		
1.Project Personnel	25	24
Quality of the Management Plan		
1.Management Plan	20	19
Significance		
1.Significance	10	10
	Sub Total	96
	Total	96

Technical Review Form

Panel #21 - Panel - 21: 84.215P

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Delta Health Alliance, Inc. -- , (U215P100281)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. a) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers-
 - i) The magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators;
 - ii) The extent to which the geographically defined area has been described; and
 - iii) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities will be identified and addressed by the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant describes the geographic area as a rural community called Indianola, MC with a population of 12,066 in Sunflower County located in the heart of the Mississippi Delta. Mississippi is among the poorest states in the USA and their county is listed as one of the poorest rural counties, five of the top 20 are in the MS Delta including Sunflower County. The applicant states only 65% of the adults completed their high school diploma or GED.

The Delta Health Alliance serves 18 distressed counties in Mississippi and they administer over \$35 million in grants and contracts with the support of over 20 different agencies that serve Delta. Page 3. Delta Health Alliance, Inc. partners with MS Center for Educational Innovation, Indianola Public School District, and the city of Indianola, Mississippi State University, South Sunflower County Hospital, the Children's Defense Fund Southern Region and the Retired Education Personnel of Sunflower County.

The applicant provides a chart on page 3 that includes Sunflower County data compared to MS State data. This chart includes eight indicators such as graduation rates to Poverty rates. The applicant discusses gaps or weaknesses in services to include the significant shortage of primary care providers only further exacerbates the problem of inadequate access to care for our unhealthy population. Page 6

The applicant talks about nine (9) focus groups that were assembled to assist in clearly establishing the magnitude of gaps and weaknesses present in Indianola. Page 8.

The applicant is specific in describing eight (8) significant gaps and services. Some include a lack of after-school academic and recreational programs targeting adolescents, lack of public transportation services and more teen pregnancy services.

Weaknesses:

There were no identified weaknesses.

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i) The extent to which the applicant describes how it will plan to build a continuum of solutions designed to significantly improve the academic and family and community support indicators in this notice;
 - ii) The extent to which the continuum of solutions includes a strategy, or a plan to develop a strategy, that will lead to significant improvements in one or more schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - iii) The extent to which the applicant describes strategies for using data to manage program implementation, inform decision-making, engage stakeholders, and measure success;
 - iv) The extent to which the applicant identifies and describes academic and family and community support indicators to be used for the needs assessment during the planning year;
 - v) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a commitment to work with the Department and with a national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national evaluation of the Promise Neighborhoods Program during the implementation phase and of specific solutions and strategies pursued by individual grantees; and
 - vi) The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources.

Strengths:

The applicant states they will conduct a comprehensive planning process to build the Continuum of Care by harnessing collective expertise, networks, programs and resources in addition to other specific approaches. Page 10.

The applicant provides a graphic illustration of the Delta Promise Neighborhood Pipeline of Programs. This illustration begins with expecting families and goes through adulthood. (Page 11).

The applicant specifically describes their approach in addressing required academic and community and family support indicators. The applicant includes several specific strategies that include Indianola Public School District and another with the Mississippi Center for Educational Innovation. Page 12.

The applicant talks further about the required family and community support indicators. Building of a community playground is one effort the community would undertake. The applicant maps out a quality workforce development services in collaboration with the Delta Workforce Investment Area Board. (pg 14-15)

The applicant includes specifics on health care services that cover both health and health care. This includes increased access to primary care, dental care, and access for healthy babies. (pg 18)

The applicant also talks about a unique but necessary Special Needs Assessment which they state will focus on the needs of the disabled to include a wide range of situations from physical to mental. (pg 20-21)

The applicant also addresses required federal, state and local coordination and on evaluation. They talk about leveraging other federal funding. (27-28)

Weaknesses:

There are no identified weaknesses for the applicant in this area. The applicant addressed all listed requirements. Page 33 and 34.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.
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 - i) The extent to which the applicant describes proposed solutions to be provided by the proposed project that are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence;
 - ii) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards; and
 - iii) The extent to which the applicant explains how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis will be used to determine that children with the highest needs receive appropriate services to meet academic and developmental outcomes.

Strengths:

The applicant talks about some specific school readiness programs to help prepare children prepare for kindergarten. The school would be called the Delta Promise School and it would take place in the summer. (Pg 29)

The applicant talks about specific programs and services such as dental care, healthy babies, primary care, parenting support, child and adolescent well being, teenage pregnancy, parent-child relationships and obesity. These are all listed on page 19 and 20.

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that the required Program Services Section is described in the previous Project Design Section. The applicant appears to have difficulty in distinguishing what is required in each project services vs. project design. It makes the organizational structure of this section disorganized.

Programs and Services are discussed in significant detail but the applicant displays insignificant information on best available practices which can provide strong and moderate evidence.

An additional identified weakness is the applicant's lack of discussion around using segmentation analysis to identify the students with the highest needs receive specific services to meet both academic and developmental outcomes.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the quality of the project personnel who will carry out the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the project personnel, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the applicant, including the project director, and the prior performance of the applicant on efforts similar or

related to the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

- c) Relevant experience includes the applicant's experience in and lessons learned by
- i) Working with the school or schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - ii) Serving the neighborhood and its residents;
 - iii) Collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making and ongoing improvement;
 - iv) Creating formal and informal relationships, and generating community support to achieve results; and
 - v) Securing and integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources.

Strengths:

The applicant includes clear and well prepared resumes to support specific project personnel. These are specifically included in Appendix B.

The applicant talks about the individual at Delta Health Alliance who will head up this effort if it were to be awarded. Dr. Karen Fox is the head of Delta Health Alliance and in the past four (4) years they note that she has expanded DHA from one grant to more than 20 partnerships partnering on a dozen projects. Page 30. The applicant discusses further the four (4) key staff and highlights some specific duties and achievements. Page 31.

The applicant specifically discusses the preparedness of Delta Health Alliance to both administer and implement this new federal initiative. The applicant discusses large projects administered by the organization to local community projects. Both Relevant experience and lessons learned are included on pages 32 and 33.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide a high level of specificity on securing and integrating funding streams. While it is mentioned briefly, it needed to be a considerably stronger response with specifics. Page 32 and 33.

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the management plan of the proposed project, the Secretary considers--
 - i) 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;
 - ii) The extent to which the memorandum of understanding described in paragraph 5 of Absolute Priority 1 describes each partner's financial and programmatic commitment; how each partner's existing vision, theory of action, and theory of change, and existing activities align with those of the proposed Promise Neighborhood; and the governance structure of the proposed Promise Neighborhood;
 - iii) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of families, school staff, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate; and
 - iv) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to sustain and scale up the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

Strengths:

The applicant has proposed a very solid management plan. This includes early childhood, evaluation and administration indicators and uses measures to include planning and implementation. (pgs 34-35) The applicant includes the proposed Governance Structure of the Delta Promise Community which was formed in the fall of 2009. This includes the Indianola Advisory Board.

The applicant specifically talks about the requirement of engaging a diversity of perspectives in this project. The applicant provides about a dozen specific details to include soliciting input from those with varying income levels. Anonymous input will also be sought. Page 36.

The applicant includes considerable details on sustainability and they discuss everything from local and state resources to foundations such as Kellogg and Robert Wood Johnson. Page 34-36. Appendix C includes the MOU as is required.

Weaknesses:

An identified weakness is the lack of specificity on the applicants plan to achieve the objectives within budget and on time. Pgs 33-34

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Significance

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.
- b) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers
 - i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in long-term systems change or improvement;
 - ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population;
 - iii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies; and
 - iv) The potential to sustain and apply the model of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation of the model in a variety of settings.

Strengths:

The applicant proposes very practical services and programs which may very well improve the overall continuum of services and result in favorable short and/or long term change. Pages 37-38.

The applicant appears to have taken this project on with a vigor that conveys they are genuinely vested in making this project work for this community. The applicant talks about their commitment to also include on-site monitoring of the Harlem Children Zone in New York. Pages 38-39.

The applicant discusses improving local capacity for purposes of improving the delivery of services. The applicant talks about sub-grants to offering training and technical assistance. Page 39.

The applicant (Delta Health Alliance) specifically talks about why they chose Indianola based on demographics that are common across different jurisdictions within the geographic service delivery of Delta Health Alliance, Inc. The applicant appears to be vested in the larger area and not in just replicating a model they created.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/25/10 2:51 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/23/10 7:37 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Delta Health Alliance, Inc. -- , (U215P100281)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1.Need for Project	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1.Project Design	20	20
Quality of Project Services		
1.Project Services	15	13
Quality of Project Personnel		
1.Project Personnel	25	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1.Management Plan	20	20
Significance		
1.Significance	10	10
	Sub Total	93
	Total	93

Technical Review Form

Panel #21 - Panel - 21: 84.215P

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Delta Health Alliance, Inc. -- , (U215P100281)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. a) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers-
 - i) The magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators;
 - ii) The extent to which the geographically defined area has been described; and
 - iii) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities will be identified and addressed by the proposed project.

Strengths:

There is a herculean amount of need in this region of the country as described in this section. The high levels of poverty (37.2% Sunflower, 27% Indianola), crime, sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancy (28% of births), free/ reduced lunch program accessibility (92%), all in combination with a chronically failing, currently state controlled school system, create an incredibly dismal picture (p. 3-6). The test scores of the schools are universally dismal, and the composite average percentage of below proficiency test takers is over 60% of the student bodies (p.7-8). The rural nature of the area is very well described and the true lack of any semblance of connection to major cities, areas of modernity is noted as well. The gaps in services, infrastructure, and opportunities are unbelievable as well. There is a paucity of daycare providers in the area, the ONLY after-school or recreational program is remedial at that, there is no public transit, noted segregation (73% black, 26% white), limited parental involvement, NO pediatricians at all (Sunflower County is a Health Professional Shortage Area and Medically Underserved Area according to the Health Resources & Services Administration), lack of mental health providers, and a general cultural acceptance for unwed teenage mothers (p.9). The collective impact of these statistics paints a very vivid picture of need within Indianola and Sunflower County.

Weaknesses:

Only addresses how the substantial gaps in services will be addressed by the proposed program.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
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 - iii) The extent to which the applicant describes strategies for using data to manage program implementation, inform decision-making, engage stakeholders, and measure success;

- iv) The extent to which the applicant identifies and describes academic and family and community support indicators to be used for the needs assessment during the planning year;
- v) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a commitment to work with the Department and with a national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national evaluation of the Promise Neighborhoods Program during the implementation phase and of specific solutions and strategies pursued by individual grantees; and
- vi) The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources.

Strengths:

The project design is very strong. From Figure 1 (p. 11) it is easy to see the general pipeline framework that is to be utilized to create and sustain additional, high quality capacity for program interventions. The various components of the program design (Educational, Health, Economic, etc.) are all planned and partnered with agencies and providers who are already working within the community and who are focused on the final goals of the DPN program (p. 12-20). Programs that are presented for educational interventions, arguably the centerpiece of interventions in Indianola due to the gap in services, are all research/evidence based, and are planned in concert with the IPSD Superintendent and Conservator who is currently implementing the state mandated Conservatorship and transformational model. On pages 23-4, there is a very well developed plan for teacher recruitment, retention, advancement, and bonus/incentive structuring, with the goal of improving overall educational services and increasing the dismal test scores. The data integration will be initially designed by a contracted MIS provider, with the intent of creating a longitudinal system for data integration amongst all the PNP co-opted for the DPN grant. Additionally, the lead agency on the application, Delta Health Alliance, maintains both in-house MIS practitioners as well as a retainer with Mathematica, Inc. where higher, PhD, level services can be accessed. The applicant expresses a desire to work with the national evaluator. The applicant's long history working to improve services in the Delta area's most rural counties creates for them a significant ability to leverage multiple other providers, ranging from public (community, state, or Federal) to private foundations and service organizations.

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

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 - i) The extent to which the applicant describes proposed solutions to be provided by the proposed project that are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence;
 - ii) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards; and
 - iii) The extent to which the applicant explains how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis will be used to determine that children with the highest needs receive appropriate services to meet academic and developmental outcomes.

Strengths:

The quality of project design section covered a large portion of the program specific spectrum of the application. The educational solutions provided in this application coincide with the transformation strategies already being planned by IPSD. The supplemental support that the DPN program will be able to provide will increase the likelihood of improvements in academic areas, as measured against rigorous standards. Data/assessment will be utilized so as to promote/provide for better instructional

decisions. The Delta Promise School, for example, will also provide additional basic language skills to disadvantaged students. The section also inputs plans for needs assessments and segmentation analyses to help develop better methods to prioritize services to those children who most need the programming within the target population.

Weaknesses:

Although there is a significant discussion about program services in the program design section, there should be more here. There is a insignificant mention of the needs/ segmentation analysis, but there should be more in depth discussion. The extensive data integration and focus on program development and sustainability is strong, but it would be helpful if there was additional information about how well they would be aimed at the target population specifically.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the project personnel who will carry out the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the project personnel, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the applicant, including the project director, and the prior performance of the applicant on efforts similar or related to the proposed Promise Neighborhood.
- c) Relevant experience includes the applicant's experience in and lessons learned by
 - i) Working with the school or schools described in paragraph 2 of Absolute Priority 1;
 - ii) Serving the neighborhood and its residents;
 - iii) Collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making and ongoing improvement;
 - iv) Creating formal and informal relationships, and generating community support to achieve results; and
 - v) Securing and integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources.

Strengths:

The team assembled has a wealth of knowledge and experience that lends the application a great deal of credibility. The DHA has a great deal of experience in the community of Indianola, working towards improving outcomes on a variety of indicators. Dr. Fox has been the DHA President and CEO since 2006, and has in that time compiled an impressive record of achievement in the community. Ms. Sample is a local resident, Mr. Johnson and Ms. Tucker are both from nearby Greenville, MS, providing a strong connection to the area and its nearby environs. The formal/informal relationships listed with partners and program providers show a significant connection with the area. It is very apparent that the DHA and the other partners are very integrated into the community and have a very vested interest in the community improvements in the long term.

Weaknesses:

This section showcases a very strong team of experienced individuals who are collectively working towards improvements in Indianola. The one area that could use a bit more support would be individuals with specific experience working with/in the school system. The school system and its Superintendent/Conservator are part of the applicant team, but there is a lack of teacher/administrators listed specifically on the application.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. a) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.
- b) In determining the quality of the management plan of the proposed project, the

Secretary considers--

- i) 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;
- ii) The extent to which the memorandum of understanding described in paragraph 5 of Absolute Priority 1 describes each partner's financial and programmatic commitment; how each partner's existing vision, theory of action, and theory of change, and existing activities align with those of the proposed Promise Neighborhood; and the governance structure of the proposed Promise Neighborhood;
- iii) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of families, school staff, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate; and
- iv) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to sustain and scale up the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

Strengths:

The timeline the application includes on pages 34-35 gives a solid insight into the approach that the team will take during the planning year to create a sustainable project. The plan to repurpose an already operating advisory board, the DPC, into an advisory board for the expanded scope of the DPN is a very efficient method for creating continuity within the community. The memoranda of understanding show similarly defined theories of change and theories of action. It shows a defined contribution structure (both formal funding and in-kind), and it enters everyone into a definite collaborative agreement. In the QMP section DHA commits to remaining active in the operations of the DPN for a period of at least 10 years, providing a significant boost to any sustainability concerns. The advisory board and the multitude of partners as detailed in the MOU show that there will be a substantial diversity of ideas/perspectives present in the planning and ultimate implementation of the DPN program. The track record of the DHA with regards to their funding successes is clearly an asset to their application. The focus on sustainability is noted throughout, and the ultimate goal of the program is to maintain a level of service, and eventually outcomes, over a longer period of time.

Weaknesses:

There is little to no mention of the possibilities for scaling up this project. Although the focus is decidedly on Indianola and Sunflower County, the bordering counties mentioned in the Need for Project section would most certainly benefit from this type of integrated continuum of solutions. A discussion of the possibilities for replication and scaling up would be beneficial. (EDIT: This is discussed sufficiently in the Significance section, score adjusted to reflect)

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Significance

- 1.a) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.
- b) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers
 - i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in long-term systems change or improvement;
 - ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population;
 - iii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies; and
 - iv) The potential to sustain and apply the model of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation of the model in a variety of settings.

Strengths:

The proposed project has a very real chance of becoming a catalyst towards the propulsion of the city of Indianola towards a more successful existence. As is mentioned in the Significance section, Indianola is at a crossroads where residents have decided enough is enough. The schools are in conservatorship and have been woefully performing for years, the health statistics, crime statistics, and measures of poverty are all dismal, and the time is right for a cohesive plan to be utilized to help Indianola become a beacon within the region to show that it can be accomplished. The program will promote capacity building through strong support of the existing community and faith-based organizations as well as soliciting for RFPs to increase the chances grass-roots solutions will be able to improve outcomes.

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted

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