

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/18/2015 02:03 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Board of Education City of Chicago 299 (U215H150069)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	45	42
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Quality of Mgmt. Plan	15	15
Sub Total	80	77
Total	80	77

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Skills for Success Panel - 7: 84.215H

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Board of Education City of Chicago 299 (U215H150069)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(2) 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.

(3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

Strengths:

The applicant adequately noted that the Chicago Public School's (CPS) proposed Start on Success (SoS) program seeks to provide additional non-cognitive supports for students considered most at-risk for grade retention, dropping out of school, or experiencing academic failure. It proposes to use a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) model. It was also noted that CPS will meet the unique needs of all students while offering higher intensity interventions as needed through the proposed project (p. 25). CPS, working with the external evaluator American Institutes for Research (AIR), will provide a replicable model of particular applicability for schools and school districts serving predominantly minority enrollment, low-income student populations.

In order to meet the varied social-emotional needs of CPS students, the applicant identified a new comprehensive MTSS model framework that offers a myriad of services and interventions to improve coordination and implementation of SEL for high-need middle grade students.

In order to identify the potential contribution of theory, knowledge, and practices, the applicant clearly noted that CPS has both a tiered model of supports around social-emotional needs and an Office of Social Emotional Learning (OSEL), which resolves gaps in counseling services and address issues around negative school climate. Using research from Bryk, it was also clearly noted that this project will use a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) approach for each development cycle for planning and delivering implementation of the proposed intervention, study implementation and outcomes by reviewing programmatic data at the end of each cycle and making changes for improvement (p. 6-8).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by Strong Theory.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(3) The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of research and development in the field, including, as appropriate, a substantial addition to an ongoing line of inquiry.

(4) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant presents a proposal that appears to be supported by strong theory (i.e., Allensworth & Easton and Payton) (p. 20-21).

The applicant clearly presented an exceptional approach with the Multi-Tiered System of Support model. Tier I will work with the development design; Tier II and Tier III will provide service providers that have been trained to engage and educate students with intellectual, physical, and emotional disabilities (p. 12).

The applicant provided details for Tiers 1-3. The proposed project represents a coherent, sustained program of research and development in the field. It also contributes substantially to an ongoing line of inquiry. It does this by using a delayed training roll out, allowing teachers the opportunity to fully absorb the training, practice its components, reflect on success, and adapt accordingly (p. 27).

The applicant adequately provided data to reflect that performance feedback and continuous improvements are integral to the design of the project (p. 28).

Weaknesses:

Additional information is needed to determine if students will participate in the performance feedback and continuous improvement process.

Reader's Score: 42

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

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

(2) 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.

(3) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

The applicant's detailed logic model identified specific procedures for providing feedback and continuous improvement in the proposal (p. 46-50).

The applicant presented detailed timelines, and identified milestones on the logic model as short-term and long-term outcomes for accomplishing the project's tasks (p. 46-50). The applicant provided a detailed budget that appears to be adequate for the proposed proposal (p. 92-97).

The applicant provided relevant commitment of each partner in the proposed project by providing commitment letters. Examples of commitment include the following: American Institutes for Research will conduct the formative evaluation that will feature a continuous improvement approach with iterative development cycles to examine the fidelity of implementation and inform the district on how to improve the program, as well as summative evaluations, which will examine student outcomes through a rigorous quasi-experimental design. An additional example is Youth Advocate Programs, Inc., who will work with a new group of students in Tier III to help them develop non-cognitive competencies, and to prepare them for success in high school (p. 55-60).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 15

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Board of Education City of Chicago 299 (U215H150069)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	45	42
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Quality of Mgmt. Plan	15	15
Sub Total	80	77
Total	80	77

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Skills for Success Panel - 7: 84.215H

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Board of Education City of Chicago 299 (U215H150069)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(2) 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.

(3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

Strengths:

The significance of the project presented by the application is grounded around the idea of developing competencies that will help youth to acquire social and emotional skills. The core competencies associated with the project model are identified and detailed enough to gain an understanding of its significance. Through the implementation of the wrap-around model and partnerships, the application has the potential to provide services previously done on a smaller scale to a large number of youth (pp. e21-e24 & e109).

There is sufficient evidence provided by the application to show how the proposed project will build on existing strategies already implemented in the school. The current district model recognizes the need to create best practices to support noncognitive skills for youth and through the implementation of the proposed project this will occur. For example, the project will extend far beyond the scope of the middle school grade level as the skills acquired will be tracked through the high school level (pp. e19 & e23-e24).

The plan to create a replicable model and evaluate project effectiveness is a logical approach to contributing to the advancement of theory as related to noncognitive skills. The approach will allow for field testing the project activities and gaining feedback regarding the methodology; thereby, contributing to best practices in the field of study (pp. e24-e25).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by Strong Theory.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or

priorities established for the competition.

(3) The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of research and development in the field, including, as appropriate, a substantial addition to an ongoing line of inquiry.

(4) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

Strengths:

There is reasonable evidence presented by the application depicting program activities that are aligned with core competencies grounded in theory. For example, the logic model presents theory-based activities such as the utilization of psychologists, social workers and teachers who will evaluate a student's needs and then create an individualized treatment plan to address the needs identified (pp. 25-e26 & e46-e47).

Overall, the project presented provides logical approaches that are aligned with the competition priorities. For example, the project activities presented are aligned with the district's current plan of action to increase noncognitive skills support to middle school students (pp. 9-10). Specifically, the three-tiered model includes activities and interventions for students specific to their needs; as student's progress, they move to the next tier where they receive additional support (pp. e26-e31).

The evidence presented by the application clearly shows that activities such as the three-tiered model are coherent approaches to sustaining project research and development in the field. The piloting of the project in two schools with a high population of at-risk youth in need of service coupled with a solid implementation and evaluation plan is a logical approach to achieve the outcomes presented (pp. e26-e31).

The plan to provide performance feedback is clearly outlined by the application and is sufficient to ensure continuous project improvement. One such approach will provide immediate feedback to teachers through the classroom observations conducted by project coaches. It is through the observations that the management team will be able to adjust training based upon findings (pp. e26-e31).

Weaknesses:

While there is discussion regarding the plan to collect student data at the end of the program year, there is no discussion regarding the procedure to obtain feedback from youth throughout the project for the purposes improving the services to be provided.

Reader's Score: 42

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

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

(2) 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.

(3) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

The information presented describing the process by which feedback will be collected regarding project operations is appropriate and will ensure staff and stakeholders are informed. For example, the project director's responsibilities include: collecting project reports; overseeing in-take and evaluation information from the evaluator; and staff oversight. The frequency of feedback is defined, such as weekly phone calls and interviews with the Youth Advocates who will help to mentor students and engage parents and other stakeholders in the learning experience (pp. e32-e35 & e46-e50).

Overall, the application has identified individuals with strong qualifications that will benefit the project by ensuring the goals and outcomes of the project. The timeline presented is sufficient as the project implementation, activities, persons responsible and milestones are clearly outlined which will support project tasks. The budget presented is appropriate for the proposed project and depicts expenditures that are appropriate for the activities presented (pp. e33-e34).

The partners identified are committed to the implementation of the project and throughout. The partners identified demonstrate their capability providing project support as identified through their experience working with the target population and the project activities to be implemented. The support of the partners is also evidenced through the letters of support presented (pp. e55-e58).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Board of Education City of Chicago 299 (U215H150069)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	45	43
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Quality of Mgmt. Plan	15	15
Sub Total	80	78
Total	80	78

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Skills for Success Panel - 7: 84.215H

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Board of Education City of Chicago 299 (U215H150069)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(2) 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.

(3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

Strengths:

The objective of the proposal is to provide additional non-cognitive supports for 5th-8th grade students and instructors at eight high-need schools, located within high-need areas of the city, supporting Absolute Priority 1 and 2.

Implementation of SoS within the Chicago Public Schools district would be of substantial benefit to the nation's third-largest school district which serves approximately 400,000 students across the city. The city's school district populations are high-needs students comprised of 40% African Americans, 45% Hispanic, 16% English Language Learners, and 13% have Individual Education Plans in place. Additionally, 85% of all CPS students qualify for free or reduced price lunch, an identifier of low-income household (p. e19).

The applicant acknowledged the importance of developing social and emotional skills as crucial for students living in under-resourced areas. The proposal will allow CPS to "create and test a proactive model to encourage non-cognitive skills and provide social-emotional supports to middle grade students at risk of not making a successful, on-time transition to high school" (p. e20).

Weaknesses:

None noted

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

(1) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by Strong Theory.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

(3) The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of research and development in the field, including, as appropriate, a substantial addition to an ongoing line of inquiry.

(4) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

Strengths:

As an addition to CPS' comprehensive MTSS model, the Start on Success (SoS) Program is proposed to "improve coordination and implementation for Social-emotional Learning (SEL) for high-need middle grade students". SoS will "employ piloting, continuous improvement and rigorous evaluation across the three year duration of the project" as indicated in Appendix 2: SoS Project Logic Model.

As identified in Table 1. Selected Demographic Data of Year 1 and 2 Pilot Schools, CPS examined metrics and data sets to select the four schools that will serve as pilot sites in Years 1 and 2 of the project (p. e26).

CPS and an external evaluator, American Institutes for Research (AIR), will collaborate to "plan and deliver implementation of the proposed intervention, study implementation and outcomes by reviewing programmatic data at the end of each cycle, and make changes for improvement. By utilizing a "scale up" model, CPS will increase the number of schools and students to be served over time (two schools in Year 1, two schools in Year 2, and four schools in Year 3).

Weaknesses:

Applicant unclear as to specific utility of products in various settings.

Reader's Score: 43

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

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

(2) 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.

(3) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

The SoS proposal will integrate, coordinate and refine MTSS strategies at participating schools during three tier intervals as indicated in Table 3. Project Timeline (p. e31), which also includes all activities and evaluation.

CPS has extensive previous experience working in partnership with leading research universities, which led to the development and testing of impactful programs through research and evaluation. In addition, grant-funded research involving CPS also led to the development of innovative program models which supported "student achievement and teacher effectiveness". The Mayor of City of Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, AIR, Youth Advocate Programs and Developmental Designs, indicate a demonstrated commitment to implementation and success of the proposal (Appendix

4 Letters of Support).

Weaknesses:

None noted

Reader's Score: 15

Status: Submitted

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