

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/22/10 10:01 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Westminster Foundation -- , (U215P100147)

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	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
	Total	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Panel - 5: 84.215P

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Westminster Foundation -- , (U215P100147)

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 Westminster area is the worst in the City of Buffalo and the third poorest in the country. Bennett High School, one of the neighborhood schools that is the focus of Phase I of the Buffalo Promise Neighborhood, is in its 7th year on the list of New York State's list of persistently lowest achieving schools. The community health, crime and violence, family stress and poverty and unemployment indicators all point to a severely distressed community.

The Buffalo Promise Neighborhood is clearly defined. Phase I will begin in a one square mile area with a population of 11,000--76% of whom are minority. There are three schools in the defined area that will be the focus of the project: Bennett High School, consistently low performing; Westminster Community Charter School an effective and highly ranked K-8 school; and, Highgate Heights School, a low performing k-8 school.

Phases II & III logically follow as a contiguous expansion of the target area.

The preliminary assessment of the target area identified specific gaps and weaknesses in academic instruction and support, health, pregnancy and parenting, community disinvestment, access to services as well as the lack of any integrated system of civic engagement, college and career preparation and any 21st century employability supports.

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 strength of the design lies in a core group of partners that has had experience working together to turn-around a low performing school in the area through the process of converting it to a high performing public charter school. Solidly at the center of this partnership is the lead applicant, Westminster Foundation and M&T Bank. These two organizations have a 17 year partnership that has brought together resources, both human and financial; and, that has resulted in the type of transformational academic change envisioned by this initiative. Additionally, other core government, foundation, and community-based organizations have joined the core team to build a long-term platform of policies, practices, systems, and resources to address the needs of the community in a way that can be scaled-up and delivered across multiple neighborhoods. These core partners include: the John R. Oishei Foundation, the Mayor's Office, Buffalo Public School District, United Way, Catholic Charities, Read to Succeed Buffalo, Buffalo Urban League, and the University at Buffalo.

Westminster Community Charter School and M & T Bank, together and in cooperation with the Buffalo School District, have turned around a failing school through a conversion and transformation. They will use their skills, talents, abilities and lessons learned to support the transformation of two neighborhood public schools: Bennett High School and Highgate Heights School.

Building on the current Technology Plan of the Buffalo School District's student information and evaluation system, Buffalo Promise, with the assistance of M & T Bank's IT Department and Buffalo Solutions, will ensure that the already robust data system can track and manage all data required by Buffalo's Promise Neighborhood initiative.

Buffalo Promise indicators for the planning year needs assessment comes from three sources: the seven Promise Neighborhood academic indicators; the five family and community support indicators; and, two additional family and community support indicators based on the applicant's initial needs assessment of the specific Buffalo Promise Neighborhood. The two additional indicators reflect the need to address the high rate of teen pregnancy (78.1 per 1000); and, the high percentage of youth who are neither in school nor employed (39%). Additionally, it is anticipated that there will be additional indicators that will be added during the planning year. These additional indicators will be added to measure needs disclosed during the assessment period.

Particularly commendable was the applicant's desire to work with other national grantees to better understand those indicators (leading and trailing) that impact poverty (p e19).

It seems to be a value of the Buffalo Promise partners to create a community of learning through knowledge sharing. To this end, they are setting up a collaborative infrastructure as part of their planning year that will enable grantees to discuss common issues and findings as well as provide a forum for collaboration that will help align activities for a rigorous national evaluation and feedback loop. To this end, included in the MOUs is an agreement by each partner to work openly and cooperatively with the national evaluator.

While all partners are sharing resources, opportunities and knowledge as demonstrated by the discussion of The Closing the Gap Consortium and its connection to the national network of full service community schools (p. e20) and the monitoring of the work of the

Mass Insight's Partnership Zone Initiative (p. e20), the lead applicant, Westminster Foundation, recognizes and accepts as its responsibility the role of assigning and overseeing the identification, tracking, and pursuing of all leads and resources (p. e21).

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 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:

Through the utilization of a service matrix (p. e23) and the discussion of each specific area, the applicant sets forth the service solutions and how each supports specific academic, family, and community support indicators. For each, where available, current providers and challenges are provided.

The applicant identifies three areas that support its likelihood of success: 1) its experience and success with academic achievement as demonstrated by the student outcomes of Westminster students (i.e. 71% met or exceeded state standards in 2008-2009, compared to 43% when state assessments were initiated); its focus on school reform as central to its Promise Neighborhood initiative coupled with the relationships that already exist to support such reform; and, its leadership capacity (p. e27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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 Project Director, Dr. Yvonne Minor-Regan, has extensive experience in transforming under-performing schools. Through a national search in 1994, she was recruited to transform a severely underperforming public school into the Westminster Charter School. She has the experience and respect to lead this project that involves under-performing schools.

Having been involved in the community and education for 17 years, the Westminster Foundation has the experience working with schools described in Absolute Priority 1 in that it was intricately involved in the transformation of School #68 into the Westminster Charter School.

As a result of its unique partnership with M & T Bank and its development of a high-performing charter school, the Westminster Foundation brings the ability to collect, analyze and use data for decision-making and ongoing improvement. The Bank provides the talent of its IT Department and the talent of analytical expertise.

The Westminster Foundation, in the development of the Westminster Charter School, has created both formal and informal relationships and generated community support that has allowed it to create a school that is successfully meeting the needs of its students.

The Westminster Foundation, through its unique partnership with M & T Bank, has secured funding from more than 37 multiple streams which it has used to transform School #68 into the Westminster Charter School.

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:

Under the oversight and governance of the Westminster Board of Trustees, an Advisory Board, and a highly experienced management team, the management plan describes a multi-track (p. e45) schedule that allows the plan to be completed within the year timeframe and within budget. The plan allows the applicant to meet its goals: 1) completing a needs assessment and segmentation; 2) survey neighborhood and achieve a variety of perspectives; 3) execute a revised MOU between the School District and Westminster by March 2011 outlining the reform changes for Bennett High School and Highgate Heights School; and, 4) equip schools with targeted support by September 2011.

The applicant will develop a community participation plan (Track B) to include public forums to define needs and provide feedback on research and plan (p e44-47). The plan design will ensure a diversity of perspective in addition to those provided through the governing structures and surveys.

The applicant will conduct a financial summit to focus on sustainability and scale-up of the plan. Additionally, the applicant will focus on prototyping only those programs that can be affordable to scale. A cost-based plan for Phases II and III with dates and prospective sponsors will be a deliverable in this planning year (p e47).

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:

Buffalo's Promise Neighborhood is likely to build long-term systems change due to: 1) The partnership of major Buffalo education, service, and business organizations building on a 17-year track record; 2) an integrated full-service community school model for academic, social, health, and human services; and, 3) new programs to integrate a continuum of solutions to reduce unplanned pregnancy while raising youth employment (p e48).

Seamless access funneled through investment in a common data portal and cost modeling and collaborative program development will result in significant impact on the effective delivery of education and human services; thereby, building local capacity to deliver expanded and improved services (p e 49).

Buffalo's Promise Neighborhood is organized into nine expanded strategies that build on, or will be alternatives to existing programs and strategies: Pregnancy/Parenting, Early learning, Dramatic School Reform, Academic Supports, Full Service Community School Supports, College Readiness and Employability, Life Literacies, Neighborhood Stability, and Community Reinvestment (p. e 50).

The unique partnership that has lasted more than 17 years between M & T Bank, Westminster Foundation and Westminster Charter School is replicable and increases the likelihood of sustainability. Additionally, the relationship-based full service community school model that provides for a shared planning model, information system, and staff development infrastructure for effectiveness and efficiency that once built can be scaled and replicated (p p e50-51).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/30/10 2:41 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Westminster Foundation -- , (U215P100147)

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	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
	Total	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Panel - 5: 84.215P

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Westminster Foundation -- , (U215P100147)

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 need for this project is clearly defined and organized. Indicators included are academic, health-related, crime and violence, family stress, poverty and unemployment. The Westminster foundation includes two unique needs; teenage pregnancy and the young adult/early adult unemployment rate. The weaknesses and gaps are detailed and transparent and connected.

The project has a forward thinking stance including recognizing the need to streamline services due to expected and unexpected budget cuts at the local, state, and federal levels.

The initial geographic area is clearly defined and very intentional. The focus on a one mile tract is manageable and a solid place to start community revitalization that can be scaled up to other similar neighborhoods in the Buffalo area.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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 - 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:

This section of the proposal is impressive. There is history of success in the neighborhood and strong partnerships with local businesses, especially the M&T bank.

The project envisions building on the success of Westminster Community Charter School community school model to bring similar services to two other low performing and persistently low performing schools in the one mile radius, which meets the criteria of Absolute Priority 1.

There is a formative outline of how data will be collected and used; the resources and human capital provided by M&T bank are formidable and the system used at WCCC is intense and fairly all-inclusive. There is also a focus on continuous improvement and reflection during all phases of the project planning year.

There are strong, measurable, and detailed indicators delineated for each section of the project including quantitative data (number of teen pregnancies, number of young/early adults employed or on a career college path) to qualitative measures like community service and early involvement in the civic engagement projects that build confidence, career skills, college readiness, and in general life readiness.

Academic Indicators are also strong; the use of the TCWRP curriculum is well-researched and run by an expert in the field of literacy; this program has its own defined outcomes which have been used at WCCC since 1997. The Buffalo Public School district has also committed to working collaboratively and designing appropriate outcomes for the two schools of serious need in the one mile area.

Westminster has not only committed to working with a national evaluator but has already asked for advice on a piece of their project. They have dedicated themselves to being a national model and collaborator with other PN planning year projects.

Intense coordination has already begun in Buffalo Promise. M & T Bank, foundations, the University at Buffalo, United Way, Catholic Charities, local political offices, the Urban League, and Read to Succeed Buffalo are all steadfast partners in this process.

Weaknesses:

None 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.
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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:

This proposal outlines a system of integration among agencies and a willingness to bring data to the surface to and used appropriately.

Some of the strongest Indicators include a focus on post secondary readiness, without the need for remediation.

There is opportunity for career building for many people involved in the project outside of the planning agencies.

The WCCC has a clear history of achievement in the neighborhood and has been mindful about the differences between the needs and laws of charter schools vs. public schools; there are proposed conversations about how to integrate these models.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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 proposed team players are stellar; they have impressive credentials, histories of academic success, and a rich connection to the community being served. Key Personnel are versed and experienced in education, community engagement, and community revitalization.

Weaknesses:

None 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 quality of the management plan is solid. There are committed funds, plans for scaling up, and a diversity of perspectives including local organizations, businesses, the school district, and social services such as Planned Parenthood.

All organizations have clear theories of action and the proposal has a plan to bring together all of these organizations to create a common goal and streamlined services.

Timelines, milestones, goals are detailed and although the timelines are short, based on the history of the Westminster Foundation, the likelihood of success is almost inevitable.

Even though planning year grant funding has not been awarded, the organizations have already begun work on the project.

There is a commitment to scale up only portions of the project that are affordable and effective based on data.

There is outstanding evidence that the program will continue after Federal financial support has ended.

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Significance

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 - i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in long-term systems change or improvement;
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 - 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:

Buffalo Promise is forward thinking, replicable, and the scale-up plan is scaffolded in such a way that deep work can be done in small areas of need.

While ambitious, the project is cautious and proposes to use proven educational techniques in the Promise Neighborhood Community.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/30/10 2:41 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/17/10 12:27 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Westminster Foundation -- , (U215P100147)

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	10
	Sub Total	100
	Total	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Panel - 5: 84.215P

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Westminster Foundation -- , (U215P100147)

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 proposed project would serve students in the city of Buffalo, NY, which is the third poorest city, in the nation by reinventing Bennett High School and Highgate Heights School. This initial project will serve a community that is 76% minority and 69% African American. The project will serve a k-8 which is classified as low performing and the high school which is classified as persistently lowest achieving in the Westminster community. Twenty-nine percent of families are below the poverty level. Typical markers of poverty exist: teen pregnancy, violence, high student mobility, high unemployment. The geographical is well defined a sq. mile area with a population of 11,000 and includes a school that is a part of the Westminster success story, providing a school (Bennett High) for students to naturally progress to that is similar to Westminster Charter. Proposal recognized nine gaps that the proposal will target.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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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 applicant enthusiastically describes the intent of the project with an overview of activities and the results expected. The core of the design for the Buffalo Promise Neighborhood (BPN) is academic, with additional emphasis on social, emotional, family and other support services to students. Within the structure of the school district the schools will become turnaround schools leveraging the success and partnership with Westminster Foundation and M&T Bank. The use of data will be built on existing systems provided by partners of the project. The applicant incorporated seven academic, five family, and designed two additional indicators which are fewer teen pregnancies and youth employment. Others may be added as needed. The BPN is willing to work with a national evaluator.

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.
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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:

Proposed solutions are well documented. For example, 42 % of kindergartners in Buffalo are not ready for school. To counter this, BPN will expand up existing literacy programs that provide support such as Head Start and Project CARE. Also notable is the fact that the MT/Westminster Foundation has purchased land to build an Early Learning Center. BPN will be based on a model developed by the applicant that has already demonstrated success, which was one of the lowest performing schools to now one of their highest performing schools. Segmentation is incorporated into the planning year to determine the exact needs of the population to be served.

Weaknesses:

none noted

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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- 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 personnel selected to manage the proposal all have outstanding and documented success in the area of community service and education. They are respected in the field of education and business, and bring a wealth of experience from the success of the Westminster Foundation. For example, the foundation has received 37 grants since 2004 and the BPN has matching dollars totaling \$250,000 if they are selected for funding. Their proposed assessments are data driven and verifiable. Finally, the applicant can build on the success of the Westminster Foundation and school that is already successful in the community.

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.
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 - 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;
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 - 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 project timeline and milestones have been put in place and are on target for implementation by September 2011. The milestones include data collection and segmentation, as well as community public forums and school reform, which includes unfunded pre-work that is currently in process. BPNs ability to scale up seems inevitable because of the history of success and the applicants ability to leverage key community relationships and attract funding. In phase I of their plan they are committed to scale up only those projects that are affordable and successful (48)

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 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 BP has long term sustainability because it is built on the proven success of Westminster Foundation and Charter school, so in their midst there is a model. Even though success driven, the project is cautious to ensure that only successful proven techniques will be used. BPN has secured active and committed partnering relationships within the business and academic community. BPN will be a community school that includes academic, social, health and human services, which are indicators of success higher education. BPN has recognized and included in their planning solutions for two additional points of poverty which are teen pregnancy and youth unemployment. BPN is not structured in a vacuum, but has partnered with the businesses, non-profits and the District school system to ensure the commitment of stakeholders which is well documented in the MOUs.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Status: Submitted

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