Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Arkansas at Little Rock -- Research & Sponsored Programs,
Research & Graduate Studies (U215P100046)
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	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Significance		
1. Significance	10	8
Sub Total	100	96
Total	100	96

Technical Review Form

Reader #1: **********

Applicant: University of Arkansas at Little Rock -- Research & Sponsored Programs,Research & Graduate Studies (U215P100046)

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 provided a clear and convincing demonstration of the need for this project based on a number of weaknesses and gaps in the current infrastructure within the community and schools. Specific data surrounding the schools, health needs, the community and students and families (e.g., poverty data are thoroughly described. The geographic area to be served is clearly defined from both a current and historical perspective.

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses 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 applicant plans to develop a continuum of solutions by the partnering organizations working backwards to build upwards from the results framework, existing expertise and collaborative efforts. The partnering entities have established the continuum of solutions (p.6) which consist of 59 indicators of success. Specific services and possible strategies that can be offered by the partners include health and dental screenings and summer programs for youth. The applicant has clearly described the importance of data collection for this project and has assured that the data team has the expertise and resources needed to build a longitudinal data system. The applicant indicates that the partners will work closely with the national evaluator and will work together to collect and share the appropriate data for the purpose of assessment and evaluation (p.14).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 considersâ
   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 has provided thorough rationale to support the selection of umbrella programs designed to create a complete continuum of solutions for neighborhood children (p .15). For instance it thoroughly explains how the Comprehensive Intervention Model is a systematic approach to literacy improvements for students K-12 and this is supported by research (p.15). Other proposed programs and strategies are also well documented by current best practices and research.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant describes in great detail the types of programming and services and the age of the students that will be served by each, the proposal does not describe how the needs analysis will determine how the project will identify and serve those students with the highest needs..

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 has provided compelling justification to demonstrate its ability to manage this project. For instance it details the recognition from NCATE for working with school districts. Furthermore it thoroughly describes how Children International (CI) works closely with area schools, parents and partners to provide educational, health care and family assistance programs. It has clearly documented its experience working with the neighborhood children (p.21). It is evident that the applicant and the IDEA Office have extensive experience managing and analyzing data (p.23) and even houses a Children's Resource Center that is the primary source of data concerning welfare of children and families. The applicant has well documented its experience managing grants of similar size and scope (e.g., HUD revitalization grants and other grants from both private and public sources). This highly suggests the applicant's ability to secure and manage funding (p. 24). The applicant has adequately described the management team for this project, specifically stating that it will be led by a project director with significant experience as a teacher and program administrator. Resumes are included for all project personnel. The project will have both a solutions and sustainability team. Details regarding both of these teams and their roles are clearly stated (p.27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

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 thoroughly described the components of the management team as well as the percent of time devoted to this effort. A detailed monthly timeline is provided that describe the activities, milestones and tasks for the project. A detailed MOU is attached

that references the percentage of time each partner will devote to this project as well as each partner's contributions. In addition, letters of support and commitment are also included. It appears that a diversity of perspective will be offered in this project by the different types of agencies represented on the various project teams (e.g., sustainability, solutions).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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 considersâ**
   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 describes how the project will involve the development of new strategies and will build on new programs (integrating the humanities and fine arts, new program offering health and dental screens).

Weaknesses:

While the applicant suggests that this project could have lasting impact and long term change based on its history of successfully garnering other resources to sustain program, details regarding the specific impact it has had in the past are not included. While it appears the applicant has managed and implemented other projects similar in scope, it is unclear what if any impact or improvement it has had in the targeted schools and communities.

Reader's Score: 8

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 8/16/10 9:28 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Arkansas at Little Rock -- Research & Sponsored Programs,
             Research & Graduate Studies (U215P100046)
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	18
Quality of Project Services		
1. Project Services	15	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Sub Total	100	98
Total	100	98

Technical Review Form

Reader #2:   **********

Applicant: University of Arkansas at Little Rock -- Research & Sponsored Programs,Research &
          Graduate Studies (U215P100046)

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 identifies gaps and weaknesses that acknowledge historically-based stressors
   in the area's political environment that may also serve as a barrier. The applicant
   provides a comprehensive description of the severity and problems to be addressed in
   detail on pages 1-5 that outline the complex issues regarding race and poverty, as well as
   the City's historic racial tensions and Supreme Court Case that has still not been
   overcome since 1958-59 (p.1-2). Other problems include high numbers of single parent
   homes, low college education among citizens, almost lowest college graduation rates in the
   nation and lowest in the state.
   Five target schools are identified. These are all low performing and one is persistently
   low performing. P.3. The applicant described the makeup of the city and location of the
   target schools. High free and reduced lunch and data on dire health conditions and dental
   health are included on pages 3-4. It's wise for them to be prepared for this and to
   include this in developing their strategy. Page 6.

   Weaknesses:
   No weaknesses found

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 applicant's plan to build a continuum of services (COS) is based on a results-based framework described on page 6, which is also developed jointly by a team of representatives from all signatories of MOUs. This is a strong indicator of success from the beginning as the applicant has obviously succeeded in efforts to get what seems to be a qualified group of organizations from a variety of perspectives to serve a 0-20 continuum of services. The applicant clearly describes existing efforts underway currently to move toward change. This includes a $12M investment to build a state-of-the-art children's library, HUD and ARRA funding to support building projects, and a research park intended to serve academic needs and revitalize the community. These resources would be leveraged in the proposed PN plan. Pages 5-6.

Starting on page 7, the applicant adequately describes that in support of the results-based framework, 59 indicators of success have been identified, 11 serve as PN program indicators and there are 14 desired outcomes. All of these flow from partners' shared Theory of Action and change described in their MOUs.
The COS all link to indicators in the framework (page 8) and the indicators cover a great deal of ground in support of results (listed in Appendix F).
It is clear that the COS is designed to leverage and coordinate existing efforts underway in the community, especially regarding revitalization efforts. This also includes various health care clinic services, service learning, summer camps, after school programming, in-school health and dental screenings, and youth development programming. (p.8)
The Central Arkansas Library programs have been designed to incorporate the whole child approach to learning which supports all of this work. (p.9)
The applicant provides a thorough description of the partnership that is underway to coordinate and link programs and services from partners that support a COS of 0-20 years of age. (p.9)
The applicant proceeds to further provide a clear description of detailed plans to coordinate programming and establish an umbrella of programs run by partners responsible for addressing accountability issues that will likely arise when working with a number of groups. (p.11-12)
The applicant provides exhaustive details and a thorough grasp of strategies for using data to manage program implementation, engage and hold accountable partners and measure success.
The applicant provides a thorough description of a plan that is supported by evidence-based research.
The applicant clearly describes strategies (pages 10-13) for using data, including longitudinal data to inform programming, decision-making, engaging stakeholders, student learning in the arts, integration of curriculum, teacher quality, integrating systems such as OST and school-based programming, family and parenting support, and more. Pages 14-18
The applicant is prepared to work with a national evaluator and the Department and state. Pages 14-15.

Weaknesses:

The applicant says that the staff of CLRPN will also evaluate the two competing whole school reform efforts currently in use by some of the target schools (Americaâs Choice and High Schools That Work). This is an expensive endeavor in time and resources to take on evaluating these programs. The programâs desire and ambition to be thorough appears to overstep its capacity. Finding a more efficient way to achieve this would prevent this part from taking resources away from other aspects of the project. Page 10

Reader's Score: 18

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 considersâ
     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:

   In this section, the applicant lists proposed solutions that are evidenced-based and cover
   the full spectrum of early childhood through college preparation. Specifically, they are
   targeting three areas: school-based programs, OST programs, and bridge programs.
   On page 15, the applicant describes a Comprehensive Intervention Model which is a systemic
   approach to literacy that is research-based and is targeted to students whose data have
   fallen most sharply in reading and writing. This program builds on the CLRPNâs elementary
   schools existing evidence-based Reading Recovery program that was featured in the Dept of
   Edâs What Works Clearinghouse.
   On page 16, the applicant lists other models of note: The A Plus Schools Program which is
   research-based and the Pearson Learning Teamâs evidence-based school improvement model
   specifically focused on guiding teacher collaboration and leadership capacity.
   On page 17, the applicant writes that the bridge program they will use, the full service
   community school approach, is designed to integrate school based and OST programming.
   The applicant mentions something very important on page 18 and this is the inclusion of a
   coordinator for the Arkansas 21 C Initiative who could take the lead in implementing the
   solution, although it is anticipated that this solution would involve most, if not all, of
   the CLRPN partners.Â This is significant as the applicant acknowledges the need for
   capacity to coordinate this work which will not all happen in committee discussions.
   The applicant (pages 18-19) thoughtfully includes in their comprehensive program design,
   youth development and gang-alternative programs that are proven to provide positive
   outcomes and a college prep program. This is the Youth Initiative Project and the Boys &
   Girls Clubs of Americaâs Gang Prevention Through Targeting Outreach.
   Finally, on page 19, the applicant rounds out their evidence-based programming with a
   partnerâs efforts in a College Prep Program designed to promote retention and graduation
   of African American males.

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

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 provides a clear and thorough description of their personnel's capacity, experience and desire to organize and lead a collaborative effort of partners to work with schools, serve the community, collect and use data, build on existing relationships and efforts, and secure funding from a variety of public and private sources to sustain the work and investment of a Promise Neighborhood. Pages 20-28.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 25

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 designed a management plan that is diverse and flexible and which includes a full spectrum of community voice within an advisory board that will include parents, community members, representatives from partnering organizations, targeted schools and a resident from each of the seven census tracts. Page 28.
The management plan includes not only an Advisory Committee, but an Administrative Team (to lead and coordinate initiative), a Data Team with a team leader (to manage data and conduct needs assessment), a Solutions Team (to finalize the plan to deliver the continuum of services), and a Sustainability Team (to build community support and involvement in the ongoing efforts. Pages 28-21. This structure is described in detail and includes responsibilities and a timeline for accomplishing the project's tasks. Page 32.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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 considersâ**
**   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 has clearly described its ability and capacity to lead, organize, and sustain this project. They have capable staff, established partnerships dedicated to the project through MOUs, a good handle on the need for a comprehensive set of solutions, and a keen knowledge of other public and private resources to tap to support this work beyond federal funding. The applicant has a good sense of the variety of federal funding available already in the community and woven into their plan is some of this. They are experienced and poised to lead this community changing project that will improve the lives of Little Rock's neediest children and families.

The applicant also has a good handle on policies at the federal level that impede the work ahead. This will be important information to gather as the Promise Neighborhoods program will likely serve as the harbinger for policy change.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 8/23/10 12:26 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of Arkansas at Little Rock -- Research & Sponsored Programs,
        Research & Graduate Studies (U215P100046)

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	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Significance		
1. Significance	10	9
Sub Total	100	99
Total	100	99

Technical Review Form

Reader #3:   **********

Applicant: University of Arkansas at Little Rock -- Research & Sponsored Programs,Research & Graduate Studies (U215P100046)

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's narrative was very strong in presenting the need for the PN project in its neighborhood. The documentation of the history of the neighborhood, as well as including up to date statistics, as recent as this year, gives major insight into the economic, educational, crime and health conditions surrounding the neighborhood.

  The applicant also identified gaps in educational services, including the approval of charter school open enrollments in the neighborhood, racial tensions, and the disconnect between the neighborhood and its institutions of higher education.

  The applicant also mentions the unhealthy eating habits and levels of obesity in the community. I hope that the applicant intends to connect a solution for unhealthy eating habits with the schools' free lunch program, in which 70% to 95% of neighborhood students participate.

  Weaknesses:

  There were no noticeable weaknesses in this section of the proposal.

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 applicant's "working backwards while building upwards" strategy (p. 6) focuses on the current resources in the community and yet acknowledges the current gaps and challenges. This will be a great way to utilize the strengths that the PN already has and will further engage organizations that have already invested the community. The applicant has already identified many of the gaps and potential gaps and has listed how it plans to address those gaps through strategic partnerships.

The applicant has listed reputable resources that have gathered research on replicable programs that have worked in similar community and intend to implement those programs in its PN. These resources are at the community, State and national level.

The applicant's plan to engage the target population and its families through focus groups and town hall meetings will be prove to be a great way to assess community perceptions of needs and gaps in services for the purpose of exploring how most effectively to incorporate programs and services of noted excellence into the continuum (p. 11).

The applicant's commitment to proper data collection and analysis is clearly stated in the proposal (p. 12). Not only does it plan to build a longitudinal data system, it intends for the data system to measure its 59 project indicators and for the system to connect to the AR Department of Education's Longitudinal Data System and the Little Rock School District data system. The applicant also plans to utilize its own Survey Research Center as well.

Weaknesses:

There were no noticeable weaknesses in this section of the proposal.

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 considersâ
    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 has defined three key areas that it anticipates being major areas of focus from its needs assessment and segmentation analysis school-based programs, out-of-school time programs and bridge programs (p. 15). The fact that they applicant is has already identified three key areas of focus proves that they have completed preliminary research

and have already begun a strategy to address the most pressing educational needs of the community.

The applicant lists many strategies and proven programs with statistical data to back up their decision to implement these particular strategies.

The applicant has also listed many key community partners, such as the Little Rock School District, the five identified schools, UALR Children International, the Arkansas Children's Hospital, and the Central Arkansas Library System.

The applicant identified the fact that it needs a clear and coordinated pathway from middle school through high school to college for students identified by data as most in need of such guidance (p. 20) as a gap in service. Because it has already identified this gap and stated that addressing it will be a priority of the PN initiative, displays that the applicant is in touch with the educational needs of its neighborhood.

Weaknesses:

There were no noticeable weaknesses in this section of the proposal.

Reader's Score: 15

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 applicantâs experience in and lessons learned byâ**
      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 adequately identified its strategy for securing additional funding from both private and public sources for its PN initiative. It also mentioned that it plans to form a committee whose responsibility will be to identify and cultivate new funding sources. The applicant also named particular funding organizations that it believed matched the vision of its PN initiative.

   The staff and teams that the applicant selected for its PN initiative is very impressive. Not only does the client identify what the roles and responsibilities of the staff and teams are, but it also lists the credentials of the staff and their relative experience to the project.

   The applicant describes a very collaborative arrangement for its PN initiative, including relationships with members of the target population. This is seen through the application's formation of its 21-member Advisory Board and its various teams, which include a diverse mix of members and skill sets.

   Not only does the applicant make a commitment to working with the National Evaluator, but it ensures that its staff and teams will do so as well. It also intends to utilize the services of its own Department of Information Quality and create a Data Advisory Council.

Weaknesses:

There were no noticeable weaknesses in this section of the proposal.

Reader's Score: 25

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 partnerâs financial and programmatic commitment; how
   each partnerâs 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 âscale upâ the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

Strengths:

The applicant included a brief strategic fundraising plan and mentioned key area funders
that have already stated their support of the PN initiative through Letters of Support and
financial commitment.

The applicant gives a detailed layout of the various teams that will support the PN
project, including identifying key team leaders and their backgrounds and expertise.

The PN initiative's coalition of partners have already begun the planning stage and have
developed "a common Theory of Change, Theory of Action based on Vision and Mission
Statements that were carefully developed over the course of several months" (p. 33).

The applicant effectively presented its skills in obtaining funding at both the government
and private levels. Because of its previous funding success and its relationships with
area and federal funders, the applicant presents a solid case of financial sustainability
for the project.

Weaknesses:

There were no noticeable weaknesses in this section of the proposal.

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 considersâ
     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's plan to create a Resource Advisory Council (RAC) will give a two-fold strategy to its fundraising plan for the initiative. Because the RAC will search for funding entities as well as consult with the Project Director on funding opportunities (p. 34), this will ensure that the project approaches as many funding opportunities as possible.

The fact that the applicant realizes "that the best approach will entail deepening the work in the existing neighborhood as opposed to expanding the program model to new communities too quickly" (p. 35) proves that its priority is bettering the educational conditions of its neighborhood and producing provable outcomes that are longer and farther reaching.

The applicant identifies new strategic partners that it plans to approach in the future, including state government departments, a medical school and other area institutions of higher education (p. 35). This displays that they are aware of even more resources to utilize in the community.

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that they are certain impediments that will affect the long-term systems change and improvement that are out of its control. These impediments are related to federal policies, regulations and other requirements (p. 36). One example that the applicant gives is the need for the increase of healthy foods provided to WIC recipients. The applicant states that "The implications of this single federal policy are far-reaching as poor nutrition can result in a host of physical and mental developmental problems and contribute significantly to childhood obesity, diabetes, and heart disease" (p. 36). Because health and nutrition are such key elements to factors like student concentration and overall well-being, this impediment could impede the progress of many of the initiative's strategies.

Reader's Score: 9

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