

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Oklahoma State Department of Education -- Standards and Curriculum Titles I, II, VI, X (S371C110028)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Quality of State-level activities		
Quality of State-level activities		
1. State-level activities	37	27
Sub Total	37	27
Quality of the State subgrant competition		
Quality of the State subgrant competition		
1. State subgrant comp	28	23
Sub Total	28	23
Project management		
Project management		
1. Project management	15	12
Sub Total	15	12
Adequacy of resources		
Adequacy of resources		
1. Adequacy of resources	20	13
Sub Total	20	13
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority		
Effective Use of Technology		
1. Competitive Priority	5	4
Sub Total	5	4
Absolute Priority 1		
Improving Learning Outcomes		
1. Absolute Priority 1	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Absolute Priority 2		
Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making		
1. Absolute Priority 2	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Total	105	79

Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - SRCL - 8: 84.371C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Oklahoma State Department of Education -- Standards and Curriculum Titles I, II, VI, X (S371C110028)

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: 27

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 Oklahoma state literacy plan focuses on high quality instruction addressing both teacher preparedness and student learning. It will be updated annually.
- Oklahoma is implementing the Common Core Standards paired with assessments to drive instruction.
- Oklahoma has nine essential elements that address leadership.
- The SEA will require LEAs to provide additional personnel to deliver supplemental instruction outside the core literacy block for students in need.
- The SEA will require LEAs to assess reading in all children PreK through grade 12.
- The SEA provides an informative and comprehensive table of current funds utilized in education.
- The SEA will required LEAs to use literacy coaches to help teachers implement effective instruction and to analyzed student data.
- Local professional development is required and will be attended by coaches.
- Data retreats provide the opportunity for all stakeholders to receive assessment data and to use data to drive decision making.
- Leaders, including principals, will be required to participate in training.
- The SEA will require LEAs to provide collaboration time for teachers which has the potential to improve instructional quality.
- Oklahoma is implementing the Common Core Standards paired with assessments to drive instruction.
- The SEA will require LEAs to provide tiered instruction.
- The SEA will require LEAS to select research-based instructional materials.
- The SEA proposes to required LEAs to hire early interventionists.

Weaknesses:

- Statements of fact are made without appropriate references. For example, on p. 7 when describing the protected literacy block the applicant states, according to research, students need a minimum of 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction. This kind of statement requires a reference.
- It is unclear whether in middle and high school the SEA is requiring 45 minutes of reading instruction or whether reading instruction will be incorporated into content area classes. This level of specificity is required to determine how the SEA is planning to carry out State level activities.
- The plan does not address SEA requirements for LEAs serving young children ages 0-5.
- The SEA requirements for LEAs use of technology are nonspecific. For example, no specific criteria for software programs are described to deliver the capability requested by the SEA.
- A list of funding types is provided, but it is unclear what actions will be taken to align and leverage

Sub Question

these funds.

- The proposal does not specify how LEA applicants will make the review process accessible prior to making grant awards.
- The SEA will require LEAs to establish professional learning communities, however the research justifying this approach as being effective is not cited.
- The tiered intervention described for preschool age children is not applicable to young babies, infants, and toddlers.
- The early intervention portion of the model is weaker and less specific than plans for older children.
- The proposal does not specify how the Reach Out and Read program provides sufficient intensity to help disadvantaged children catch up in their early literacy skills.

Reader's Score: 7.5

- 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 SEA plans a comprehensive approach to achieving goals for children ages 5- grade 12.
- The proposal has clearly stated goals.
- Data will be disaggregated for recipients.

Weaknesses:

- The SEA plan for achieving goals for children ages 0-5 is less ambitious, referencing existing special education programs.
- Children who are learning to speak English are not addressed specifically in plans.

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:

- The SEA proposes to provide a wide array of technical assistance to LEAs including webinars, face to face meetings, videoconferences, onsite visits.

Weaknesses:

- Few specifics regarding the schedule and content of technical assistance is provided.
- No research is cited to support the choice of technical assistance formats or content. This makes it difficult to judge whether the proposed technical assistance has the potential to deliver a high-quality literacy program or whether it has the potential to improve student achievement.

Reader's Score: 4.5

- 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:

-Data from mClass will be available for analysis for participating LEAs. This will allow feedback on student progress that can inform teaching and continuously improve the design and implementation of activities.

Weaknesses:

-The proposal does not specify requirements for an independent evaluator and how this individual will assess program quality.
-Evaluation of programs for children ages 0-5 is underspecified.

Reader's Score: 6

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 proposal meets basic requirements for disseminating information to all stakeholders.
-Project outcomes will be available in different formats tailored to various groups.

Weaknesses:

-The proposal does not include plans for disaggregating data.

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: 23

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 grant application procedure will be provided via webinars and at regional meetings around the state. This will increase the LEAs capacity to submit a quality application that is responsive to SEA requirements.

Weaknesses:

-The number and qualifications of grant reviewers are not specified. Unqualified reviewers would not be able to judge the LEAs capacity to successfully implement its proposal.
-The rubric to be used by reviewers is not provided, which will make it difficult to reliably score the LEAs

Sub Question

capacity to successfully implement its proposal.

- Because points are awarded for each criterion, it seems inappropriate to disqualify an application receiving a zero score on only one criterion. The applicant could score well on other criterion and have a higher score than applicants who do not score zero on any criterion. This scoring plan may result in judging LEA capacity incorrectly.
- The proposal does not address how programs designed for children 0-5 will be reviewed. This prevents reviewer's from judging LEA capacity for this age range.

Reader's Score: 1.5

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 SEA requires LEA applicants to commit to serve disadvantaged students. This will insure that the target population receives funding priority.

-The proposal states that subgrantees will be required to use a common assessment and data management system. This statewide system will help insure that data inform program evaluation and will help the SEA and LEAs make timely changes to their intervention plans.

-Partnerships with community organizations and agencies is supported by giving priority to LEAs who provide evidence of community involvement. This will help to insure the involvement of families and community members who can promote literacy achievement in students in conjunction with schools.

-Effective teaching will be promoted by requiring LEAs to teach reading instruction based on recommendations from the National Reading Panel and to utilize principles of universal design so that intervention is accessible to students with special needs.

Weaknesses:

-No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 8

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 SEA provides requirements for the LEA to align funds and a chart is available to LEAs showing how funds from the state and federal levels can be leveraged to support their projects.

Weaknesses:

-The LEA describes funds alignment, but there is no detail about how existing funds could be leveraged.

Reader's Score: 1.5

Sub Question

- 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:

-Priority is given to applicants who serve 50% or more children living in poverty, which is consistent with the SR requirement to serve disadvantaged children, including those living in poverty.

Weaknesses:

-According to the proposal agencies who partner with a preferred early childhood organization will receive scoring priority. It is unclear how scoring will proceed if an agency does not include a preferred organization in their application or how scoring will proceed if an applicant includes many preferred organizations. Because a scoring rubric is not included in the application and point values are not assigned for this priority, it is not clear whether some applicants could earn many points and some none, or whether it is a met or not met priority.

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 SEA proposes a data-based approach to setting LEA priorities including giving more points to applicants who use data to document need, who show alignment of programs for children ages 0 to grade 12, and who show evidence of community partnerships.

Weaknesses:

-No weaknesses noted.

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 SEA will require subgrantees to align curricula and materials with State standards by using textbooks approved by the State, by documenting how intervention materials align with State standards, and by showing how instructional objectives align with State standards.
-The State will make the review process for how well materials and curricula align with State standards available on their website.

Weaknesses:

-The SEA states that selected programs must provide guidance for scientifically-based reading research instruction that are primarily applicable to elementary grades, but not pertinent to ages 0-3 or to middle and high school students.

Reader's Score: 4

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

- 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 proposal includes a detailed timeline for implementation of objectives.

Weaknesses:

- Sufficient detail is not provided to judge the adequacy of the management plan. For example, milestones are not included.
- Children ages 0-5 are not represented in the plan.

Reader's Score: 4.5

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

Strengths:

Proposed key personnel appear to have the training and expertise to manage the project.

Weaknesses:

Qualifications for the project evaluator are not specified.

Reader's Score: 4.5

- 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 proposal lists a diverse range of outside local agencies that will help insure a diversity of perspectives in project implementation.

Weaknesses:

- The proposal does not specify how the local agencies will interact and plan together which may limit how well diverse views are represented within the project.
- There is less diverse representation of perspectives at the SEA level than the LEA level with primarily State level education administrators, local schools, and universities represented. This does not promote the inclusion of perspectives from families, professional organizations or libraries.

Reader's Score: 3

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: 13

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:

- Funds for children K-12 appear to be used for research-based intervention strategies.
- The budget allocations appear reasonable in relation to the objectives described.

Weaknesses:

- The funds expended for programs serving children 0-5 do not appear to be of sufficient intensity to help children arrive at kindergarten ready to learn to read.
- Time and percentage is not itemized for key positions.
- Equipment, supplies and travel are not itemized.

Reader's Score: 4

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 SEA states that funds will be divided as required.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

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 SEA will require LEAS to explain how they are leveraging funds.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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.

Sub Question

Strengths:

-The SEA plan doubles the number of disadvantaged children that will be served by LEAs in the state, which is a significant increase in the number of students served.

Weaknesses:

-Because the budget requirements made by the SEA to LEAs in their subgrant application process are not well specified, it is not clear whether the LEA subgrants will be of sufficient size to support the proposed number of projects.

Reader's Score: 2

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:

Priority met.

The SEA proposes to use technology for assessment, planning and intervention including use of technology for formative assessments (mClass), webinars and podcasts for professional development, and intervention technology for students with visual, auditory, or learning impairments.

Weaknesses:

Clear guidance is not provided to the LEA regarding how they will be judged on their use of technology.

Reader's Score: 4

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.

Strengths:

The project is designed to improve school readiness and success through grade 12 in the areas of language and literacy development for disadvantaged students.

Weaknesses:

NA

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 project is designed to collect, analyze, and use high-quality data, especially on participant outcomes.

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

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Applicant: Oklahoma State Department of Education -- Standards and Curriculum Titles I, II, VI, X (S371C110028)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Quality of State-level activities		
Quality of State-level activities		
1. State-level activities	37	27
Sub Total	37	27
Quality of the State subgrant competition		
Quality of the State subgrant competition		
1. State subgrant comp	28	22
Sub Total	28	22
Project management		
Project management		
1. Project management	15	8
Sub Total	15	8
Adequacy of resources		
Adequacy of resources		
1. Adequacy of resources	20	13
Sub Total	20	13
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority		
Effective Use of Technology		
1. Competitive Priority	5	4.5
Sub Total	5	4.5
Absolute Priority 1		
Improving Learning Outcomes		
1. Absolute Priority 1	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Absolute Priority 2		
Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making		
1. Absolute Priority 2	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Total	105	74.5

Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - SRCL - 8: 84.371C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Oklahoma State Department of Education -- Standards and Curriculum Titles I, II, VI, X (S371C110028)

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: 27

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 Oklahoma State Department of Education(OSDE)has written a Comprehensive State Literacy Plan that is supported by research on literacy(pp. e3, e9-10).

The State has signed onto the Common Core State Standards(CCSS)and will continue to expand the State Plan to include alignment with the CCSS and assessments. The Literacy Plan is based on a set of Nine Essential Elements that clearly identify the State's priorities for improving literacy(p.e0,Introduction). The Elements reflect research and best practices and are categorized into three groups to support implementation. They provide a foundation for the implementation of the Common Core Standards.

Each of the components under each category is or will be required for the LEAs. The implementation of the requirements is supported by programs, technology and advisory committees already selected and in place. The timelines for implementation of new efforts (i.e., Common Core Standards) are reasonable (4-years). The State is a member of PARCC, which will develop new and relevant assessments over time. Research based practice initiated under NCLB will also be maintained, such as Response To Intervention (RTI), protected literacy blocks, and the inclusion of strategies and resources for intervention. OSDE will provide professional development, require Professional Learning Communities, instructional coaches, and parent liaisons.

The State Literacy Team meets once per year to review and revise the State plan based on data collected over the year.

The State has developed tables that identify the various titles, descriptions, funding sources, and alignment possibilities that will need to be included in LEA proposals. The descriptions identify the allocation of funding to specific aspects of the State Plan.

The State sub grant process is transparent. The State's plan to distribute information about the proposal process, how State Plan programs were reviewed and selected, and how the programs were aligned to the State Standards is comprehensive, using a number of avenues for communication such as listservs, letters, and websites.

The State will require districts to implement a needs assessment and report on the findings as a part of their proposal. Since the State Plan is so clearly articulated, it should be relatively easy to monitor the implementation of the components, both formatively and summatively through the findings of the needs

Sub Question

assessments.

Weaknesses:

The monitoring plan for grantee implementation is ambitious. It will be difficult for State department staff to make the promised number of site visits, classroom observations, and exit interviews.

There are no specifications on how the professional development will be evaluated.

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:

As part of the NCLB implementation, the State has collected and analyzed data in a number of ways and reviewed research on many topics to arrive at the Nine Essential Elements framework for learning. Several of the programs already running will be expanded. The Maternal and Child Health Services of the State conducted a needs assessment to inform direction for the birth to age 5 group of children. The State Department is keenly aware of the learning challenges that are associated with poverty, and have presented those data in a Profiles 2009 Report.

In K-12th grade, all students will participate in an appropriate assessment. Improvement goals are established by the State from the data and are publicly available. The goals are based on prior achievement and growth. As in NCLB, there will be subgroup analysis of test scores and the use of a component of the WISE tool to support the development of individualized goals. The data presented on Oklahoma student achievement, college readiness and poverty levels are compelling. The State Plan is clearly established to focus on and provide wide-scale support for literacy achievement across all levels from birth to grade 12.

Weaknesses:

There is no documentation on how the reading goals were selected. There is no evidence that disaggregated data were used to provide direction for specific goals related to special needs groups.

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:

The State has planned a number of electronic opportunities to support training on instructional methods, the use of data, and the use of state supported technology programs. The training will be available to all schools in the State. There will also be site visits to support the review of student and teacher progress and provide opportunities for administrators, coaches and teachers to collaborate.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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 proposal states that an independent regional research lab will conduct the evaluation. The lab has a reputation for doing comprehensive, rigorous evaluation studies. The evaluator will have access to a myriad of data collected from the various learner management systems in place in the district.

The installed data management systems will provide reports for all schools in the district. In addition, relevant surveys and other qualitative methods will be administered. One summative annual report will be reviewed to examine the year's progress. Quarterly reporting will be provided for the purpose of targeting technical and instructional support.

Weaknesses:

The documentation to ensure the hiring of the evaluator is not present.

Reader's Score: 3

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 SEA will disseminate information on project outcomes through press releases, webinars, and on the State website. The presented data will be disaggregated among NCLB subgroups, when possible. The formats of the reports to schools will be parent friendly. The State will also present reports to their local school board. Suggestions for improvements of the learning process will be accepted at meetings and on the website.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 4

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

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 State's plan to announce the competition is thorough. It is comprised of different ways to communicate publicly what the proposal needs to include and how it will be judged. Webinars, on-site training, and video-conferencing will be planned for eligible districts across the State. Districts will be required to sign letters of intent and of commitment to implement their programs according to State guidelines. The grant readers will be thoroughly trained on the overall expectations of the proposals and on using the developed rubric to assign the scores for each section. Principals will be interviewed to validate their knowledge of the SEA requirements. Rules have been established to assign points to different proposal ratings.

Priority will be given to districts that already have a comprehensive literacy plan in place and can be expanded.

The data from the needs assessment, a review of the district's currently operating literacy plans, and the face-to-face visits should provide evidence of the district's capacity to implement their proposal.

Weaknesses:

The RFP for the LEAs is not included in the State proposal. It is difficult to judge the quality of the application. The scoring rubric is not included either. Without these items, it is difficult to know how the SEA will be judging the subgrantees' capacity for success.

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:

State supported programs and training are already in place to address the needs of the disadvantaged students. Data collected from the required needs assessments will help to determine the levels of need. Data collected from various components of their current programs (i.e. parent involvement, use of data for decision making, demographic and achievement data) will be used to determine capacity for improvement.

All submitting districts will be required to submit the results of a needs assessment on literacy needs and issues.

Applicants will be required to discuss partnership districts in the proposal. Certain identified partnerships, listed, will be given priority. The programs supported by those partners are already supported by the State.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 8

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:

Applicants will be required to show how their proposal will integrate the use of additional sources of funding into their literacy plan, including Early Head Start, Center for Professional Development, and Reach Out and Read. The plan for integration is a scoring point on the proposal scoring rubric.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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 scoring rubric for the applicant proposals describes generally how priority points will be allocated, such as for special interest groups (e.g., disadvantaged students) and for distributing funds according to the SEA's 15%, 40%, 40% rule.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear why awarding priority points for applicants who serve at least 50% of their population of disadvantaged students is a strong criterion.

Reader's Score: 3

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 SEA has designed the requirements for the proposals so that objectivity to scoring can be applied. Five criteria for getting a top-ranking proposal include: signed letters of assurance to follow the SEA guidelines, data submitted from a needs assessment (on poverty levels and reading achievement scores), solid levels of community partnerships, currently implemented programs that provide a solid infrastructure.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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

Sub Question

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 competitive process appears to be well-established and relatively simple to update. The OSDE website will make the entire competitive process transparent.

Weaknesses:

It is difficult to determine the quality of the scoring system for the application because the application is not available.

Reader's Score: 3

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: 8

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 timelines for the proposal solicitation, scoring process, professional development and evaluation are well-documented with a budget that is within reason. All participating staff are named with their title and general job description provided.

Weaknesses:

There are no milestones included and the timeline is unclear, with insufficient detail.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The staff include many people with a history of teaching in the schools and working at the state department. Most likely, the familiarity of the staff with the local culture and operations will help to support the grant implementations.

Weaknesses:

The inclusion of a broader constituency group could bring in new ideas and ways to think about progress.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Sub Question

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:

A variety of audiences were engaged in the development of the current State Plan. Regular reports from initiatives and special interest groups will maintain the input.

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not specify how the various groups will continue to work together. It would be a stronger proposal if Early Childhood participants were more involved in the State planning, scoring and implementation.

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: 13

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:

Almost all of programs being proposed are in place. Therefore a majority of the funding appears to be for license renewals for software. The external evaluator fee is average for the proposed evaluators. The materials and travel for technical assistance to the sites seem low but will depend on the locations of the fund distribution. The fee for the middle and high school trainer may be high but will depend upon how the message will be delivered (i.e., in small or large settings). The majority of the funding will go to the districts with the greatest capacity for success and will be distributed at 15%, 40%, 40% level.

Weaknesses:

Funding for children from birth to five years may not be sufficient to prepare children for kindergarten.

Time and percentage allocations are not provided for key staff.

Reader's Score: 5

- 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:

The SEA plan for distributing the funding is well-defined. The foremost qualification to meet is to distribute the monies to augment a currently implemented infrastructure.

The early childhood funding will be used to expand a currently installed program, Reach Out and Read (ROR) and will take the current service level from 21,053 to 266,547 students. The remainder of the money will be open for the purchase of early childhood curriculum, expanding the current programs, and/or hiring a provider so that the number of students served can be increased.

The K-12 funding will include \$12 million for a broad array of services including hiring literacy coaches, purchasing literacy programs, assessment and data management systems, and so on.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 4

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:

LEA proposals need to explain how they will match funding of programs. The Oklahoma Parents as Teachers (OPAT) program will require a 25% match. The ROR program will need to secure 25% of the funding from outside sources after one year of successful implementation.

The K-12 programs need to propose a well-integrated system of support which will include a number of already established programs so that the entire network of offerings will provide a solid foundation of support.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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 funding for the expansion of the parenting programs is based on increasing the service level from 21,000 to almost 300,000 children and their parents.

The K-12 funding will be distributed according to the justification of the budgets that are written into the proposal.

Weaknesses:

The SEA provides vague criteria on the qualifications for determining reasonable or appropriateness of proposal budgets. The absence of defined criteria may lead to subjectivity in the selection of the proposals to be funded.

Sub Question

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 SEA integrates technology across the districts in the State. The use of programs that will collect and report data, support district planning, and support training to enable districts to make data-driven decisions will be leveraged so districts can expand upon the number and expertise of its users. Webinars and Podcasts will be used to present ideas that teachers can use to increase effectiveness. Also, through the use of technology, traveling costs do not need to consume the budget, increasing the number of teachers and students served. Districts are encouraged to incorporate research-based software to support literacy, from birth to grade 12, through the use of new electronic literacy programs.

The primary rationale underlying the use of technology is implied with the requirement that districts must purchase only research based program materials. The use of technology to collect and report on student data supports the need to supply immediate feedback to teachers and parents. Parents are also expected to participate in their child's education with easy access to the same information as the teacher. The purchase of technology hardware such as whiteboards and other classroom materials has been shown to enhance teachers' ability to engage a greater number of students in the classroom.

Weaknesses:

The discussion about the use of technology to support special needs students, including ELL learners, was not well-developed.

Reader's Score: 4.5

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:

MET. The SEA has a comprehensive plan that is well-grounded in research on literacy, professional development, technology and assessment. The proposal will expand upon the current plan by reaching out to additional students in urban and rural areas. Although the plan includes a lot of required features, the support to enable the implementation of the features appears to be adequate. The plan is easy to follow and well-defined.

Weaknesses:

Two potential weaknesses that stand out:

- 1)The staff at the SEA level does not include people with widespread experience in high stakes projects.
- 2)The criteria for rating the adequacy of LEA budgets and the lack of definition about the number of grants to be rewarded provide gaps in objectivity.

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:

MET. The SEA has already put into place programs and systems that will enable a larger number of people to use data for decision making. With the use of technology, a number of reports will be designed and available for multiple audiences. Data Retreat will provide training on the use of data. The number of assessments across grade levels will be increasing to K-12 so that there will more data available to monitor progress.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Status: Submitted

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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Oklahoma State Department of Education -- Standards and Curriculum Titles I, II, VI, X (S371C110028)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Quality of State-level activities		
Quality of State-level activities		
1. State-level activities	37	26
Sub Total	37	26
Quality of the State subgrant competition		
Quality of the State subgrant competition		
1. State subgrant comp	28	24
Sub Total	28	24
Project management		
Project management		
1. Project management	15	9
Sub Total	15	9
Adequacy of resources		
Adequacy of resources		
1. Adequacy of resources	20	13
Sub Total	20	13
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority		
Effective Use of Technology		
1. Competitive Priority	5	4.5
Sub Total	5	4.5
Absolute Priority 1		
Improving Learning Outcomes		
1. Absolute Priority 1	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Absolute Priority 2		
Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making		
1. Absolute Priority 2	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Total	105	76.5

Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - SRCL - 8: 84.371C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Oklahoma State Department of Education -- Standards and Curriculum Titles I, II, VI, X (S371C110028)

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: 26

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:

1. Oklahoma has an established State Literacy Plan, the Oklahoma Nine Essential Elements. These previously established Elements define best practices for academic learning, effective teaching, and effective leadership (pp. 5 -6). This concise, yet well-articulated State Literacy Plan will strengthen the capacity for this applicant to succeed. There is a clear alignment between the three key areas of the State Literacy Plan and grant requirements and activities (pp. 7-14).
2. The Oklahoma State Literacy Team will meet annually to review, revise, and update the State Literacy Plan. This will assure that goals and activities are current and appropriate (p. 14).
3. Oklahoma has adopted the Common Core Standards and will require sub-grantees to transition to the Standards by 2014-15 (p. 7). This will ensure that schools are working with the most current thinking on literacy needs of students.
4. Oklahoma is a governing state in the PARCC consortium. This will position the state to have current and complete information regarding assessments to measure the Common Core Standards (p. 7).
5. The proposal includes charts detailing all state and federal funds and an explanation of how the funds can be leveraged to support the goals of this project (pp. 14-18).
6. Sub-grantees will be required to attend state-level professional development sessions. This will provide coherence to the program so that a solid theory of action can be verified (p. 10).
7. LEA Striving Readers Coaches will be required to attend a state data retreat. This will enable the coaches to lead data-driven decision making (p. 11).
8. The OSDE and sub-grant recipients will use technology-based data analysis program to obtain student assessment results. Because disaggregated results are immediately available, monitoring of program implementation will allow for mid-course corrections (p. 21).
9. OSDE has a list of suggestions for sub-grantees to create language- and text-rich classrooms (i.e., word walls, labeling, literacy centers, library center, writing center) (p. 23).
10. OSDE will utilize data currently collected from community agencies such as Oklahoma Parents as Teachers, Child Services Demonstration Center, Reach Out and Read (p. 24).

Weaknesses:

1. The proposal cites literature and research to support evidence-based literacy instruction throughout the proposal, but a reference list is not provided.
2. The proposal indicates that a needs assessment will be used to determine how students will be served, but there are no details about the assessment tool to be used (p. 19).

Sub Question

3. "Program requirements for elementary students will include the five components of reading and writing while middle and high schools ensure exposure to different genres and elements of writing," (p. 19). Secondary students, particularly those who struggle, need continued instruction in three of the five components designated as elementary requirements (vocabulary, fluency, comprehension).
4. It is unclear how OSDE will monitor the effectiveness of professional development as required in section D of Additional Requirements.
5. The project implementation timeline specifies topics for monthly webinars. Four of the five components of effective reading instruction as identified by the National Reading Panel are on the schedule; however, phonemic awareness is not addressed. Since this program includes birth through age 5 (in addition to primary grades children) phonemic awareness is essential (pp. 41-45).

Reader's Score: 8

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:

1. Four significant and measurable goals are clearly articulated in the proposal and are consistent with SRCL grant objectives (p. 24).
2. A need for the project was established with academic data from the National Center for Education Statistics, Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency, and Oklahoma Regent for Higher Education (pp. 3-4). Data were also included for SES and special education (p. 26). The OSDE will also disaggregate data for special education, ethnicity, gender, and ELLs (p. 27).

Weaknesses:

1. Disaggregated student achievement data to justify a need were not included.
2. The applicant did not document how reading goals were determined (p. 26).

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:

1. Technical assistance will begin with the RFP process through webinars, meetings, and videoconferencing. This will allow an application process that is fair and competitive (p. 29).
2. OSDE will provide support through site visits that include recommendations for improvement. This will lead to an expectation of accountability and continuous improvement (p. 29).
3. OSDE will provide professional development and collaboration forums for principals, Striving Readers coaches, and teachers. This will assure strong and consistent leadership for the project (p. 29).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Sub Question

- 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:

1. Quarterly reports of student achievement will be generated by a technology-based data analysis program. This will allow for timely interventions (p. 30).
2. The project will employ an external evaluator (p. 30). This should ensure an impartial assessment of results.
3. Dollars budgeted for the external evaluation is reasonable given the scope of the project (Budget Narrative).

Weaknesses:

1. Page 30 indicates that the external evaluator will be Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (p. 30); however, the implementation timeline for the grant indicates an RFP for the evaluator will be prepared in December, 2011 with a contract awarded February, 2012 (pp. 41-42).
2. Research questions to guide the evaluation are not included in the proposal.
3. Data collection procedures are not defined.
4. The proposal does not state which stakeholders will provide data for the evaluation (i.e., parents, students, community members, principals, teachers, etc.).
5. Data analysis protocols are not defined.
6. A timeline for gathering and evaluating data is not included.
7. Page 30 indicates the external evaluator will report performance measures annually (p. 30). However, the project implementation timeline indicates the first evaluation report will be February, 2014, 2 1/2 years after the grant is awarded (p. 44). There is no indication that the evaluator will touch base with key personnel before that time or provide interim reports in order to allow for "just-in-time" corrections to the program.
8. There is no description of what comprises "district feedback/input," how it will be collected, or how it will be analyzed (p. 30).
9. The proposal states surveys will be used for evaluation, but there is no indication of who will be surveyed.

Reader's Score: 3

- 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:

1. OSDE will use a variety of venues for sharing project outcomes: website, webinars, press releases, and reports to school boards (pp. 30-31).
2. OSDE will assist stakeholders in using the information on project outcomes to determine next steps in project implementation and improvement (p. 31).

Weaknesses:

1. The proposal repeats language from the SRCL selection criteria (i.e., "formats that are easily understood") but does not explain how that will play out in this project (p. 30).

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: 24

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:

1. OSDE will provide support for potential applicants through an initial video conference broadcast across the state followed by trainings at regional locations. This will assure that interested entities are aware of the opportunity and knowledgeable of application requirements (p. 31).
2. OSDE will interview applicants to assess their knowledge of the grant as well as programs and assessments described in their application. This should help OSDE to determine whether the applicant is committed to the goals of the grant or merely seeking extra dollars (p. 32).
3. Priority will be given to applicants that currently have components of an effective and systematic comprehensive literacy program in place that can be scaled up. This process will help to assess the capacity of the applicant to carry out the proposal (p. 32).

Weaknesses:

1. The proposal does not include the RFP for sub-grants. Including this would help reviewers to assess whether the process will be rigorous and of high-quality.
2. The proposal references a rubric but it was not found in the application (p. 32).

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:

1. Sub-grants will be required to address all areas of effective reading instruction as defined by the National Reading Panel as well as principles of universal design (pp. 8, 33). A focus on these components will help to assure a comprehensive literacy program.
2. Sub-grant proposals must include strategies currently in place to meet the needs of all learners and to

Sub Question

identify additional strategies to expand their repertoire (p. 34). This will ensure that funds are not used to continue "business as usual."

3. Sub-grants will be required to establish an uninterrupted literacy block of 90 minutes at the elementary level. This is in keeping with effective reading research and will allow teachers to better meet all students' needs (p. 7-8).
4. Sub-grants will be required to implement a Response to Intervention model. This will enable teachers to meet the needs of all students, including those who have mastered the material ahead of their peers as well as those who are struggling (pp. 8, 22).
5. Parent involvement will be increased through required parent liaisons and local use of a Parent Involvement online analysis tool (p. 10).
6. Sub-grants are required to include business and community members in project implementation. This will enable a broader base of support (pp. 11, 37).
7. Priority will be given to applicants that include partnership with agencies and organizations with a history of effective partnership with schools and families (i.e., Head Start, Parents as Teachers, libraries, and others) (p. 36).
8. Sub-grants will be required to provide for professional development through the establishment of professional learning communities and teacher collaboration time (p. 13). Professional development topics are comprehensive (instructional strategies, MAX teaching, language development, data analysis, and assessment) (p. 19).
9. OSDE will require sub-grants to gather and use data on literacy performance indicators and rubrics through the Ways to Improve School Effectiveness planning tool. Regular use of this tool can help grantees in making mid-course corrections (p. 13).
10. Formative and summative assessments will be required to track student progress, utilizing the common assessment and data management system designed by OSDE (pp. 20, 34). The required use of statewide assessments and data management will provide for consistency in measuring outcomes of the project.
11. Requirements include: (1) webinars and podcasts on grant implementation, reading strategies, and data process; (2) Instructional Leadership Training; and (3) training for classroom walkthrough visits. These requirements for key leaders will assure support and accountability (p. 12).
12. A state-developed needs assessment, which provides literacy performance indicators and rubrics, will be used by all recipients (p. 35). This common tool will allow for evaluation data that can be more reliably analyzed.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 8

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:

1. The state proposal includes charts detailing all state and federal funds and an explanation of how the funds can be leveraged to support the goals of this project (pp. 14-18). These charts will be provided to LEAs to assist with their alignment of funds (p. 38).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

1. Priority will be given to sub-grant applicants that partner with organizations that address issues of poverty (p. 36-37).

Weaknesses:

1. The proposal does not specify the criteria for determining the priority. No scoring rubric is included.

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:

1. Priority will be given to applicants who provide evidence in several areas: (1) data documenting need, (2) current initiatives, (3) community partnerships, (4) aligned program birth-grade 12, and (4) assurance statements of fidelity to the grant (pp. 38-39).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

1. A governor-appointed textbook committee reviews all instructional materials used in Oklahoma to assure they are aligned with state standards. This process will guide the OSDE in determining materials alignment (p. 39).
2. Applicants will be required to document how their program and instructional strategies align with state standards (p. 39).
3. Applicants will be required to document how supplemental and intervention materials can be integrated with the core reading program (p. 39).
4. Applicants will be required to document how the supplemental and intervention materials and programs are scientifically-based and effective with the target population (p. 40).
5. OSDE will make the review process for curricula and materials available on the OSDE website (p. 40).

Weaknesses:

1. Since a sub-grant scoring rubric is not provided, it is difficult to determine how the SEA will consider the extent to which LEAs align curriculum and materials with state standards.

Reader's Score: 4

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:

1. The timeline includes a specific and comprehensive list of activities (pp. 40-44).

Weaknesses:

1. It is unclear why the Striving Reader Director would be hired before the OSDE leadership team is informed that the grant had been awarded (p. 41). The OSDE leadership team's involvement in the selection of this key person would help to assure the right person was hired and the team was invested in his/her success.
2. No milestones are listed.
3. Some timeframes are not clear. For example, there is no indication of how long monthly meetings and monthly webinar sessions will last--whether an hour, several hours, or a full day. It is difficult to assess whether the applicant can achieve the objectives without that information (pp. 42-45).
4. It is not apparent who is responsible for some activities. For example, it is unclear whether webinars will be prepared and presented by consultants, nationally-known experts, OSDE personnel, or some other entity (pp. 42-45).

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

1. Resumes for the SRCL Director and State Level Team reflect training and experience relevant to the success of the project (Attachments-Part 6).

Weaknesses:

1. Qualifications for the project evaluator are not included.

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.

Sub Question

Strengths:

1. The list of team members and their roles in implementing the project reflect a strong commitment from the OSDE (pp.45-46).

Weaknesses:

1. Sub-grants are required to include business and community members in project implementation (pp. 11 and 37), but the list of team members at the state level is predominantly OSDE, local school districts, and university educators. There is no indication that families, community-based organizations, local businesses, or public libraries will be involved in order to assure a diversity of perspectives (p. 45-46).

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: 13

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:

1. Overall budget allocations are reasonable given the scope of the proposal (pp. 47, Budget Narrative).
2. The sub-grant RFP will require LEAs to explain how they will leverage funds (p. 38).

Weaknesses:

1. The amount of time (in hours or percentage) to be expended by each position is not defined.
2. The rate and base on which fringe benefits are calculated is not included.
3. The travel allocation does not provide an estimate for number of trips or an itemized estimate of transportation and subsistence.
4. The estimated unit cost for equipment is not included.
5. An itemized estimate for supplies and the basis for the estimate are not included.
6. There is no indication of how much time the project will spend with contracted personnel and organizations.
7. The basis for cost estimates for contractors is not included.
8. It is unclear why \$85,000 is allocated in 2011-12 for the evaluator since the proposal (pp. 41-42) indicates the evaluator will not be hired until February 2012.
9. It is unclear why \$85,000 is allocated in 2012-13 for the evaluator since the proposal indicates (p. 44) the evaluator will not submit a report until 2014.

Reader's Score: 4

Sub Question

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:

1. The budget allocates funds consistent with Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program requirements (p. 48).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

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:

1. OSDE will give priority to districts that currently have an evidence-based birth through age 5 early childhood partner. Such partnerships are evidence of capacity to implement expanded services and to sustain the project when grant funds expire (p. 48).
2. The proposed number of sites for early childhood providers is 20. This will allow for funds sufficient to make an impact (p. e1).
3. Applicants will be provided charts detailing all state and federal funds and an explanation of how the funds can be leveraged to support the goals of this project (pp. 14-18). Priority will be given to applicants that describe how such funds will align with SRCL funds (p. 49).
4. OSDE will support recipients in creating a "culture of change" rather than implementing arbitrary strategies (p. 49). This will make sustainability more likely because efforts will be focused and beliefs-driven.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

1. OSDE's plan would double the number of children birth to five that are currently being served through community programs (p. 50).

Weaknesses:

1. It is unclear how sub-grant applicants will be made aware of budget parameters.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 2

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:

1. Sub-grants will be required to use technology to provide assistance for students with visual, auditory, motor skills, and/or learning challenges (p. 9).
2. Sub-grants will be required to address principles of Universal Design using technology (p. 9).
3. Sub-grant administrators will be required to provide staff development on digital literacy and integrating technology into instruction (p. 20).
4. Sites may use funds to support or enhance curriculum including technology integration such as iPads and student response systems (p. 21).
5. The OSDE and sub-grant recipients will use a technology-based data analysis program to obtain immediate assessment results (p. 21).
6. Webinars and podcasts will be used to train Striving Readers coaches, principals, and teachers (p. 12).

Weaknesses:

1. The proposal does not specify the extent to which effective use of technology will be considered in sub-grant proposals.

Reader's Score: 4.5

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

1. Four clearly articulated goals target all students, from necessary pre-literacy skills of young children to college and career readiness for high school graduates (p. e0).
2. The Oklahoma Literacy Team has adopted a set of statements to guide literacy instruction in the state. The statements, which are rooted in research and effective practice, will guide the project in improving learning outcomes for all students (pp. 1-2). These commonly shared beliefs will assure that the project stays focused.
3. Priority is given to sub-grants with a target population of at least 50% free and reduced meals (p. 38).
4. Webinars and podcasts for professional development include a comprehensive list of topics essential to quality literacy instruction (pp. 41-45).

Weaknesses:

1. The proposal speaks of educating all students, but discussion of English Language Learners and students with disabilities is limited.
2. The proposal does not specifically address oral language development in children ages birth to 5.

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

1. LEA Striving Readers Coaches will be required to attend a state data retreat (p. 11).
2. The OSDE and sub-grant recipients will use a technology-based data analysis program to obtain student assessment results. Because disaggregated results are immediately available, monitoring of program implementation will allow for mid-course corrections (p. 21).
3. OSDE will require sub-grants to gather and use data on literacy performance indicators and rubrics through the Ways to Improve School Effectiveness planning tool (p. 13).
4. Formative and summative assessments will be required to track student progress, utilizing the common assessment and data management system designed by OSDE (pp. 20, 34).
5. Principals, Striving Readers Coaches, and teachers will be trained in data collection and analysis (p. 12).
6. LEA Striving Readers Coaches will be required to attend a state data retreat. This will enable the coaches to lead data-driven decision making (p. 11).

Weaknesses:

1. A description of how the external evaluator will collect and analyze data regarding grant implementation is missing from the proposal.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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