

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 6/24/11 12:00 AM

### Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** NYS Education Department -- NYS Education Department Curr., Instruct., Field Servic (S371C110051)

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

|  | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Questions</b>                                 |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of State-level activities</b>         |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of State-level activities</b>         |                 |               |
| 1. State-level activities                        | 37              | 29            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>37</b>       | <b>29</b>     |
| <b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b> |                 |               |
| 1. State subgrant comp                           | 28              | 24.5          |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>28</b>       | <b>24.5</b>   |
| <b>Project management</b>                        |                 |               |
| <b>Project management</b>                        |                 |               |
| 1. Project management                            | 15              | 10            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>15</b>       | <b>10</b>     |
| <b>Adequacy of resources</b>                     |                 |               |
| <b>Adequacy of resources</b>                     |                 |               |
| 1. Adequacy of resources                         | 20              | 16            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>20</b>       | <b>16</b>     |
| <b>Priority Questions</b>                        |                 |               |
| <b>Competitive Priority</b>                      |                 |               |
| <b>Effective Use of Technology</b>               |                 |               |
| 1. Competitive Priority                          | 5               | 5             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>5</b>        | <b>5</b>      |
| <b>Absolute Priority 1</b>                       |                 |               |
| <b>Improving Learning Outcomes</b>               |                 |               |
| 1. Absolute Priority 1                           | 0               | 0             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>0</b>        | <b>0</b>      |
| <b>Absolute Priority 2</b>                       |                 |               |
| <b>Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making</b>  |                 |               |
| 1. Absolute Priority 2                           | 0               | 0             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>0</b>        | <b>0</b>      |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>105</b>      | <b>84.5</b>   |

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SRCL - 4: 84.371C

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

Applicant: NYS Education Department -- NYS Education Department Curr., Instruct., Field

## Questions

### Quality of State-level activities - Quality of State-level activities

1. In determining the quality of State-level activities, the Secretary considers: See Sub-Criteria

Reader's Score: 29

#### Sub Question

1. How the SEA will carry out the required State-level activities (described in the Additional Requirements section of the NIA) and how it will align those activities with its comprehensive State literacy plan.

#### Strengths:

(ia) The State has a birth through grade 12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan (NYSCLP) (e3, e13). Subgrantees' activities are expected to align with the NYSCLP (GEPA: e0). The NYSCLP outlines goals and action steps which guide the implementation of the plan, and ensures that activities are aligned with the plan (e14).

(ib) RttT (Race to the Top) resources are used to develop Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) standards-aligned curriculum models (e6). There is an effective and abundant alignment of this grant with other federal and state funding streams (e17-e19).

(ic) The process of subgrant reviews are publicly available via postings on the New York State Education Department (NYSED) website and other appropriate websites, a webinar session, and Q&A postings.

(id1-2) The proposed project is likely to deliver effective professional development in literacy; the curriculum and instructional materials to be used are required to be aligned with the NYSCLP and the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) (e20-e23).

(id4) The applicant describes its intention to ensure that all students--including those who have mastered the material ahead of their peers and those who are struggling with the material--are served appropriately; the latter will be served via Rtl (Response to Intervention) plans (e25-e26).

(id5) The applicant embeds the provision of literacy-rich environments in the state's comprehensive literacy goals by requiring that all professional development and curriculum materials (e6, e14-e15) are aligned with these goals.

#### Weaknesses:

(ia) The State has a Comprehensive Literacy Plan (NYSCLP); however, the applicant does not discuss any plans to continuously improve the NYSCLP over the life of the grant.

(id3) The applicant describes the intention to use a statewide system of summative assessments and an early learning framework, but no specific assessments are listed, and no assurance is given that subgrantees will be collecting similar data (e24-e25). The reviewer cannot make a judgment regarding

**Sub Question**

the validity or reliability of screening, diagnostic, or progress-monitoring measures.

(id4) Plans for serving students who have mastered the material ahead of their peers lack specificity (e25).

**Reader's Score: 9**

- 2. The SEA's goals for improving student literacy outcomes throughout the State for all students (e.g., limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities), including a description of the data (which may include data gathered through a needs assessment) that the SEA has considered or will consider and a clear and credible path that the SEA will take to achieve these goals with the support of its LEAs.**

**Strengths:**

(ii) The SEA has successfully disaggregated data by subgroups (ethnicity, English language learners, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities) and identified gaps in proficiencies (e10-e12, e27-e29), and targets professional development of Network Team members so that they can directly influence literacy development of the State's disadvantaged students (e3). The SEA clearly describes the student literacy priorities for improving student literacy outcomes (e3) and comprehensive literacy goals (e27).

**Weaknesses:**

(ii) The applicant refers to Table 4, which is supposed to show two of the goals and their associated action steps, but this table is not included in the proposal. Therefore, there is no evidence of the clear and credible path that the SEA intends to take (e29).

**Reader's Score: 6**

- 3. How the SEA will provide technical assistance and support to its SRCL subgrantees (and, at its discretion, to other LEAs or early childhood education providers) to enable them to implement a high-quality comprehensive literacy program and to improve student achievement in core academic subjects.**

**Strengths:**

(iii) The SEA will provide substantial technical assistance and support. The aligned curriculum modules being developed for grades 3-12 are likely to result in student achievement gains (e6-e7). The state will provide technical assistance and support for: analysis of site-based student data to identify gaps in student learning and instruction (e29), designing a system of supports (e29), and coordinating technical assistance through State or local channels (e29). Support will be provided via Network Team members (e3), the NYSED website, State-led webinars, the SRCL listserv, etc. (e30).

**Weaknesses:**

(iii) No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

- 4. How the SEA will evaluate the State's progress in improving achievement in literacy for children and youth from birth through grade 12, including disadvantaged students, including: (1) whether the evaluation will be conducted by an independent evaluator (whose role in the project is limited solely to conducting the evaluation); (2) whether the evaluation will use methods that are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the objectives of the proposed project; and (3) how the SEA will use**

**Sub Question**

**evidence to inform and continuously improve the design and implementation of its activities.**

**Strengths:**

(iv) The evaluation will be conducted by an independent evaluator (e30) and substantial resources are included in the budget to support the evaluation (e47). The applicant's overarching research question (e30) and statement of intent to include teacher and student outcome measures in the research design are appropriate to the intentions of the proposed project (e30). The inclusion of formative and summative evaluation processes appear to be thorough and feasible (e31). The use of a quasi-experimental design is appropriate to the objectives of this project (e31). The evaluation vendor will provide quarterly and annual reports, and participate in weekly meetings with NYSED (e33).

**Weaknesses:**

(iv) No explicit plan, schedule or activities related to reviewing the results of the formative and summative evaluation data collection is included (e31), nor is information included regarding how the SEA will use evidence to inform and continuously improve the design and implementation of the activities (e33-34). The sample logic model does not clearly show how the evaluation plan will provide the evidence needed to inform and improve the design and implementation of the SEA's activities (e31-32). While the applicant states that the evaluator will develop the logic model with the applicant, a preliminary model related to the SRCL project would have been helpful (e32). None of the classroom practice assessments or teacher knowledge assessments currently exist (e32).

**Reader's Score: 7**

**5. How the SEA will disseminate information on project outcomes, disaggregated by student subgroup, and in formats that are easily understood by, and accessible to, the public, and how the SEA will make that information useful to varied groups (such as families, educators, researchers, other experts, early childhood education providers, and State leaders).**

**Strengths:**

(v) The applicant will disseminate information on best practices and successes and challenges on the NYSED website, through State-led webinars, and on the SRLC listserv (e30).

**Weaknesses:**

(v) No discussion of how the SEA will widely disseminate information on project outcomes disaggregated by student group that is easily understood by and accessible to the public is included in this proposal.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Quality of the State subgrant competition - Quality of the State subgrant competition**

**1. In determining the quality of the applicant's proposed SRCL subgrant competition, the Secretary considers: See Sub-Criteria**

**Reader's Score: 24.5**

**Sub Question**

**1. The extent to which the SEA will run a rigorous, high-quality competition for subgrants, including how it will review and judge:**  
**a) The LEA's or early childhood education provider's capacity to successfully implement its**

**Sub Question**

**proposal.**

**Strengths:**

(i) The SEA has considerable experience in conducting rigorous, high quality competitions for subgrants (e34). The SEA will require applicants to demonstrate their capacity to manage a SRCL subgrant, show need based on evidence-based research, include samples of instructional materials and evidence that the materials align with the CCLS, and complete a Capacity Determination Form. A scoring rubric will be developed by the Statewide Literacy Team (e20, e34). The SRCL Request for Proposals (RFP) and NYSCLP will be posted on the NYSED (New York State Education Department) website, ensuring that the RFP is publicly available. The SRCL Team will lead a Q & A webinar for subgrant applicants, ensuring that all potential applicants have an opportunity to ask questions and to learn from the questions posed by others (e43). Application information will be posted on additional websites (e19) and email blasts announcing the RFP will be distributed to members of relevant listservs across New York State (e19).

**Weaknesses:**

(i) No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**2. (b) The extent to which each SRCL subgrant applicant has proposed a comprehensive high-quality literacy program that meets all of the requirements set out in paragraph (d) of the Additional Requirements section in the NIA and that:**

**(1) Addresses the needs of disadvantaged students and proposes to implement activities in schools and early learning programs with the highest levels of need and capacity for improvement.**

**(2) Is informed by a needs assessment described in the application and is designed to support effective teaching and to improve student achievement of struggling readers.**

**(3) Involves other agencies, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and families in activities that promote the implementation of effective literacy instruction for disadvantaged students.**

**Strengths:**

(b)

(d) All subgrants are required to serve students within the birth-grade 12 range (e19). All are required to complete a needs assessment, using a template provided by the NYSED (e20, e35), and all are required to include a site-based literacy plan (or have a plan in development) that addresses eliminating the achievement gap, preparing students for college and 21st century careers, early interventions, and ongoing professional development (e35-36).

(d1) The professional development provided by subgrantees is likely to be effective because 1) subgrantees are required to use 75% of their funds to deliver job-embedded professional development (e20), 2) subgrantees will receive site-specific support from Network Teams (e22), and 3) subgrantees will select appropriate professional development from NYSED-supported providers (e37). Subgrantees are required to submit professional development plans in an NYSED-provided template that outlines professional development goals, benchmarks, and measurement tools (e37).

(d2) Subgrantees applications require demonstration that they have developed a literacy program that includes curriculum and instructional materials consistent with the NYS P-12 CCLS and aligned with the NYSCLP (e37).

(d3) Subgrantees are required to propose a strategic plan that includes professional development, diagnostic tools, and strategic scaffolding for teachers serving disadvantaged populations (e35). Subgrantees are expected to use coherent assessment systems aligned with State standards and assessments (e38).

(d4) The SEA requires that applicants have in place--or be in the process of developing--interventions that insure that all students, both those who have mastered the material ahead of their peers and those

### Sub Question

struggling with the material, are served appropriately (e38). The RtI activities are likely to help subgrantees address the needs of struggling students (e38). Required enrichment activities are likely to meet the needs of higher level students (e38).

(d5) Subgrantees are required to show evidence of language and text-rich environments, and infrastructural changes that will support literacy for all students, and are encouraged to provide professional development on designing and maintaining these environments (e39).

(d6) The Education Data Portal is expected to provide information on program implementation and outcomes, especially student outcomes (e39).

(ib.1) Subgrant applicants are required to propose programs that target literacy interventions to address the needs of disadvantaged children (e39). Subgrantees are required to identify learning gaps in disadvantaged students, and to identify appropriate interventions and instructional activities (e40).

(ib.2.) Subgrant applicants are required to include a needs assessment in their applications that is based on student data (e40).

(ib.3.) Subgrant applicants are required to provide both examples and evidence of how they will involve other agencies, etc. to promote the implementation of effective literacy instruction for disadvantaged students (e40).

### Weaknesses:

(d3,d6) The assessment systems subgrantees are expected to use are still in development, and lack specificity (e24, e39). No template is provided to help subgrantees develop and implement a coherent assessment system. No specific discussions are included regarding how the systematic use of assessment data will inform instruction, intervention, professional development, and continuous program improvement (e38). No mention is made of appropriate accommodations to ensure that all students are reliably and accurately assessed.

(d5) No template is provided to help subgrantees design a plan for providing and maintaining engaging language- and text-rich learning environments.

(d6) The Education Data Portal (EDP) does not appear to contain specific data that monitors program implementation and outcomes, including the effectiveness of professional development and tracking implementation at the LEA level. The vague reference regarding school staff using the EDP does not show how these data will be used to inform continuous improvement (e39).

(ib.1) There is no explicit statement that subgrantees will serve those students with the highest levels of need and capacity for improvement. Subgrantees are only required to serve at least 40% of disadvantaged students (e20).

(ib.2). The applicant states that the subgrantee needs assessment must connect to the literacy plan's goals and specific interventions, but it is unclear how the subgrantee needs assessments will be used to support effective teaching and to improve student achievement (e40).

**Reader's Score: 6**

- 3. (c) The extent to which each SRCL subgrant applicant demonstrates that it will implement a coherent strategy to improve literacy instruction that aligns activities under the SRCL subgrant with literacy instruction supported with other Federal funds, including with funds the entity receives under Title I, Title II-A, and Title III of the ESEA and, as appropriate, the Head Start Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, and State and local funds.**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

(ic) Subgrant applicants are required to demonstrate that they will align activities with literacy instruction supported with other Federal funds. The applicant lists specific examples of local agencies with which activity alignment will occur (e41).

**Weaknesses:**

(ic) No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 2**

- 4. The extent to which the SEA will give priority to LEAs or providers of early childhood education that propose to serve high-poverty schools or a high-poverty population, based on a definition of poverty and process for applying the priority provided by the State.**

**Strengths:**

(ii) The applicant confirms that subgrantee applicants must show strong evidence that they will serve populations of disadvantaged students, including students who live in poverty (e41). The applicant confirms that it will prioritize subgrant applications based on number of students living in poverty. The formulas used to define "high-poverty" are clearly stated (e41).

**Weaknesses:**

(ii) The applicant does not describe a specific process or rubric for setting the priority levels for LEAs or early childhood providers serving high-poverty populations (e42).

**Reader's Score: 5**

- 5. The extent to which the SEA will give priority to LEAs or providers of early childhood education whose applications are supported by the strongest available evidence.**

**Strengths:**

(iii) The applicant confirms that LEAs or providers of early childhood education are required to submit evidence that they are serving populations of disadvantaged students, that their comprehensive literacy program is research or evidence-based, and incorporates instructional strategies designed to address the needs of diverse learners (e41).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 4**

- 6. The extent to which the SEA will develop or update a process, or use an existing process, to review and judge the evidence base and alignment with State standards for the curricula and materials that LEAs propose to use in implementing their subgrants, and how the SEA will make the process and results of any such review publicly available.**

**Strengths:**

(iv) The process that will be used by the applicant appears to be adequate for judging the quality of the subgrant applications. Review panels consisting of NYSED staff members with wide areas of expertise and backgrounds will review and evaluate each application based on the selection criteria and eligibility determinations outlined in the RFP and application. An evaluation rubric will be used to rate subgrant applications. Subgrant awardees will be posted on the department's website, and on a variety of listservs (e42).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

(iv) The applicant does not specify that the rubric used to evaluate subgrant applications will specifically address the evidence base and alignment with State standards for the curricula and materials that LEAs propose to use in implementing their subgrants (e42).

**Reader's Score: 4.5**

**Project management - Project management**

**1. The Secretary considers the following factors in determining the quality of the project management plan: See Sub-Criteria**

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Sub Question**

**1. (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.**

**Strengths:**

(i) The applicant's management plan explicitly lists key activities that will achieve the objectives of the proposed project. The timeline appears feasible; the Project Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the project management team completes the tasks on the management plan (e43). The applicant will evaluate the degree to which subgrantees achieve project objectives by requiring subgrantees to submit comprehensive performance reports that discuss the effectiveness of professional development activities (e42), progress towards implementation of literacy plans (e43), milestones reached (e43), and inclusion of evidence-based assessments and student outcome data (e43). The applicant will continue to fund only those programs that appear to be meeting project objectives, which increases the likelihood that the overall objectives of the project will be met (e43).

**Weaknesses:**

(i) The management plan does not specify responsibilities for individual Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) management team members, so it is unclear who will conduct each of the specified tasks (e43). No information is listed in the Milestones column of the SRCL Management Plan (Table 5, e43). No explicit information is given regarding how the applicant will ensure that the project will be accomplished within budget (e43).

**Reader's Score: 4**

**2. (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key personnel.**

**Strengths:**

(ii) The stated qualifications of members of the management team, including the Program Coordinator and four part time staff are aligned with the purposes of the project (e44). The resumes in the Appendix indicate that highly qualified staff members are available to fill key personnel positions.

**Weaknesses:**

(ii) The applicant states that one of its innovations is to use Network Team members in each school who will serve as school leaders to provide additional professional development capacity. The Network Team members are key to increasing the capacity of teachers, principals, and literacy coaches' capacity to implement project reforms. No qualifications are listed for Network Team members, so the reviewer cannot make a judgment regarding the qualifications of these key personnel (e2).

**Sub Question**

**Reader's Score: 4**

3. (iii) **The extent to which the State will ensure a diversity of perspectives in the design and implementation of the proposed project, including those of: families, teachers, early childhood education professionals, officials from other State and local agencies, Head Start Advisory Councils, professional organizations, institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, and libraries.**

**Strengths:**

(iii) The applicant mentions that the Statewide Literacy Team is diverse and will provide a wide range of perspectives in the design and implementation of the project. The Team includes external shareholders, suggesting that there will be some diversity in perspectives beyond that of State administrators (e44).

**Weaknesses:**

(iii) The applicant does not provide a list of members, positions, or qualifications of the Statewide Literacy Team, nor does the applicant explicitly describe elements of the diversity of the team members. Thus, no judgment can be made regarding the diversity of perspectives of the team members (e44).

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Adequacy of resources - Adequacy of resources**

1. **The Secretary considers the following factors in determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project: See Sub-Criteria**

**Reader's Score: 16**

**Sub Question**

1. (i) **The extent to which the costs described in the SEA's budget are reasonable in relation to the number of objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project .**

**Strengths:**

(i) The budgeted costs are reasonable in relationship to the number of objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. Ninety-five percent (95%) of funds will be subgranted to applicants who meet the criteria of the project's objectives and goals (e45). Subgrant applicants are required to justify their proposed budgets as part of the application process (e45). The number of state personnel serving the project--and associated costs--are reasonable (e45-e46). The professional development supported by the project is closely aligned with the proposed project's objectives and is likely to enhance the potential significance of the project (e46).

**Weaknesses:**

(i) No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

2. (ii) **The quality of the SEA's plan to ensure that SRCL subgrant funds are allocated as follows:**
- \* **At least 15 percent to serve children from birth through age five.**
  - \* **At least 40 percent to serve students in kindergarten through grade five.**
  - \* **At least 40 percent to serve students in middle and high school, through grade 12, including an equitable distribution of funds between middle and high schools.**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

(ii) The applicant states that SRLC subgrants will be allocated according to the 15/40/40 formula (e47). The applicant broadens the potential of meeting the formula by permitting subgrantees to serve more than one subgroup (e48). The applicant intends to develop a formula to ensure that grant funds are distributed equally, per SRLC requirements (e48), which has the potential to ensure that the allocations meet SRLC requirements.

**Weaknesses:**

(ii) The SEA only states its intention to design a formula to ensure that grant funds are distributed according to SRLC's requirements, but no specifics regarding the formula are offered and so no judgment on the quality of the formula can be made (e48). There is no statement of how an equitable distribution of funds between middle and high schools will be determined and ensured.

**Reader's Score: 2**

3. (iii) **The extent to which the SEA will use the grant to leverage other State and Federal funds in order to maximize the impact of the grant and how it will support LEAs and early childhood education providers in integrating funds with other local, State, and Federal funds and in developing a plan for sustaining funding after the end of the subgrant.**

**Strengths:**

(iii) The SEA offers specific examples of how it will use the grant to leverage other State and federal funds to maximize the impact of the grant, including the alignment and support of the State's Race to the Top Plan. It is likely that program managers of federally and State-funded literacy programs will work together to ensure non-duplication and alignment of efforts because the SRLC management team has specific responsibilities to facilitate this process (e48).

**Weaknesses:**

(iii) There is no description of how the SEA will develop a plan for sustaining funding after the end of the grant.

**Reader's Score: 2.5**

4. (iv) **The extent to which the SEA will award SRCL subgrants of sufficient size to support projects that improve instruction for a significant number of students in the high-need schools or early learning programs serving children birth through five that the SRCL subgrantee would serve.**

**Strengths:**

(iv) The applicant is likely to maximize the impact of the grant by providing funds to those LEAs and early childhood education providers that serve the greatest number of disadvantaged youth, thus ensuring that a significant number of students in high-need schools and early learning programs will be served. The applicant is likely to identify high-need schools because it will use Title I formulas to identify institutions serving the greatest number of high-need students (e48). The applicant states that subgrants will be of sufficient size to meet the needs of the subgrantees (e49).

**Weaknesses:**

(iv) There is no description of what the SEA considers a sufficient size of a subgrant, so it cannot be determined by the reviewer if these subgrants will, indeed, be of sufficient size.

**Reader's Score: 1.5**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Priority - Effective Use of Technology**

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must (1) propose to use technology--which may include technology to support principles of universal design for learning (as defined in the NIA)--to address student learning challenges; and (2) provide, in its application, an evidence-based (as defined in the NIA) rationale that its proposed technology program, practice, or strategy will increase student engagement and achievement or increase teacher effectiveness.

**Background:** The effective use of technology is a critical tool for improving learning outcomes and providing teachers with high-quality professional development. Use of concepts, ideas, programming techniques, and computer-assisted text displays that give access to the text for students who cannot access traditional print, including limited-English-proficient children and students with disabilities, is a basic tenet of universal design for learning (as defined in the NIA) and can help improve students' literacy and language development and identify and address student learning challenges.

**Strengths:**

The project is likely to use technology to increase student engagement and achievement and to increase teacher effectiveness because the applicant will use grant funds to employ a part-time Technology Integration Specialist to provide technical assistance on the use of technology tools to enhance instruction, provide guidance on best practices in the integration of technology for improved student achievement, etc. (Budget Narrative: e1-e2). The professional development provider is required to provide training to integrate technology as a tool to enhance student learning and achievement in literacy, which increases the likelihood that subgrantees will be able to use technology effectively (Budget Narrative: e4). The applicant will dedicate specific funds to subgrantees for the purpose of purchasing LCD reading tablets to be used by all participating students, and subgrantees will receive specific professional development to learn how to use the tablets to support student learning (e21).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score:** 5

**Absolute Priority 1 - Improving Learning Outcomes**

1. To meet this priority: An applicant must propose a project that is designed to improve school readiness and success through grade 12 in the area of language and literacy development for disadvantaged students.

**Background:** Improving the language and literacy development of disadvantaged students is essential to improving academic achievement for these students in all content areas. The 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results show disproportionately large numbers of disadvantaged students struggle with developing the necessary pre-literacy and literacy skills needed to read, comprehend, and use language effectively. This results in persistent gaps in academic achievement through the elementary and secondary school years and in high school graduation rates, and presents civic and economic difficulties for these students later in life. Meeting the language and literacy needs of disadvantaged students, including limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities, is a particular focus of the SRCL program.

**Strengths:**

Priority Met.

The applicant has devoted considerable effort to developing Common Core Standards, pre-Kindergarten standards, and Common Core curricular modules to improve school readiness and success through grade 12 (e0). The applicant will provide Network Teams to help LEAs and early childhood providers align curricula with the NYS P-12 CCLS (New York State PreKindergarten-12 grade Common Core Learning Standards) (e2). The New York State Comprehensive Literacy Plan (NYSCLP) has clearly established a series of student literacy priorities that set benchmarks for students and teachers as they work together to close literacy achievement gaps. The State's Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) plan is closely aligned with the NYSCLP and identifies the ongoing supports needed for teachers of struggling students (e3). The proposed project is carefully aligned with the above initiatives, and is therefore designed to improve school readiness and success through grade 12 in the area of language and literacy development for all students. Subgrantees are required

to use curriculum and instructional materials that are aligned with the NYS P-12 CCLS (e22).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Absolute Priority 2 - Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making**

- 1. To meet this priority: An applicant must propose a project that is designed to collect, analyze, and use high-quality and timely data, especially on program participant outcomes, in accordance with privacy requirements (as defined in the NIA), to improve instructional practices, policies, and student outcomes in early learning settings and in elementary and secondary schools.**

**Background: Accurate, timely, relevant, and appropriate data, and the effective use of that data for informed decision-making, are essential to the continuous improvement of children's literacy and language development. In developing comprehensive literacy plans and programs, it is important for States to consider strategies that provide educators, as well as families and other key stakeholders, with the data they need and the capacity and training to use those data to improve school readiness, respond to the learning and academic needs of students, improve educator effectiveness, inform professional development practices and approaches, and make informed decisions that increase student pre-literacy, literacy, and language development.**

**Strengths:**

Priority Met.

The SEA is using Race to the Top funding to develop formative, interim, and summative assessments aligned to the NYS P-12 CCLS (New York State PreKindergarten-12 grade Common Core Learning Standards). The SEA is developing a robust data system and rigorous teacher and principal evaluation systems that include student achievement measures, which will enable the applicant to collect, analyze, and use high-quality and timely data (e1). The NYSCLP has a specific key action step related to the use of a variety of data to inform instruction and curricular decision-making (e16). Subgrantees will use the Education Data Portal's Comprehensive Instructional Reporting and Improvement System (IRIS) to help identify students at risk (e1-e2).

Subgrantees are expected to use coherent, aligned assessment systems to inform instruction (e38).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 6/24/11 12:00 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 6/24/11 12:00 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** NYS Education Department -- NYS Education Department Curr., Instruct., Field Servic (S371C110051)

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

|  | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Questions</b>                                 |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of State-level activities</b>         |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of State-level activities</b>         |                 |               |
| 1. State-level activities                        | 37              | 31            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>37</b>       | <b>31</b>     |
| <b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b> |                 |               |
| 1. State subgrant comp                           | 28              | 22.5          |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>28</b>       | <b>22.5</b>   |
| <b>Project management</b>                        |                 |               |
| <b>Project management</b>                        |                 |               |
| 1. Project management                            | 15              | 9             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>15</b>       | <b>9</b>      |
| <b>Adequacy of resources</b>                     |                 |               |
| <b>Adequacy of resources</b>                     |                 |               |
| 1. Adequacy of resources                         | 20              | 15            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>20</b>       | <b>15</b>     |
| <b>Priority Questions</b>                        |                 |               |
| <b>Competitive Priority</b>                      |                 |               |
| <b>Effective Use of Technology</b>               |                 |               |
| 1. Competitive Priority                          | 5               | 5             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>5</b>        | <b>5</b>      |
| <b>Absolute Priority 1</b>                       |                 |               |
| <b>Improving Learning Outcomes</b>               |                 |               |
| 1. Absolute Priority 1                           | 0               | 0             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>0</b>        | <b>0</b>      |
| <b>Absolute Priority 2</b>                       |                 |               |
| <b>Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making</b>  |                 |               |
| 1. Absolute Priority 2                           | 0               | 0             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | <b>0</b>        | <b>0</b>      |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>105</b>      | <b>82.5</b>   |

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SRCL - 4: 84.371C

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

Applicant: NYS Education Department -- NYS Education Department Curr., Instruct., Field

## Questions

### Quality of State-level activities - Quality of State-level activities

1. In determining the quality of State-level activities, the Secretary considers: See Sub-Criteria

Reader's Score: 31

#### Sub Question

1. How the SEA will carry out the required State-level activities (described in the Additional Requirements section of the NIA) and how it will align those activities with its comprehensive State literacy plan.

#### Strengths:

The applicant seems to have developed a thorough plan to carry out State-level activities and align those activities with its comprehensive State literacy plan. The applicant has designed an innovative structure called "Network Teams" that are tasked with helping schools to implement their SRCL plans. The applicant also has an extensive system of Regional Information Centers which are staffed with qualified professionals who provide over \$300,000,000 in high-quality technology related services(e10). The state has implemented a unique data portal that is an Instructional Improvement System as well as an early warning system. As a part of this comprehensive plan, the applicant has developed a B-12 plan whose sound goals are to: close the achievement gap; implement the NY's P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), and increase capacity through teacher education and Professional Development (PD). As a part of this comprehensive plan, the state has established a comprehensive and thorough set of goals and action steps to be followed by subgrantees. This establishes appropriate scaffolds and guidelines for subgrantees. Additional evidence of the state's ability to carry out the plan is the applicant's focused plan to integrate (e17-19) other state and federal funds to fully leverage the SRCL funds. The applicant plans on using web-based strategies to ensure that all potential subgrantees are informed of the requirements of the subgrants. The applicant seems to have established sound foundations and the processes to facilitate the state's comprehensive literacy plan. This comprehensive plan details in particular an ambitious job-embedded PD infrastructure from birth through 12th grade for all educators in the system. Other sound supports that the state has in place include an umbrella learning experience for the state's educators, a full year of curricular modules by summer of 2013 with associated measures of student performance. This comprehensive plan also involves a thorough framework for the assessment of early learners that includes progress measures. The state is in the process of meeting with other state agencies to further strengthen this area. The applicant has detailed an innovative and exhaustive plan that covers the additional requirements section of the grant notice.

#### Weaknesses:

The application would have benefitted if the applicant explicitly stated their plan for continuously improving their literacy plan.

Reader's Score: 9

2. The SEA's goals for improving student literacy outcomes throughout the State for all students (e.g., limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities), including a description of the

**Sub Question**

**data (which may include data gathered through a needs assessment) that the SEA has considered or will consider and a clear and credible path that the SEA will take to achieve these goals with the support of its LEAs.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant has six appropriate goals (e27) that, if achieved, would serve to close the literacy gap and prepare all students for their chosen career path. The applicant has provided a detailed analysis of data and effectively annotated the gaps among differing student groups. These data were used to inform the applicant's goals. The data came from varying sources and provide convincing evidence that the state has done a thorough needs assessment. (e28-e29). As noted in the previous indicator, the state has provided a clear B-12 plan that seems to focus on all of the elements of the grant. The applicant places a considerable amount of resources on ongoing professional development and already has many of the components necessary for a comprehensive literacy plan in place. These include a network of technical assistance providers; planned Professional Development (PD)(e10); a system for gathering and analyzing data, and technical assistance for using technology to enhance educational outcomes. The applicant has put together a thorough and achievable plan.

**Weaknesses:**

The state failed to include a table that was referred to in the narrative, making it difficult to understand what action steps are to be taken (e29). This omission weakened the application.

**Reader's Score: 7**

- 3. How the SEA will provide technical assistance and support to its SRCL subgrantees (and, at its discretion, to other LEAs or early childhood education providers) to enable them to implement a high-quality comprehensive literacy program and to improve student achievement in core academic subjects.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents an adequate plan for providing technical assistance. The SRCL program management team will work with grantees. This includes help with data analysis and the use of data to design instructional supports. The state plans on using site visits and annual reports to document progress or non-progress. (e30) An innovative method is the creation of a listserv to provide a forum for grantees to communicate with one another. Also, based on data analysis, other strategies such as making experts available to subgrantees and using technologies such as webinars paints a picture of a comprehensive technical assistance plan.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

- 4. How the SEA will evaluate the State's progress in improving achievement in literacy for children and youth from birth through grade 12, including disadvantaged students, including: (1) whether the evaluation will be conducted by an independent evaluator (whose role in the project is limited solely to conducting the evaluation); (2) whether the evaluation will use methods that are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the objectives of the proposed project; and (3) how the SEA will use evidence to inform and continuously improve the design and implementation of its activities.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant has detailed a comprehensive and innovative evaluation plan. The state has clearly stated research questions that will examine the impact of the grant on a) teachers' ability to effectively incorporate the Professional Learning Outcomes in their daily practice, and b) students' performance. An external evaluator will perform this quasi-experimental design using matched-sample comparison groups in combination with pre-post and/or time series designs. The applicant presents a strong logic model that clearly establishes a direct link between grant activities and teacher and student outcomes. (e32-e33)The applicant presents a thorough detailed timeline of the evaluation and evaluation

**Sub Question**

milestones. The extensive types of data to be collected are both qualitative and quantitative allowing the data to be used for both formative and summative evaluation.

**Weaknesses:**

The logic model, unfortunately, does not indicate the continuous improvement phase of formative assessment. The feedback loop is never explicitly addressed in the narrative, which weakens the formative phase (continuous improvement) part of the plan.

**Reader's Score:** 9

- 5. How the SEA will disseminate information on project outcomes, disaggregated by student subgroup, and in formats that are easily understood by, and accessible to, the public, and how the SEA will make that information useful to varied groups (such as families, educators, researchers, other experts, early childhood education providers, and State leaders).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant does suggest that it will disseminate information to various groups including educators, researchers, and other experts.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not explicitly mention outcomes, omits how it will distribute information to families. In general, there is a dearth of information related to the "how" of the dissemination plan.

**Reader's Score:** 1

**Quality of the State subgrant competition - Quality of the State subgrant competition**

- 1. In determining the quality of the applicant's proposed SRCL subgrant competition, the Secretary considers: See Sub-Criteria**

**Reader's Score:** 22.5

**Sub Question**

- 1. The extent to which the SEA will run a rigorous, high-quality competition for subgrants, including how it will review and judge:**  
**a) The LEA's or early childhood education provider's capacity to successfully implement its proposal.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant has adequate processes in place to assure that subgrantees have the capacity to implement the subgrants. (e34) One innovative part of this process is that the subgrant applicant will be required to fill out a "Capacity Determination Form" which helps the NYSED to determine if the applicant is eligible to manage multi-year government grants. Equally effective is that the subgrant applicant is mandated to provide their latest audit. The state does note that there will be opportunity for LEAS who have not had previous large grants to prove that they have the capacity to implement and manage a subgrant.

**Weaknesses:**

While the state indicates subgrant applicants who have not received prior grants will be given an opportunity to show that they can, the state does not detail the process for this situation. This might mean that eligible subgrantees who have not had previous opportunity will be shut out of the

**Sub Question**

competition despite being qualified (e34).

**Reader's Score: 2**

**2. (b) The extent to which each SRCL subgrant applicant has proposed a comprehensive high-quality literacy program that meets all of the requirements set out in paragraph (d) of the Additional Requirements section in the NIA and that:**

**(1) Addresses the needs of disadvantaged students and proposes to implement activities in schools and early learning programs with the highest levels of need and capacity for improvement.**

**(2) Is informed by a needs assessment described in the application and is designed to support effective teaching and to improve student achievement of struggling readers.**

**(3) Involves other agencies, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and families in activities that promote the implementation of effective literacy instruction for disadvantaged students.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant has detailed a thorough process for the subgrant applicants to follow in order to be eligible for the grants. This process includes alignment to the state standards, a demonstration of how the proposed program will eliminate the achievement gaps; early interventions for disadvantaged groups, and ongoing job embedded PD (e35-36). Included in this comprehensive plan is training for literacy leadership teams. Additionally, the subgrant plan must be based on a needs assessment to be included in the plan and directly linked to activities. Finally, the state asks subgrants to document how their proposal will involve other agencies and community based organizations citing that these partnership will strengthen the grant. The sound combination of factors presents convincing evidence that subgrantees will have the capacity to facilitate improvement and that the state has proposed a high-quality literacy program.(e40-41)

**Weaknesses:**

1) The applicant is ambiguous as to how they will ensure that subgrantees propose to implement activities in schools and early learning programs with the highest levels of need. In their application they note that to be eligible the subgrant applicant must serve schools that have at least 40% of its students eligible for free and reduced lunch. This would seem to be a modest requirement with potential for partnerships being formed with relatively low percentages of disadvantaged students (e35-e36).

**Reader's Score: 6**

**3. (c) The extent to which each SRCL subgrant applicant demonstrates that it will implement a coherent strategy to improve literacy instruction that aligns activities under the SRCL subgrant with literacy instruction supported with other Federal funds, including with funds the entity receives under Title I, Title II-A, and Title III of the ESEA and, as appropriate, the Head Start Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, and State and local funds.**

**Strengths:**

The state requires that subgrantees demonstrate that they will align funding with other funding streams such as Title I and IDEA. This would seem to be adequate evidence that the subgrant applicant must demonstrate that it will implement a coherent strategy to improve literacy instruction that aligns activities under the SRCL subgrant with literacy instruction supported with other federal and state funds. (e41)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Sub Question**

**Reader's Score: 2**

- 4. The extent to which the SEA will give priority to LEAs or providers of early childhood education that propose to serve high-poverty schools or a high-poverty population, based on a definition of poverty and process for applying the priority provided by the State.**

**Strengths:**

The state notes that it will prioritize subgrant applications based on the number of students living in poverty using the formula used for Title 1 funds. This would seem to be an adequate method to ensure that high poverty schools receive an appropriate level of funding.

**Weaknesses:**

The state sets a minimum of only 40% of a school's population be disadvantaged( this includes all subgroups). This low minimum could result in very few high poverty students being served by some subgrants(p20).

**Reader's Score: 4**

- 5. The extent to which the SEA will give priority to LEAs or providers of early childhood education whose applications are supported by the strongest available evidence.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides convincing evidence of their commitment to giving priority to Early Childhood Education Partners (ECEP) and LEAs who demonstrate the strongest level of success. Throughout the grant, NYSED has tied the sound process for receiving grants to the state standards(e41). The comprehensive subgranting process asks the subgrant applicants to present evidence surrounding their curricula (e36-e37), PD plans, assessments and interventions, and evaluation plans. The state has provided the subgrant applicants with a thorough list of research-based areas (aligned by age level) that would be appropriate areas for focus of their subgrants. The state also asks subgrantees to detail previous successful initiatives. Additionally, the applicant's clearly stated goals also lend credibility that the state will choose subgrantees who will have the strongest chance of success.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 4**

- 6. The extent to which the SEA will develop or update a process, or use an existing process, to review and judge the evidence base and alignment with State standards for the curricula and materials that LEAs propose to use in implementing their subgrants, and how the SEA will make the process and results of any such review publicly available.**

**Strengths:**

The state explicates an adequate and thorough process for reviewing grants. The applicant plans on using the SRCL management team to manage the grants and the review process. The applicant notes that these panels will be composed of highly qualified literacy experts. Review panels will likewise be composed of B-12 literacy experts. The state has designed an evaluation rubric. Additionally, the state will post the sub-grant results on the state website and also through appropriate websites. The combination of factors appears to present a comprehensive and thorough process for reviewing grants.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not specify the criteria for judging subgrants (42).

**Reader's Score: 4.5**

## Project management - Project management

1. The Secretary considers the following factors in determining the quality of the project management plan: See Sub-Criteria

Reader's Score: 9

### Sub Question

1. (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.

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides an adequate management plan which lists the primary responsibilities for the management team (e43) and a general timeline for the first year. Extensive detail is provided (e33-34) for the evaluation plan for the full length of the grant.

#### Weaknesses:

The management plan presented was lacking in details related to specific milestones. It also lacked detail as to who would "own" each responsibility. This lack makes it difficult to predict efficacious implementation. The timeline did not extend past the first year of the grant. The lack of these details significantly weakened the management plan.

Reader's Score: 4

2. (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key personnel.

#### Strengths:

The applicant presents an adequate description of the profiles of the management team. The state appears to be recruiting qualified individuals with backgrounds in literacy and leadership.

#### Weaknesses:

The state did not list qualifications for the literacy network team members who are an important part of the grant's plan. This weakens the narrative.

Reader's Score: 4

3. (iii) The extent to which the State will ensure a diversity of perspectives in the design and implementation of the proposed project, including those of: families, teachers, early childhood education professionals, officials from other State and local agencies, Head Start Advisory Councils, professional organizations, institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, and libraries.

#### Strengths:

The applicant states that the statewide literacy team is appropriately diverse and includes external shareholders. (e44)

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant offers sparse information about the makeup of its advisory council. They only mention that they will use their Statewide Literacy Team, but no information is provided detailing the makeup of the team. This makes it difficult to judge if diversity has been included in the team (e44).

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 1

Adequacy of resources - Adequacy of resources

1. The Secretary considers the following factors in determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project: See Sub-Criteria

Reader's Score: 15

Sub Question

1. (i) The extent to which the costs described in the SEA's budget are reasonable in relation to the number of objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project .

**Strengths:**

The state presents an adequate budget (e47 and budget narrative), that appears to budget equally for each year. Adequate funds are allocated for evaluation and for technical assistance during the grant. Ample funds are also allocated for ongoing job embedded PD with 75% of subgrant funds targeted at that arena. Generally the budget seems to be reasonable.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

2. (ii) The quality of the SEA's plan to ensure that SRCL subgrant funds are allocated as follows:
- \* At least 15 percent to serve children from birth through age five.
  - \* At least 40 percent to serve students in kindergarten through grade five.
  - \* At least 40 percent to serve students in middle and high school, through grade 12, including an equitable distribution of funds between middle and high schools.

**Strengths:**

The applicant states that they have an adequate plan to ensure appropriate allocation of funds.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant is ambiguous as to how it will ensure the appropriate ratio (15/40/40). (e47-48) The applicant only states that it will design a formula but no details are supplied.

Reader's Score: 1

3. (iii) The extent to which the SEA will use the grant to leverage other State and Federal funds in order to maximize the impact of the grant and how it will support LEAs and early childhood education providers in integrating funds with other local, State, and Federal funds and in developing a plan for sustaining funding after the end of the subgrant.

**Strengths:**

The applicant details an adequate plan to leverage SRCL funds with other federal and state funding. The applicant has a sound plan to have the program coordinator coordinate all (state and federal) literacy funds to ensure appropriate integration of the funds. The applicant is also in the process of developing appropriate program evaluation and monitoring tools which further strengthens the plan.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found

**Reader's Score:** 3

4. (iv) The extent to which the SEA will award SRCL subgrants of sufficient size to support projects that improve instruction for a significant number of students in the high-need schools or early learning programs serving children birth through five that the SRCL subgrantee would serve.

**Strengths:**

The applicant states that it will develop an appropriate formula for an equitable distribution of funds. They appropriately plan on using the Title 1 formula for deciding on need.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant gives no details related to how they will ensure that subgrants will be of sufficient size to address the needs of the subgrantee. This lack of detail makes it difficult to judge the quality of the plan.

**Reader's Score:** 1

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Priority - Effective Use of Technology**

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must (1) propose to use technology--which may include technology to support principles of universal design for learning (as defined in the NIA)--to address student learning challenges; and (2) provide, in its application, an evidence-based (as defined in the NIA) rationale that its proposed technology program, practice, or strategy will increase student engagement and achievement or increase teacher effectiveness.

**Background:** The effective use of technology is a critical tool for improving learning outcomes and providing teachers with high-quality professional development. Use of concepts, ideas, programming techniques, and computer-assisted text displays that give access to the text for students who cannot access traditional print, including limited-English-proficient children and students with disabilities, is a basic tenet of universal design for learning (as defined in the NIA) and can help improve students' literacy and language development and identify and address student learning challenges.

**Strengths:**

The applicant details an extensive commitment to the use of technology to support students and teachers. One convincing example of this is the use of twelve Regional Information Centers that annually provide districts with over \$300 million in high-quality technology-related services. Another innovative use of technology is the purchase of computer pads to facilitate students' growth in literacy (e12). Additionally, the applicant has an innovative data portal system that allows the applicant to help their school districts collect and analyze data, and serve as an early warning system .

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score:** 5

**Absolute Priority 1 - Improving Learning Outcomes**

1. To meet this priority: An applicant must propose a project that is designed to improve school readiness and success through grade 12 in the area of language and literacy development for disadvantaged

students.

**Background:** Improving the language and literacy development of disadvantaged students is essential to improving academic achievement for these students in all content areas. The 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results show disproportionately large numbers of disadvantaged students struggle with developing the necessary pre-literacy and literacy skills needed to read, comprehend, and use language effectively. This results in persistent gaps in academic achievement through the elementary and secondary school years and in high school graduation rates, and presents civic and economic difficulties for these students later in life. Meeting the language and literacy needs of disadvantaged students, including limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities, is a particular focus of the SRCL program.

**Strengths:**

The applicant has put together an ambitious plan designed to improve school readiness and success for disadvantaged students. The applicant has already put in place extensive components to successfully implement this plan. This includes a clearly articulated B-12 literacy plan focused on implementing word-class literacy standards. Other important components include a well thought-out evaluation plan, and effective use of technology and technical assistance. The applicant's plan for ensuring that subgrantees are well qualified to implement their plans is also a strength. One innovative part of this process is that the subgrant applicant will be required to fill out a "Capacity Determination Form" which helps the NYSESD to determine if the applicant is eligible to manage multi-year government grants. The applicant has MET this criteria.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found

**Reader's Score:** 0

**Absolute Priority 2 - Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making**

1. **To meet this priority:** An applicant must propose a project that is designed to collect, analyze, and use high-quality and timely data, especially on program participant outcomes, in accordance with privacy requirements (as defined in the NIA), to improve instructional practices, policies, and student outcomes in early learning settings and in elementary and secondary schools.

**Background:** Accurate, timely, relevant, and appropriate data, and the effective use of that data for informed decision-making, are essential to the continuous improvement of children's literacy and language development. In developing comprehensive literacy plans and programs, it is important for States to consider strategies that provide educators, as well as families and other key stakeholders, with the data they need and the capacity and training to use those data to improve school readiness, respond to the learning and academic needs of students, improve educator effectiveness, inform professional development practices and approaches, and make informed decisions that increase student pre-literacy, literacy, and language development.

**Strengths:**

The applicant has detailed a comprehensive and innovative evaluation plan that is designed to collect, analyze, and use high-quality and timely data, especially on program participant outcomes to improve instructional practices, policies, and student outcomes in early learning settings and in elementary and secondary schools. The state has clearly stated research questions that will examine the impact of the grant on a) teachers' ability to effectively incorporate the Professional Learning Outcomes in their daily practice, and b) students' performance. An external evaluator will perform this ambitious quasi-experimental design using matched-sample comparison groups in combination with pre-post and/or time series designs. (e32-e33)The applicant presents a thorough detailed timeline of the evaluation and evaluation milestones. The extensive types of qualitative and quantitative to be collected ensure that the data can be used for both formative and summative evaluation. Absolute priority 2 is MET.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 6/24/11 12:00 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 6/24/11 12:00 AM

### Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** NYS Education Department -- NYS Education Department Curr., Instruct., Field Servic (S371C110051)

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

|  | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Questions</b>                                 |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of State-level activities</b>         |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of State-level activities</b>         |                 |               |
| 1. State-level activities                        | 37              | 33            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | 37              | 33            |
| <b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b> |                 |               |
| 1. State subgrant comp                           | 28              | 25.5          |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | 28              | 25.5          |
| <b>Project management</b>                        |                 |               |
| <b>Project management</b>                        |                 |               |
| 1. Project management                            | 15              | 12            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | 15              | 12            |
| <b>Adequacy of resources</b>                     |                 |               |
| <b>Adequacy of resources</b>                     |                 |               |
| 1. Adequacy of resources                         | 20              | 17            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | 20              | 17            |
| <b>Priority Questions</b>                        |                 |               |
| <b>Competitive Priority</b>                      |                 |               |
| <b>Effective Use of Technology</b>               |                 |               |
| 1. Competitive Priority                          | 5               | 5             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | 5               | 5             |
| <b>Absolute Priority 1</b>                       |                 |               |
| <b>Improving Learning Outcomes</b>               |                 |               |
| 1. Absolute Priority 1                           | 0               | 0             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | 0               | 0             |
| <b>Absolute Priority 2</b>                       |                 |               |
| <b>Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making</b>  |                 |               |
| 1. Absolute Priority 2                           | 0               | 0             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                 | 0               | 0             |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | 105             | 92.5          |

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SRCL - 4: 84.371C

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

Applicant: NYS Education Department -- NYS Education Department Curr., Instruct., Field

## Questions

### Quality of State-level activities - Quality of State-level activities

1. In determining the quality of State-level activities, the Secretary considers: See Sub-Criteria

Reader's Score: 33

#### Sub Question

1. How the SEA will carry out the required State-level activities (described in the Additional Requirements section of the NIA) and how it will align those activities with its comprehensive State literacy plan.

#### Strengths:

The applicant has a sound plan to provide job-embedded professional development and technical assistance to teachers that will increase effectiveness and align with NYSs Common Core Standards in classrooms serving a majority of disadvantaged students (Pre-K-grade 12). (e0)

The applicant has a sound plan to leverage all aspects of USNY (a component of NYSED) and align resources including curriculum, assessments and instruction around students, systems and structures to increase outcomes for the most in need students. (e1)

The focus of the implementation will be around the classroom to significantly increase the capacity of teachers, principals and literacy coaches. (e2)

The applicant has a strong plan to build on prior work of the Regents Reform Agenda and Race to the Top (RttT) by funding direct supports for implementation in schools that need it the most. (e2) (e6)

The applicants' plan to provide professional development for Network teams is sound and focuses on disadvantaged students. (e4)

The applicant adequately describes how aligned curricular modules will join with the statewide initiative and job embedded supports to implement a School Based Inquiry and Data Driven Instruction to provide the foundation for a comprehensive model. (e7) The applicant provides two successful models already implementing the practices NYSED plans to scale across the state. (e8)

Additional requirements are comprehensive with 95% of SRCL used to support competitive sub-grants for local agencies or early childhood education providers. (e12)

The SRCL grant program is driven by two absolute priorities and one competitive preference priority to produce the intended impact. (e12)

The applicant shows strong evidence of goals and key action steps for a creditable path to achieve the goals. (e16)

Coordination of funding streams and implementation of supports will be aligned with Federal and State funds and programs within NYSED and NYS LEAs. (e17-e19)

The applicant will provide transparency in the RFP process. NYSED will post the RFP and the review

**Sub Question**

process on the grants page of their website. In addition email blasts announcing the application will be included in listserves. Criteria are listed in the SRCL Subgrant Applicant Eligibility Criteria (e19-e20).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not have an explicit plan for continuously improving the state literacy plan.

**Reader's Score:** 9

- 2. The SEA's goals for improving student literacy outcomes throughout the State for all students (e.g., limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities), including a description of the data (which may include data gathered through a needs assessment) that the SEA has considered or will consider and a clear and credible path that the SEA will take to achieve these goals with the support of its LEAs.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant details the rich, embedded performance tasks under development by New York State that will enable teachers to assess student's progress towards the CCLS in an ongoing way that is consistent with the data-driven model. These performance tasks will elicit evidence of students' progress in each of the five key elements of literacy and because they are embedded in the curriculum and will serve as the center point of instruction. (e24) Performance assessments will be in starting in 2012-13, the New York state end-of-year summative assessments and the results will provide a thorough assessment of student achievement on the reading and writing. (e22) NYSED Office of Early Learning (OEL) is developing a Guiding Framework for the Assessment of Early Learners for assessment of learners in pre-kindergarten - grade 2. (e24) The NYSCLP sets a clear and credible path for the NYSED to take to achieve its goals with the support of its LEAs by using student literacy priorities, goals, and actions. (e29)

**Weaknesses:**

Table 4 is not included in the proposal but the applicant refers to that table in this section making it difficult to understand the action steps.

**Reader's Score:** 7

- 3. How the SEA will provide technical assistance and support to its SRCL subgrantees (and, at its discretion, to other LEAs or early childhood education providers) to enable them to implement a high-quality comprehensive literacy program and to improve student achievement in core academic subjects.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant has a comprehensive plan to analyze data for race and socioeconomic status; sizable discrepancies are noted among different groups to achieve the Comprehensive Literacy Goals (Table 3). (e27) The applicant has a plan to share reports and best practices among sub-grantees through site visits, website and State led webinars. And, the applicant will create a listserv to provide a forum for sub-grantees to communicate with each other, and share resources to produce a high quality literacy program. (e30)

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score:** 5

4. How the SEA will evaluate the State's progress in improving achievement in literacy for children and youth from birth through grade 12, including disadvantaged students, including: (1) whether the evaluation will be conducted by an independent evaluator (whose role in the project is limited solely to conducting the evaluation); (2) whether the evaluation will use methods that are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the objectives of the proposed project; and (3) how the SEA will use evidence to inform and continuously improve the design and implementation of its activities.

**Strengths:**

The applicant plans for a rigorous and comprehensive quasi-experimental evaluation of the statewide initiatives and the LEA programs funded by SRCL that will be conducted by a third-party evaluator. (e30) The primary objective of the evaluation study is to obtain compelling evidence of the efficacy of the New York State Struggling Readers & Writers Literacy Initiative to improve the literacy of NYS students at all developmental levels.

The evaluation will examine the impact of the Initiative on teachers, and students. (e30) The evaluation will be formative, quasi-experimental in design, logic model (Figure 1, e32), measureable, with a timeline and milestones (Table X, e32) to achieve the intended impact. (e30-33)

The applicant will require a high-quality competition for sub-grants with change in performance on curriculum-embedded performance tasks and end-of-year summative assessments.

**Weaknesses:**

There is no plan or schedule to review the summative or formative evaluation data. (e31)

There is no evidence of how the SEA will review the evidence to inform and improve the design of activities. (E33-34)

**Reader's Score:** 9

5. How the SEA will disseminate information on project outcomes, disaggregated by student subgroup, and in formats that are easily understood by, and accessible to, the public, and how the SEA will make that information useful to varied groups (such as families, educators, researchers, other experts, early childhood education providers, and State leaders).

**Strengths:**

SRCL staff will share best practices among sub-grantees on the NYSED website and through State-led webinars. Subgrantees will be able to see successes and challenges faced by their peers to explore technical assistance options. (e30)

NYSED will create a SRCL listserv, facilitated by SRCL program management staff, to provide a forum for SRCL sub-grantees to communicate with one another, share resources, and learn about effective literacy programs across the state.

The SRCL management team will ensure that the State in-service and ongoing professional development will include the use of video, and other technologies as appropriate, allowing teachers to observe master teachers and analyze teaching practices to improve their teaching technique. (e39)

**Weaknesses:**

There was no discussion about how project outcomes will be disseminated to the public in easily understood formats.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 3

Quality of the State subgrant competition - Quality of the State subgrant competition

1. In determining the quality of the applicant's proposed SRCL subgrant competition, the Secretary considers: See Sub-Criteria

Reader's Score: 25.5

Sub Question

1. The extent to which the SEA will run a rigorous, high-quality competition for subgrants, including how it will review and judge:
  - a) The LEA's or early childhood education provider's capacity to successfully implement its proposal.

**Strengths:**

The applicant justifies the ability to run a rigorous, high-quality competition for sub-grantees from past experience. (34)  
LEAs and early childhood education providers will be required to complete a Capacity Determination Form and demonstrate that they can successfully manage large, multi-year grants and provide latest audit. (34)

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 3

2. (b) The extent to which each SRCL subgrant applicant has proposed a comprehensive high-quality literacy program that meets all of the requirements set out in paragraph (d) of the Additional Requirements section in the NIA and that:
  - (1) Addresses the needs of disadvantaged students and proposes to implement activities in schools and early learning programs with the highest levels of need and capacity for improvement.
  - (2) Is informed by a needs assessment described in the application and is designed to support effective teaching and to improve student achievement of struggling readers.
  - (3) Involves other agencies, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and families in activities that promote the implementation of effective literacy instruction for disadvantaged students.

**Strengths:**

Sub-grant proposals must provide a strategic plan that includes job-embedded professional development, diagnostic tools and strategic scaffolding for teachers serving disadvantaged populations.  
Successful sub-grant application will include a needs assessment with deep data analysis based on current, multi-year data, district-wide testing and internal assessments, disaggregated by NCLB subgroups (e35, e40)  
A competitive application must include samples of curriculum modules aligned with the NYS P-12 CCLS, performance tasks, job-embedded professional development and clear rules and responsibilities corresponding to the outcomes of this grant for literacy coaches and Network Teams.  
Sub-grant applications must include a site-based literacy plan (or evidence of a plan in development) that demonstrates how the proposed program will help eliminate the achievement gap, includes early interventions, provides for ongoing professional development etc. (e35-36)  
NYSED meets the additional requirements indicated on e36-40.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant was ambiguous as to how they will ensure that the subgrantees implement activities in the schools and in early childhood centers where there is the highest need.

The applicant states that it will serve at least 40% of disadvantaged students; therefore the applicant may be eliminating 60% of the students in need. (e20)

There is no template available for subgrantees to design a plan for providing rich text environments.

**Reader's Score: 6**

- 3. (c) The extent to which each SRCL subgrant applicant demonstrates that it will implement a coherent strategy to improve literacy instruction that aligns activities under the SRCL subgrant with literacy instruction supported with other Federal funds, including with funds the entity receives under Title I, Title II-A, and Title III of the ESEA and, as appropriate, the Head Start Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, and State and local funds.**

**Strengths:**

To ensure a coherent approach to funding and implementing effective literacy support for learners, particularly those who are identified as disadvantaged, SRCL sub-grant applications must demonstrate that they will align funding with current programs under Title I, Title II-A, and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), and, as appropriate, under the Head Start Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. Applicants should indicate that they will actively collaborate with relevant local agencies to produce the intended outcome.

NYSED meets the additional requirements indicated on e36-40.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 2**

- 4. The extent to which the SEA will give priority to LEAs or providers of early childhood education that propose to serve high-poverty schools or a high-poverty population, based on a definition of poverty and process for applying the priority provided by the State.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant confirms adequate information to demonstrate that priority to sub-grant applications will be based on the number of students living in poverty and served by the LEA or early education provider. For LEAs, NYSED will use the same formula used by Title I to determine poverty and funding based on the number of students eligible for free and/or reduced price lunch (F/RPL). For early childhood education providers, the NYSED will use data from the districts of residence of the students to determine poverty according to Title I as specified by USDE.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 6**

- 5. The extent to which the SEA will give priority to LEAs or providers of early childhood education**

**Sub Question**

**whose applications are supported by the strongest available evidence.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant documents that all sub-grant applicants need to show strong evidence that they will serve populations of disadvantaged students.

LEAs or providers of early childhood education programs, must ensure that their comprehensive literacy program is research or evidence-based and incorporates instructional strategies designed to address the needs of diverse learners, along the birth-grade 12 continuum.

For birth-age 5, the applicant requires that the early childhood education provider must demonstrate that their literacy program will promote reading readiness and lead to student success in the NYS P-12 CCLS.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 4**

- 6. The extent to which the SEA will develop or update a process, or use an existing process, to review and judge the evidence base and alignment with State standards for the curricula and materials that LEAs propose to use in implementing their subgrants, and how the SEA will make the process and results of any such review publicly available.**

**Strengths:**

NYSED will administer a high quality, competitive sub-grant application process for the States LEAs and early childhood education providers. NYSED will build a SRCL program management team comprised of in-house literacy experts with extensive experience in birth-grade 12 literacy instruction, who will manage all aspects of the SRCL grant and sub-grants.

The SRCL program management team will establish review panels made up of NYSED staff members with background and expertise that address the birth - grade 12 learning continuum and diverse learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities. Panels will review and evaluate each application based upon the selection criteria and eligibility determinations outlined in the RFP.(e40)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not indicate how the program management team, comprised of in-house literacy experts with extensive experience in birth-grade 12, will be chosen. The applicant does not indicate how they will establish review panels that do not have a conflict of interest with the LEAs or early childhood providers they serve.(e40)

**Reader's Score: 4.5**

**Project management - Project management**

- 1. The Secretary considers the following factors in determining the quality of the project management plan: See Sub-Criteria**

**Reader's Score: 12**

**Sub Question**

**Sub Question**

- 1. (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.**

**Strengths:**

The NYSED will assign an SRCL Program Coordinator who will be responsible for the oversight of a SRCL program management team tasked with achieving the objectives of the grant and sub-grant administration.

The PD provider will address developing performance tasks, integrating technologies to increase literacy achievement, and using the Education Data Portal (EDP) to inform instructional decisions. (e42)

The main responsibilities of the SRCL management team and the timeframe within the first year of the grant, to reach the objectives of the grant (Table 5) are appropriate.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not include who will conduct the specified tasks. The management plan lacked specific milestones and did not cite who would own the activities listed. (e42)

**Reader's Score: 5**

- 2. (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key personnel.**

**Strengths:**

The resumes included are strong with a diverse, experienced, well educated team of individuals with expertise in birth-grade 12. The SRCL management team will represent varied perspectives and teaching experiences who can identify appropriate interventions and technical assistance for teachers.

A Program Coordinator and four additional part time FTE staff will lead the SRCL initiative. Each team member must meet specific qualifications including NYS certification and/or Masters in ELA, Reading or Literacy, classroom teaching experience in ELA and/or Literacy (or teaching experience in an early childhood setting), and at least five years experience as a school administrator or school leader (priority will be given to applicants with certification or Masters in Education Leadership or administration). All management team members must have experience working in low-performing/high-poverty schools with a majority of disadvantaged students. (e44)

All SRCL management team members should have experience designing and leading professional development trainings. Priority will be given to those applicants with curriculum development and/or professional development design regarding students with disabilities, ELLs, and students of poverty. (e44)

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

- 3. (iii) The extent to which the State will ensure a diversity of perspectives in the design and implementation of the proposed project, including those of: families, teachers, early childhood education professionals, officials from other State and local agencies, Head Start Advisory Councils, professional organizations, institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, and libraries.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant will use the team, composed of NYSED's Internal Literacy Workgroup and external shareholders to plan and solicit different perspectives. (e44) The applicant states that the team will be diverse.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant is unclear as to how the SRCL management team will ensure perspectives from families, community based organizations and libraries.  
Listing advisory team members would have made this section stronger.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Adequacy of resources - Adequacy of resources**

**1. The Secretary considers the following factors in determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project: See Sub-Criteria**

**Reader's Score: 17**

**Sub Question**

**1. (i) The extent to which the costs described in the SEA's budget are reasonable in relation to the number of objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project .**

**Strengths:**

The applicant's plan for an adequate use of resources at 95% of the funding to be distributed to sub-grantees statewide. The remaining 5% will be used by the SEA to fund a SRLP management team to oversee the implementation of the LEA and early childhood education providers programs, provide statewide literacy PD that build on the NYS P-12 CCLS for ELA/Literacy and the NYSCLP, and evaluate all SRCL program activities statewide is solid. (e46)

Personnel costs, salaries and benefits are appropriate and based on current salary rates and standard benefits of currently funded State Education Department positions.

The applicant will enter into a contract with a professional development provider to provide statewide professional development throughout the life of the grant. The NYSED contract procurement process will be followed to identify and select the PD provider. Trainings will focus on developing curricula, assessments and interventions that build off the states comprehensive literacy plan and align with the

NYS P-12 CCLS for ELA/Literacy will provide the intended objectives, design and significance for the project.

Allocations for the program evaluator travel and supplies are adequate for the project. (e47)

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**2. (ii) The quality of the SEA's plan to ensure that SRCL subgrant funds are allocated as follows:**

**\* At least 15 percent to serve children from birth through age five.**

**\* At least 40 percent to serve students in kindergarten through grade five.**

**\* At least 40 percent to serve students in middle and high school, through grade 12, including an equitable distribution of funds between middle and high schools.**

**Strengths:**

The evidence that sub-grant funds will be allocated with at least 15 percent to serve children from birth through age five; at least 40 percent to serve students in kindergarten through grade five; at least 40 percent to serve students in middle and high school, through grade 12, including an equitable distribution of funds between middle and high schools is in the GEPA. (e48)

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

Insufficient evidence of details of how/what the mandated 15%, 40%, 40% will be supported and implemented.

**Reader's Score: 2**

3. (iii) **The extent to which the SEA will use the grant to leverage other State and Federal funds in order to maximize the impact of the grant and how it will support LEAs and early childhood education providers in integrating funds with other local, State, and Federal funds and in developing a plan for sustaining funding after the end of the subgrant.**

**Strengths:**

NYSED will use SRCL funds to leverage other state and federal funds in order to maximize the impact and sustainability of the grants literacy program effects in LEAs and early childhood education providers. An example was provide: New York State's Race to the Top plan, which supports the creation of curriculum, assessments and instructional interventions aligned to the NYS P-12 CCLS, all of which are informed by the development of a statewide instructional reporting and improvement system, available through the Education Data Portal.

NYS plans to leverage all aspects of USNY resources around students, systems and structures by setting specific targets for increases in early childhood opportunities, outcomes for students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs), and high school attendance and graduation rates, among other objectives. Over the next three years, New York State school districts will align their local curriculum, assessments, and instruction to these standards.

SRCL management team will use program monitoring tools and program evaluations (surveys, data, etc.) to ensure that program managers of each federally and State-funded literacy program are working together and aligning plans regularly to avoid repetition among literacy programs.

LEAs and early childhood education providers have to sign off on funds used for intended purposes and work with the grant project leaders to ensure that projects are aligned and working in unison grant funds will be used to support the goals.

Leveraging ARRA Funds includes:

Title I 1003(g) School Improvement Grants (SIG) (\$261M): funds to be used to complement RTTT investments in intervention models (i.e., turnaround, restart, closure, and transformation). These funds will also support New York State's efforts to expand the use of data to improve instruction and recruit, train, and retain effective teachers and principals.

Title II-Part D Enhancing Education Through Technology (\$55.6M): These ARRA funds will be used to create a Technology Rich Environment through Student-Centered Active Learning Environments (SCALE) for 21st Century Learning and develop Online Formative Assessments.

Leveraging Other Federal Funds:

Title II-A (\$27.6M): Professional development to assist LEAs with recruitment and retention of HQ teachers and principals.

Title II-D (\$8.1M): this grant will also ensure better use of technology to support limited English Proficient/English Language Learners and/or students with disabilities. Title II-Part D funds will also help the New York State Education Department to initiate technical assistance centers, which will provide direct technical consulting.

Title III (\$54.7M) including bilingual, ESL and native language arts instruction, parental involvement and professional development programs. (e18)

It is sound plan to sustain funding by using other state, federal and local funds.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not indicate how the SEA's will sustain funding after the end of the subgrant.

**Reader's Score: 2.5**

4. (iv) **The extent to which the SEA will award SRCL subgrants of sufficient size to support projects that improve instruction for a significant number of students in the high-need schools or early learning programs serving children birth through five that the SRCL subgrantee would serve.**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

The applicant plans to maximize the impact of the SRCL grant by providing funds to those LEAs and early childhood education providers that serve the greatest number of disadvantaged youth. An equitable amount of funds will be made available based on data and poverty as defined by the formula used by Title I. (e48)

**Weaknesses:**

This section would be stonger if the applicant included the formula they intend to use.

**Reader's Score: 2.5**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Priority - Effective Use of Technology**

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must (1) propose to use technology--which may include technology to support principles of universal design for learning (as defined in the NIA)--to address student learning challenges; and (2) provide, in its application, an evidence-based (as defined in the NIA) rationale that its proposed technology program, practice, or strategy will increase student engagement and achievement or increase teacher effectiveness.

**Background:** The effective use of technology is a critical tool for improving learning outcomes and providing teachers with high-quality professional development. Use of concepts, ideas, programming techniques, and computer-assisted text displays that give access to the text for students who cannot access traditional print, including limited-English-proficient children and students with disabilities, is a basic tenet of universal design for learning (as defined in the NIA) and can help improve students' literacy and language development and identify and address student learning challenges.

**Strengths:**

The applicant details and supports a Technology Integration Specialist from the Office of Educational Design and Technology will provide training to integrate technology to enhance student learning and achievement in literacy. (Cruz resume, e3)

A plan to use technology as an effective instructional tool is in place. Sub-grantees will engage in State sponsored, ongoing professional development and be provided with ongoing technical assistance and support to implement the literacy priorities. (e1)

A small portion of funding is devoted to the strategic use of technology - electronic reading tablets - to support the development of struggling readers and writers and/or young children who are likely to struggle in the future. (e12, e38)

The applicant plans to use technology as an effective instructional tool to increase student engagement and increase teacher effectiveness respectively. (e12)

Computer Hardware and Technology Aid (\$38M): School districts are eligible to receive State Aid for the purchase or lease of micro-and/or mini-computer equipment or terminals to be used for student instruction. (e18)

Title II-Part D funds will also help the New York State Education Department to initiate technical assistance centers, which will provide direct technical consulting. (e18)

To support the technology needs of LEAs, each BOCES is served by one of twelve Regional Information Centers (RICs) which annually provide the BOCES and their component districts with over \$300 million in high-quality technology-related services. (e1)

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

## Absolute Priority 1 - Improving Learning Outcomes

1. **To meet this priority: An applicant must propose a project that is designed to improve school readiness and success through grade 12 in the area of language and literacy development for disadvantaged students.**

**Background:** Improving the language and literacy development of disadvantaged students is essential to improving academic achievement for these students in all content areas. The 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results show disproportionately large numbers of disadvantaged students struggle with developing the necessary pre-literacy and literacy skills needed to read, comprehend, and use language effectively. This results in persistent gaps in academic achievement through the elementary and secondary school years and in high school graduation rates, and presents civic and economic difficulties for these students later in life. Meeting the language and literacy needs of disadvantaged students, including limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities, is a particular focus of the SRCL program.

### Strengths:

THE APPLICANT MET ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1

The applicant has a sound plan to leverage all aspects of USNY (a component of NYSED) and align resources including curriculum, assessments and instruction around students, systems and structures to increase outcomes for the most in need students. (e1)

The focus of the implementation will be around the classroom to significantly increase the capacity of teachers, principals and literacy coaches. (e2)

The applicant has a strong plan to build on prior work of the Regent's Reform Agenda and RtT by funding direct supports for implementation in schools that need it the most. (e2) (e6)

The applicant's plan of providing professional development for Network teams is sound and focuses on disadvantaged students. (e4)

### Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 0

## Absolute Priority 2 - Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making

1. **To meet this priority: An applicant must propose a project that is designed to collect, analyze, and use high-quality and timely data, especially on program participant outcomes, in accordance with privacy requirements (as defined in the NIA), to improve instructional practices, policies, and student outcomes in early learning settings and in elementary and secondary schools.**

**Background:** Accurate, timely, relevant, and appropriate data, and the effective use of that data for informed decision-making, are essential to the continuous improvement of children's literacy and language development. In developing comprehensive literacy plans and programs, it is important for States to consider strategies that provide educators, as well as families and other key stakeholders, with the data they need and the capacity and training to use those data to improve school readiness, respond to the learning and academic needs of students, improve educator effectiveness, inform professional development practices and approaches, and make informed decisions that increase student pre-literacy, literacy, and language development.

### Strengths:

THE APPLICANT MET ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 2

The applicant will enable more data-based decision-making by seamlessly implementing the Regent Reform Agenda, the RtT plan, and other existing initiatives by building the infrastructure necessary to further improve student achievement in the areas of language and literacy development.

Sub-grant applicants must show that they are implementing curriculum, assessments and interventions that further NYS vision of improving student outcomes and of enabling more data-based decision-making. (e37)

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted

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