

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 6/23/11 12:00 AM

### Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Wyoming Department of Education -- WY Department of Education Federal Programs (S371C110022)

**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	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	37	25
<b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b>		
<b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b>		
1. State subgrant comp	28	19
<b>Sub Total</b>	28	19
<b>Project management</b>		
<b>Project management</b>		
1. Project management	15	10.5
<b>Sub Total</b>	15	10.5
<b>Adequacy of resources</b>		
<b>Adequacy of resources</b>		
1. Adequacy of resources	20	17.5
<b>Sub Total</b>	20	17.5
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority</b>		
<b>Effective Use of Technology</b>		
1. Competitive Priority	5	2.5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	2.5
<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	74.5

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SRCL - 4: 84.371C

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

Applicant: Wyoming Department of Education -- WY Department of Education Federal Programs

## 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: 25

#### 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 devoted extensive efforts to develop and provide for continuous improvement of its state literacy plan. The state has a Comprehensive Literacy Plan: Birth through grade 12, adopted on April 27, 2011, and intends to regularly review and revise the plan as needed (Abstract, Narrative: e0, e3). The State has--or is in the process of--reviewing state content and performance standards (e1), with a separate initiative to develop and align early learning guidelines with state K-12 standards (e2).

(ib) The State specifies abundant examples of how it aligns the use of Federal and State funds and programs within the SEA and LEA, including Title I, Migrant Education, Special Education, Title II, etc. (e4-e6)

(ic-d) The State has developed a comprehensive plan to make the process and results of subgrant applications publicly available (e26), including posting of information on the Wyoming Striving Readers Webpage, notifications by the Wyoming Dept. of Ed. (WDE), offering of technical support via subgrant design workshops and individual support as requested by LEAs and ECEPs (e16-17) and a two-day conference (e18). This extensive support ensures that subgrant proposals and funded subgrants meet the SRCL requirements of implementing a comprehensive and coherent literacy program. The State has a sound plan for scoring and selecting subgrant recipients (e10, e29-e32).

#### Weaknesses:

(id). The State intends to monitor the use of subgrant funds to implement a comprehensive and coherent literacy program, but does not describe specific performance indicators or objective monitoring tools that will be used (e10).

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.

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

(ii) The State has developed three (3) overarching goals and specific goals by age group (e10-e11). The State describes a range of available data sources (e12-e14). The State has used student achievement data to identify serious gaps in student achievement of specific subgroups (e15).

**Weaknesses:**

(ii) The IF-K assessment includes only one item that specifically addresses the child's literacy level and is unlikely to provide the detailed data needed to improve early childhood outcomes (e35). The specific goals by age group and subgroups do not demonstrate a clear credible path for how these goals will be achieved (e11-12). The specific goals are not clearly aligned with the review of the data analyses; e.g., while developing principal literacy leadership may be a credible goal, there is no relationship of the assessment data review to principal leadership (e12-e14).

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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 considerable support to LEAs in designing subgrant applications, developing partnerships, and designing plans to address the literacy needs of disadvantaged children and adults (e17). As part of the development of subgrant applications, LEAs will receive extensive technical assistance to design high-quality comprehensive literacy programs that are likely to improve student achievement (e18). The WDE SR project team will provide ongoing technical support to subgrantees (e18), including on-site support from the regional coordinators (e19). Regional coordinators will provide extensive assistance on analyzing student performance data (e19).

**Weaknesses:**

(iii) The criteria for selection of SR regional coordinators--the key SEA technical assistance providers--are ambiguous; the criteria include a broad range of areas of expertise, but lack specific description of how these skills will translate into effective technical assistance. For example, there is no description of the regional coordinators' expertise in leadership training or mentor/coach training, although the principals/ECP directors and literacy coaches have primary responsibility for ensuring that the comprehensive literacy programs are implemented (e19).

**Reader's Score: 3**

**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:**

(iv) The SEA will contract with an external evaluator via an RFP process (e20). The SEA specifies two (2) state level objectives (e21) and five (5) subgrant level objectives that will be evaluated (e22). The SEA has specific plans to review the WCSLP by analyzing student achievement data, and to use these results in updating the WCSLP (e24).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

(iv) The applicant suggests that subgrant annual reports, which are to be used as a monitoring tool, will also be part of the evaluation. However, there is no mention that the external evaluator will have access to, or use these as part of the evaluation. Assuming the latter, this component of the evaluation is not independent, as it is being conducted by program staff who are delivering the services being evaluated (e20). No performance indicators or GPRA indicators are mentioned; there are no targets listed for the two primary objectives and the five subgrant objectives; and no specific relationship to the measures (e22-24) and how these will inform the evaluation regarding the State's progress. In sum, the applicant leaves undefined how the evaluation defines and measures: progress, impact, fidelity, increased learning, and growth in teacher knowledge, skills and efficacy (e22). No mention is made of using evidence from the external evaluation to inform and continuously improve the design and implementation of its activities. The continuous improvement efforts appear to solely focus on student achievement, and not on the specific grant activities that are intended to affect student achievement.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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 SEA has an extensive and detailed plan for disseminating project outcome data in formats that match the needs of varied groups (e25). Results from each subgrant will be posted on the SR webpage (e25) and at regional and state conferences (e26).

**Weaknesses:**

(v) The proposal states that aggregated student assessment data (e25) will be available; it is unclear whether data disaggregated by student subgroup will be available, although this is alluded to (e25, 3rd line from bottom).

**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: 19**

**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:**

(1a) The SEA will run a rigorous, high-quality competition for subgrants. The SEA will offer workshops to assist subgrant application preparation, will convene and train a subgrant review panel and will establish inter-rater reliability (e29). The School Readiness Tool will be used to evaluate the early childhood provider's capacity to successfully implement its proposal.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

(1a) The applicant vaguely refers to assessment tools described in the evaluation section for use in determining an LEA's capacity to successfully implement its proposal; however, it is unclear how student achievement data will serve this purpose (e30).

**Reader's Score: 2.5**

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:**

(b) The subgrantee application and technical assistance process is likely to ensure that subgrantees propose high-quality literacy programs, including instructional strategies to meet the literacy needs of disadvantaged students (e32), curriculum and instructional materials aligned with State standards (e32) use of a coherent assessment system (e32), etc. The SEA will offer technical assistance workshops to help LEAs and ECEs conduct needs assessments for designing effective literacy improvement programs (e18).

**Weaknesses:**

(b) The applicant assumes that the assessment system will be operational during the life of the project, but no timeline is given for the completion and availability of the system. No mention is made of subgrantees involving other agencies, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, or families.

**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:**

(c) Subgrantee applications are required to demonstrate how SR funds will be leveraged in conjunction with other Federal funds (e32) and are required to demonstrate alignment with their SR-developed comprehensive literacy programs (e17).

**Weaknesses:**

(c) No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**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:**

(ii) The SEA makes some attempt to give priority to LEAs or ECEs that serve high-poverty schools or a high-poverty population by including in the selection criteria schools that surpass the state percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced lunch count (e33).

**Weaknesses:**

(ii) Poverty levels are only one of five (5) possible selection criteria for identifying highest need populations. High-need can also be established by meeting one of the following criteria: 50+% surpass state average percentage of 1) English language learners or 2) special education services recipients or 3) Native American heritage students or 4) Hispanic heritage students. While all four (4) of the latter might be associated with high-poverty, they are not necessarily so. The applicant appears to mistakenly equate at risk or high need with high-poverty (e33-e34). Under this formula, it would be possible for no high-poverty schools to be included. The applicant gives priority to schools in improvement status, assuming that these are all high-poverty schools, but there is no evidence provided that this is the case (e34).

**Reader's Score: 1**

- 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 SEA requires that potential ECEPs submit a record of effectiveness as part of the subgrant application (e34). The SEA requires that LEAs submit a record of effectiveness in improving literacy as part of the subgrant application (e35).

**Weaknesses:**

(iii) The applicant appears to confuse the concept of applications supported by the strongest available evidence with "record of effectiveness" (e35). This may result in not awarding subgrantees to those LEAs most in need.

**Reader's Score: 2.5**

- 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 SEA provides considerable support to assist LEAs in aligning curricula and materials with State standards. The Common Core Coalition will provide support to LEAs as well. The evaluation process and results from each project will be posted on the SR webpage (e36).

**Weaknesses:**

(iv) No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 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: 10.5**

**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 management plan is well-thought out, with specific responsibilities, timelines, and milestones specified for Year 1 and for State-level activities for Years 2-5 (e36-e39).

**Weaknesses:**

(i) The responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for the subgrantees are not specified.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

**Strengths:**

(ii) The Executive Sponsor (resume), Chair (resume), and Sponsor appear well-qualified to carry out their identified tasks. The resumes of five (5) of the six (6) WDE Regional Coordinators and Operations are submitted. All have either extensive teaching or administrative experience.

**Weaknesses:**

(ii) The Project Director has the greatest number of responsibilities for implementing this project, but no resume or description of her qualifications are included. The external evaluator has not been hired, so no determination can be made of the evaluator's qualifications.

Five (5) resumes are submitted for the Regional Coordinators and Operations Manager, but six (6) individuals are listed in the Project Management chart (e40). The project intends to hire four (4) Regional Coordinators and one (1) Operations Manager (e18), but the resumes are not matched to these roles. Some of the resumes indicate considerable administrative experience and others indicate considerable classroom experience, but these skills appear to be mutually exclusive. It is unclear who will be performing which role.

**Reader's Score: 2.5**

- 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:**

(iii) The State Literacy Team that developed the WCLSP included a diverse and wide range of professionals (e41, Attachment A). The State Literacy Team will review and update the WSCLP yearly, based on the results of statewide assessments and local assessments (e24). The State Literacy Team will collaborate with the Early Childhood Council and the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium to review emerging literacy research (e25).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

(iii) There is limited parent representation on the State Literacy Team. There is limited opportunity for a diversity of perspectives beyond the development and review of the WCLSP.

**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: 17.5**

**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 costs described in the SEA's budget are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the grant. The funding of annual meetings (e42), regional literacy coordinators (e42), literacy coaches (e43), materials (e43), professional development (e43) and travel (e44) should provide sufficient support, and are especially sensitive to the rural population density of the state (e0).

**Weaknesses:**

(i) Support for evaluation at the state level at \$15,000 for Year 1 and \$5,000 for subsequent years is low relative to the responsibilities expected of the external evaluator (e44). Support for evaluation at the LEA level is inadequate, with just over 2% of the direct costs directed to evaluation in Year 1 and under 2% in Year 2. These are not reasonable allocations and are unlikely to produce objective data to successfully evaluate the significance and effectiveness of the proposed project.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**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:**

(ii) The SEA has a high-quality plan to ensure that SRCL subgrant funds are allocated according to the 15/40/40 formula. The Operations Manager has specific responsibility to ensure that the allocation meets this, and the Project Director and WDE Office of Finance will also review allocations (e45).

**Weaknesses:**

(ii) The proposal states that there will be equitable distributions of funds between middle and high schools, but does not show separate allocations for middle schools and high schools (e45).

**Reader's Score: 3.5**

**Sub Question**

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 describes considerable efforts to leverage other State and Federal funds to maximize the impact of the grant, and in sustaining funding after the grant (e45-e47).

**Weaknesses:**

(iii) 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:**

(iv) The SEA has developed a logical and objective formula to ensure that subgrants are of sufficient size to support effective projects (e47, e44).

**Weaknesses:**

(iv) No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**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 plan to use technology for the purposes of increasing teacher effectiveness via professional development is appropriate, given the rural nature of the State (e48). The sharing of rubrics and anchor papers are likely to assist teachers' abilities to effectively assess students and identify gaps. Presumably, this could ultimately result in increased student achievement.

Use of UDL to support inquiry learning projects and backpack studies has the potential to support literacy growth by capitalizing on student motivation and student choice (e49).

**Weaknesses:**

The student use of technology is limited in scope and does not provide for online learning opportunities. No evidence is provided that the proposed use of technology will directly increase student engagement or achievement. There is no evidence that limited-English-proficient children and students with disabilities--or other students who cannot access traditional print--will be given access to technology

**Reader's Score:** 2.5

**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 project addresses the needs of a range of disadvantaged students, including schools with higher than State average percentages of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, English language learners, special education service recipients, Native American heritage, or Hispanic heritage (e33-e34). The project is aligned with the State's Wyoming State Comprehensive Literacy Plan (WSCLP) that is based on an in-depth statewide needs assessment and identifies three (3) overarching state goals and six (6) age and subgroup-specific sets of goals for: early childhood, elementary, secondary, special education, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students (e10-e12).

**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 State intends to develop an Assessment Resource tool (ART) to help LEAS make data-driven decisions (e-16).

**Weaknesses:**

There is no description of which assessment instruments will/can be exported to the ART. There is no discussion of how quickly State assessment data will be uploaded to the system, so no determination on timeliness or appropriateness can be made. There is no description of privacy requirements. There is no discussion of a timeline for completion of the ART (e-16).

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

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**Status:**           Submitted  
**Last Updated:**   6/23/11 12:00 AM

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Last Updated: 6/23/11 12:00 AM

### Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Wyoming Department of Education -- WY Department of Education Federal Programs (S371C110022)

**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	33
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b>		
<b>Quality of the State subgrant competition</b>		
1. State subgrant comp	28	22
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Project management</b>		
<b>Project management</b>		
1. Project management	15	13
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Adequacy of resources</b>		
<b>Adequacy of resources</b>		
1. Adequacy of resources	20	19
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority</b>		
<b>Effective Use of Technology</b>		
1. Competitive Priority	5	4
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</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>91</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SRCL - 4: 84.371C

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

Applicant: Wyoming Department of Education -- WY Department of Education Federal Programs

## 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:

Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) detailed a comprehensive and focused plan that will carry out the required State-level activities and how it will align those activities with its comprehensive State literacy plan. This plan includes (e1) alignment to the state and common core standards, as well as content literacy standards. This plan includes details that focus on the integration of Early Learning guidelines to Common Core Standards (e3). To facilitate the process the Governor created the WY Early Childhood Development State Council to partner with K-12 to fully integrate a B-12 comprehensive literacy plan. WDE gave an exhaustive delineation of the alignment of funds and how they would be integrated into the comprehensive literacy plan through a table presentation (e4). Of \$80,290,688 \$26,897,037 or thirty-three percent is targeted toward the comprehensive literacy plan. (e5). Additional funds (\$14,470,447) are provided from other state funds (e6). WDE will provide public transparency through a website dedicate to the Striving Readers Grant. Further proof of focused coordination of many initiatives includes a list of seven other state initiatives that are aligned with the comprehensive literacy plan (e10).

#### Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 10

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:

WDE has three focused overarching goals for improving literacy outcomes for all students: preventing a literacy gap; closing the gap where it exists, and challenging all students to perform at proficient and advanced literacy levels (e10). The grant specifies specific goals for each age group and for special needs groups as well(e11). Among the more unique and innovative goals is the focus on the principal as an instructional leader(e18). Another sound goal is to ensure that all supplemental literacy instruction is based on the foundation of a cohesive and comprehensive literacy framework(e11). Other innovative

**Sub Question**

strategies are the focus on dual immersion framework for students and on parental and community awareness of the importance of literacy proficiency(e19). The focus on PD supplemental teachers and paraprofessionals is also a significant and sound indicator of the comprehensive nature of the WDE plan (e 11). WDE indicates the use of appropriate assessments throughout the age spectrum of B-12. Examples of these assessments are: Kindergarten Readiness Measure Instructional Foundations; K-12 Proficiency Assessment Wyoming (PAWS); ACCESS for ELLs; DIBELS; MAP; Benchmark Assessments, and ACT Testing for College and Career Readiness (e14). WDE notes that the data indicate that there is a 65% reading and 83% writing proficiency rate across all students. However, they note that disaggregated data indicate gaps among sub-groups. NAEP data indicate that 33% of fourth grade students score at proficient or advanced categories, and again there are significant gaps among the disaggregated groups(e0-1). The plan calls for using this data to improve state literacy. WDE is in the process of developing a WY Assessment Resource (ART) (e16)to enhance data collection and use. ( Absolute priority2)

**Weaknesses:**

The Kindergarten Assessment has only one area directly related to literacy (e35), for a literacy initiative a more literacy focused assessment would have strengthened the proposal.

**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:**

WDE has a thorough approach to providing technical assistance to LEAS and Early childhood education providers (ECEP). This innovative plan starts as soon as the RFPs are announced and follows through to the end of the Grant (e16). The plan includes pre-grant workshops to ensure high quality grant proposals. This sound help extends through the budgeting process to ensure that grantees expend monies on appropriate activities(e17). Striving reader teams are prepared to help throughout the granting process. This is an extensive and coherent plan that includes providing technical assistance for using data to identify needs and gaps through fostering LEA/ ECEP partnerships(e18). This comprehensive plan is structured around a SR project director, an operations manager and four regional coordinators that will provide technical assistance through the life of the grant(e18). The thorough technical assistance plan includes all areas of the projects from inception through data collection, through other parts of the nuts and bolts of implementation and evaluation, both formative and summative. Include in the plan is a yearly conference where grantees to share lessons learned and to provide ongoing technical assistance.

**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:**

WDE presents an adequate evaluation plan that includes an (1) external evaluator who is yet to be determined (e20). (2) The evaluation methodology is both formative and summative with the primary goals being: the fidelity of implementation, and efficacy and impact of state level support on teacher knowledge and growth at the state level. (e21). Sound goals at the sub-grant level include the above but also: impact on students' literacy skills; impact on disadvantaged students; and the replicability of

**Sub Question**

successful practices statewide. WDE provides an extensive list of approved assessment for the evaluation process (e23-24). However, they note that sub-grantees may choose other instruments.(3) WDE plans, starting in August 2011, a meeting of the State Literacy Team, Internal Design team, and the state advisor to analyze the available data. These meetings will be conducted twice a year throughout the life of the grant. These meetings seem to adequately address the use of data for continuous improvement(e24-e25).

**Weaknesses:**

The evaluation plan is a bit ambiguous with limited information about exact processes and assessments to be used. Clarification of types of evaluation methods would have added to the project.The ability of subgrantees to choose other assessment instruments might weaken the evaluation process (20-22) and limit the ability to aggregate data and evaluate statewide impact (e24)

**Reader's Score: 8**

**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:**

WDE has an adequate plan to disseminate information related to project outcomes. They appear to be able to make reasonable use of technology and other mediums to provide information in differing formats for different audiences (e25).

**Weaknesses:**

WDE is making use of their website as a primary means of distributing information to stakeholders. WDE does not make reference to how this information might be provided to stakeholders who do not have access to web based technology (e26).

**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: 22**

**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:**

WDE has articulated a thorough methodology for insuring that the LEA's or early childhood education provider (ECEP) has the capacity to successfully implement its proposal(e26). WDE's use of NWREL Readiness Tool(e30) combined with submission of a record of literacy success seems to be a sound methodology to assure that ECEPs have the capacity for implementation. WDE's use of focused assessments for LEAS is a sound approach, as it will help subgrantees in their evaluation process. WDE's extensive technical assistance in the sub-grant writing process provides yet another method to ensure

**Sub Question**

high-quality grants from highly qualified LEAs and ECEPS, as this will help to ensure a that the state receives high quality subgrants. (e30)

**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:**

The process for (1) Addressing 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 is detailed in the plan. This plan includes the use of specified assessments to ensure that disadvantaged students are making progress. WDE has an adequate plan that asks the LEAs to plan instruction that 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 (e30). The sub-grants must adequately describe the instructional environment, interventions and enrichment strategies, an assessment system and evaluation and progress monitoring strategies. The combination of factors provides a comprehensive picture of the sub-grant and its use of assessment.

**Weaknesses:**

Inadequate information is provided on how LEAS/ECPS will involve other agencies, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and families in activities that promote the implementation of effective literacy instruction for disadvantaged students(e33).

**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:**

Adequate information is requested of subgrantees about the use of other federal and state funds and how Striving Readers funds will be leveraged to improve reading instruction for all students. These data include the amount and percentages of funding sources used to support comprehensive literacy programs. The combination of detail(e32) is convincing evidence of the states intention to insure maximum leverage of federal dollars.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness 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 applicant adequately details how they will ensure that disadvantaged children and students will be served by the sub-grant by requiring that 50% of schools served by each sub-grant surpass the state average percentage on one or more of the following criteria: qualified for free and reduced lunch; English Language Learners; receive special education services; students who are Native American or part Native American, or are Hispanic or part Hispanic. WDE's commitment to this priority is further demonstrated through the mandate that disadvantaged students' progress be tracked, and through the innovative idea of adding bonus points for each school that is included that is identified as being in School Improvement Status for the 2010-2011 school year (e33-34).

**Weaknesses:**

The formula designed by the state could allow schools without a high-poverty population to be selected. This could happen since subgrantees are allowed to pick from one of five different categories(e33).

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 applicant provides convincing evidence of their commitment to giving priority to ECEPS and LEAs who demonstrate the strongest level of success. A combination of innovative strategies that include "The School Readiness Tool"; the Instructional Foundations of Kindergarten Survey, and a data collection process that links students' progress back to their ECEP, document WDE's ability to prescreen subgrant partners (e35). At the LEA level an adequate process is outlined making use of extensive predetermined assessments to track the literacy progress of the students impacted by the sub-grants.

**Weaknesses:**

The use of alternative measures of effectiveness by subgrantees would seem to make comparison of potential partnerships inconsistent thus weakening the evaluation plan. (e35)

Reader's Score: 3

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 applicant details an innovative series of workshops that will help to educate the prospective sub-grantees to ensure that curriculum and materials are aligned with state standards(e36). In addition to the workshops, sub-grant applicants have the opportunity to work with the Common Core Coalition and WDE Striving Readers (SR)staff throughout the grant writing process to ensure that appropriate materials are picked(e36). The SEA provides a list of appropriate materials for the subgrant applicants to choose. Then as a part of the subgranting process, the materials chosen by the sub-grant applicants must be described in their sub-grants and are made part of the review (e36). Finally, the superintendents of funded sub-grants must complete assurances statements that the materials review process will be carried out(e36). The process appears to be sound and thorough.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 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: 13**

**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 presents a complete and comprehensive Project Management plan. This thorough plan has sound and achievable milestones and dates and designated personnel who are responsible for each task. The tasks are clearly aligned to the objectives of the grant. The timelines appear to be ambitious but achievable(e36-40).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 6**

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

**Strengths:**

The resumes submitted and the SRCL project management chart show an adequate level of expertise in the field of literacy and project management. All members of the team have had experience in education and/or leadership. Some have had experience with literacy and early childhood education. This appears to be a sound mix of talent. (e40 and appendix g).

**Weaknesses:**

The Project Director's resume was not submitted despite the fact this position carries a major portion of the responsibilities for the grant. This makes it difficult to judge the adequacy of the personnel(appendix g).

**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:**

The applicant presents a design and implementation team that strongly represents various stakeholders across the state. The members of the team represent the perspectives of the following groups: families; k-12 teachers; early childhood professionals; Head Start; professional organizations; institutions of higher education; community based organizations, officials from state and local agencies and libraries. This mix demonstrates the state's commitment to representing the perspectives of all stakeholders(e41-42).

**Weaknesses:**

One area of weakness was the lack of representation from Native American or tribal organizations and/or Hispanic and other ethnic organizations (e42-42).

**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: 19**

**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 presents an appropriate budget(budget narrative, e42-45). It is designed so that a reasonable amount of the funds are front loaded which should enable sub-grants to quickly get their grants in place with adequate resources for the acquisition of both instructional materials and appropriate personnel. The sub-grants will receive less funds in subsequent years as many of the materials are not continuing costs(e44). This also gives adequate time for sub-grants to be weaned from federal funds and become self-sufficient models of B-12 literacy programs(e41). The budget seems to be comprehensive and reasonable

**Weaknesses:**

There did not appear to be adequate funds allocated for the evaluation (E41).

**Reader's Score: 9**

- 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 plans, through pre-grant workshops and online and phone technical assistance, to provide extensive guidance on ensuring the 15/40/40 split of funds in the design of the sub-grants. This combined with the SR operations manager, Projector Director and Office of Finance monitoring of funds seems to be an adequate process for insuring that funds are spent and disbursed in an appropriate

**Sub Question**

manner. (e45)

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**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 applicant provided ample evidence of its ability to leverage both federal and state funds to maximize the impact of the grant. The state provided a table in section A.i of the grant to show how \$26,897,037.00 in federal and \$14,470,447.00 in state funds have been coordinated to support the Wyoming State Comprehensive literacy Plan. An additional \$943,810 in WY general funds will also be used to support the federal aid. The state provides extensive detail (e46) as to how these funds will be disbursed. Thus, the applicant provides an extensive look into its capacity to implement a sound and comprehensive literacy plan(e46-470).

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness 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 plans to fund 5-7 sub-grant projects. While not overly ambitious, it does ensure that the subgrantees that are funded have adequate funds to have a successful literacy program.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses observed.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**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:**

WDE already makes extensive use of technology in their education and professional development systems. They have a website and a system known as WEN. The applicant also is in the process of expanding broadband capacity in order to utilize the WEN to facilitate discussion among SR grants; provide and model best practices, and monitor grants. The applicant also notes a sound plan to use technology to facilitate Universal Design for Learning(e48) especially through inquiry learning projects. The state details a comprehensive plan to use technology appears to provide multiple ways of fostering both student and teacher growth.(e48)

**Weaknesses:**

While the state addressed the use of technology for PD and data collection, there was a lack of information about the use of technology at the student level (e48).

**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:**

The applicant has presented a comprehensive literacy plan, that if executed with fidelity, should improve the literacy outcomes of all children, in particular children with disadvantages. WY has already many of the key components in place to successfully implement this plan. These elements include: a comprehensive B-12 literacy plan that is aligned to national and common core standards and informed by a statewide needs assessment; a strong leadership team, an innovative technical assistance plan, and a process for using technology to enhance instruction and assessment and monitoring of students' progress. In this thorough process, WY has pulled together partnerships and funds that will facilitate the leveraging of the power of the Striving Readers Grants. The applicant's goals to eliminate both eliminate the "gaps" and to prevent the "gaps" from happening show their appropriate focus on meeting the literacy and language needs of disadvantaged students. This priority is MET.

**Weaknesses:**

As noted previously, it would be helpful to have more minority representation on the State Literacy Team (e41). Also, allowing grantees to pick assessments other than those recommended by the state would seem to weaken the monitoring and evaluation process(e24).

**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:**

Wyoming has detailed a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system for the sub-grants awarded. Wyoming already has a reasonable system in place that monitors all students in the state (Every Student Counts). This extensive system allows all stakeholders to access data and use the data to make data based decisions. The state, as part of their technical assistance plan (e19), charges regional coordinators with helping sub-grant sites to assess student learning, data collection and usage in setting up procedures for data interpretation, reports and analysis. This sound process will help to ensure that appropriate assessments, collection of data, and analysis of data is accomplished. At the state level, all sites will have on-site reviews on a biennial schedule. The use of an outside evaluator helps to validate the results(e16). The clearly stated objectives of the evaluation both at the state and sub-grant level will facilitate appropriate analysis. The use of both qualitative and quantitative data will also help to facilitate reliable data based decisions. This appears to be a thorough and extensive evaluation plan(e21). This priority is MET.

### **Weaknesses:**

The use of alternative assessments may weaken the evaluation plan, as it would make more difficult to compare and contrast results of different sub-grants(e22).

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 6/23/11 12:00 AM

Status: Submitted

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

### Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Wyoming Department of Education -- WY Department of Education Federal Programs (S371C110022)

**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	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	23
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Project management</b>		
<b>Project management</b>		
1. Project management	15	12
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Adequacy of resources</b>		
<b>Adequacy of resources</b>		
1. Adequacy of resources	20	18
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority</b>		
<b>Effective Use of Technology</b>		
1. Competitive Priority	5	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</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>86</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - SRCL - 4: 84.371C

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

Applicant: Wyoming Department of Education -- WY Department of Education Federal Programs

## 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 has a documented statewide needs assessment in place (Attach B and C). (e1) The alignment and development of a comprehensive state literacy plan began with the forming of an 18-member panel with expertise in literacy. The final version of the Wyoming Comprehensive State Literacy Plan was approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (Attachment A) and provides an alignment of programs for a comprehensive literacy plan. (e3) There are additional state initiatives that are legislatively mandated. A number of statewide programs designed to address the needs of all students have been aligned with the WCSLP to produce a comprehensive literacy plan to effectively carry out activities.

A Statewide Literacy Needs Assessment was legislatively mandated by the Governor. (e18) In addition, the applicant presents documentation that the State Board of Education approved Wyoming Content and Performance standards in Language Arts (attach. B), imbedded in Common Core Standards (attach. C). Wyoming Early Learning Guidelines provides a seamless transition beginning with 3-5 year olds and is aligned with Head Start. (e18) The applicant demonstrates a framework to align a comprehensive literacy plan by ensuring that literacy skills within the Common Core Standards are connected within and across content areas to assist students from across the state to meet their learning goals. (e1) This comprehensive framework will enable the applicant to align a comprehensive literacy plan.

#### Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 10

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.

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The applicant has an innovative plan to use the Assessment Resource Tool. By using this tool Wyoming LEAs can set standards for school and student performance as measured against other LEAs statewide for a successful implementation.

The primary goal of ART is to support Wyoming LEAs in making data-driven decisions that ultimately affect student learning. LEAs can analyze data in all areas of assessment including one of the most critical areas: reading. LEAs are able to view graphs, compare longitudinal educational data, export, and drill educational data tables, and extend data analysis by combining measures and dimensions to create customized analytical reports and use this data to improve outcomes. In addition, ART provides student-level assessment performance and behavior data in a user-friendly manner. It is the WDEs hope that it can provide LEAs with a single solution for assessment reporting needs. The end user has the ability to customize the data collected at a state level to take advantage of LEA data to increase student performance in the areas most critical to education.

The applicant has a solid data collection strategy by using the Kindergarten Readiness measure, PAWS, DIBLES, MAP, K-8 Assessments and ACT. (e10-e11) The applicant will utilize a Council to investigate a recently completed needs assessments (part of WCSLP, Title I and Title IIA) and complete a gap analysis in preparation for systematic needs assessments.

The Council will develop recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data collection system statewide. (e3) The applicant will use this data to enable administrators, teachers and parents can accurately assess student learning and provides an accountability tool; it is a diagnostic tool that permits that encourages teachers to tailor instruction to student needs and create effective activities for student achievement.

The applicant clearly defined overarching goals with a clear path that SEA use to achieve goals with LEAs birth - grade 12 including ELL, economically disadvantaged, special needs. (e10) The applicant documented the use of past awards to Wyoming (fiscal year 2009/10) to show evidence that the groundwork for continued work with limited-English-proficient students, students in poverty and students with disabilities is solid. (e4-e6) This demonstrates that the applicant has a solid foundation to continue to build an aligned, system to produce desired results.

### Weaknesses:

The applicant is not completely convincing that the plan will meet the requirements for ALL students since there is no evidence of a specific plan or how the applicant will use the data to improve the literacy skills for the most in need.

**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 will provide continuous support throughout the life of the grant with subgrant design and writing workshops, annual meetings, state review and a 2-day conference. (e18).

The applicant will use the webpage to provide communication and technical assistance to with LEAs and ECEPs.

The applicant plans for a two-day design workshop that is strategically planned on two sides of the state. (e17)

The applicant details the use regional coordinators to work closely with principals and school-based mentors and coaches to make sure that the school and ECEP staff have the professional development and coaching necessary to ensure an effective literacy program is implemented at each school and ECEP site. WDE SR regional coordinators, report directly to the SR project director, and will provide on-site support to the subgrant sites during the five-year grant period.

The applicant plans to have the WDE SR project director, an operations manager and four SR regional

**Sub Question**

coordinators. This team will have the responsibility for ensuring that SR schools and ECEPs receive ongoing professional development, technical assistance, and a clear communication path to project and WDE leadership as they implement the components of an effective literacy program from birth to grade 12 ( e12).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant refers to a Kindergarten Readiness Measures but does not include a sample of the it. It is unclear as to whether the applicant is providing technical assistance to provide an effective literacy program implement a high-quality comprehensive literacy program since the applicant does not use the later description. (e35)

**Reader's Score: 3**

- 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) The applicant has an RFP in place for choosing an independent external evaluator. (e20)
- 2) The applicant's plan for evaluation is sound employing both quantitative and qualitative data collection analysis. (e20)  
Procedures are sound to meet the goals of evaluation by formative evaluation, to improve programs, and summative evaluations, for results of the program. (e21-e23)  
The applicant will aggregate at-risk students and disaggregate by each separate group to elevate their progress. (e6)
- 3) The applicant provides convincing plans to support a continuous improvement plan based on statewide and local assessments. (e24)

**Weaknesses:**

It is unclear as to how the applicant will evaluate progress between grades since they will be using different curriculum. This is especially true for early childhood participants.

**Reader's Score: 8**

- 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 has specific plans to disseminate project outcome information, including annual evaluations and aggregated student assessment data, in a variety of formats to meet the needs of various audiences and stakeholder groups including families, educators, researchers, other experts, and early childhood education providers. Annual reports will be made to the Superintendent of Public Education, State Board, legislature, and governor. In addition, the applicant will use the website to maintain communications and material dissemination. (e25)

The applicant will use ART to provide student-level assessment performance and behavior data in a user-friendly manner. It is the WDE's hope that it can provide LEAs with a single solution for assessment reporting needs. The end user has the ability to customize the data collected at a state level so he or she may take advantage of LEA data to increase student performance in the areas most critical to education.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not have a solid plan to disseminate project outcome information disaggregated by student subgroup.

**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 applicant will create a subgrant review panel with deep expertise in effective literacy instruction and familiarity with the Wyoming Comprehensive State Literacy Plan to ensure a rigorous, high-quality competition. Training on the subgrant application, scoring rubric and scoring procedures will take place prior to the review and selection process. The review panel will evaluate and score each application. Each subgrant application will be reviewed by two reviewers using a subgrant scoring rubric. At the conclusion of the independent review, reviewers will meet to discuss and make final scoring recommendations about each subgrant application. If a discrepancy exists in the scoring of an application, a third reviewer will score the application. The WDE will review the scoring to ensure that the teams were calibrated in their scoring and that the recommended projects comply with all grant requirements. (e26)

Eligible early education and non-profits providers must demonstrate a record of effectiveness in improving early literacy development and will complete a Comprehensive Striving Reader Partnership subgrant. Council authorized to conduct periodic statewide assessment. (e3) (e26)

Subgrant Review Panels (e29) and in-depth statewide assessment (Attach A) will enable grantee to select the most promising, high-quality subgrant projects. (e31)

a)

WDE plans to use the School Readiness Tool, developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory to help early childhood providers determine their capacity and readiness to participate in a SR subgrant partnership proposal. All early learning potential partners will administer the Readiness Tool and submit the results as part of the subgrant application. In addition, early childhood partners must submit a record of effectiveness in improving early literacy development as part of the subgrant application. These two components will be scored in the subgrant review process.

The applicant will consider the results from the assessment tools described in the evaluation section to demonstrate the capacity and readiness of one or more schools within an LEA to participate in a SR subgrant partnership proposal. Subgrant sites may propose alternate measures but those measures must have strong evidence of validity and reliability in order to be considered. WDE will have final approval on the acceptability of proposed alternates.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant shows inappropriate knowledge of early childhood centers when explaining how the School Readiness Tool will be used. ECCs do not have a principal or specialists on staff. (e30)

The applicant does not indicate how a high quality, nationally accredited early learning center would be included.

**Sub Question**

The applicant is not clear about how the School Readiness Tool surveys will be used in early learning centers B-5 where there is no Principal, Special Education Teachers etc.(e30)

**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 documents that over the last year the State Literacy Team worked to develop the Wyoming Department of Education State Literacy Plan. They began with an in-depth statewide needs assessment. Assessment data were analyzed, gaps were identified, and the team reviewed the most recent literacy research. This work resulted in the identification of three overarching (see Attachment A). (e30)

The applicant will require that all funded subgrants must meet in order to address the needs of disadvantaged students, and struggling readers to implement an effective B-12 literacy program. (e31-e32)

1)

The activities in the comprehensive literacy plan summarized for each age band: birth-5, Kindergarten-Grade 5, and Grades 6-12 builds a Comprehensive Plan Birth-12 Literacy Instruction framework.

2) The State Literacy Team completed a needs assessment demonstrating support for literacy .

3)

The applicant details their goals which are the basis of the State Literacy Plan and will be used in the review of the subgrant proposals. WDE will select and fund only the most promising, high-quality subgrant projects designed to advance literacy skills of all students from B-12, and particularly the literacy skills of disadvantaged/at-risk students.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant is not thorough and does not ensure that the requirements will be substantiated. The applicant is lacking in a detailed description.

**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 Organization Structure and Terminology attachment (e0-e8) and attachment A Comprehensive Literacy Plan B-Grade 12 (e3-e22) demonstrates a coherent strategy to improve literacy instruction that aligns activities under the SRCL subgrant. Support of other entities is also documented in the alignment federal funds data and demonstrates the ability to improve literacy. (e4)

**Sub Question**

**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 is interested in funding partnership projects that intentionally bring together a mix of high performing schools reflecting a variety of socioeconomic conditions and disadvantaged students. The applicant will specifically target the needs of the most disadvantaged populations within the state of Wyoming. The applicant has identified those populations and they are economically disadvantaged as measured by the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch; are English Language Learners (ELL); are served by Special Education (SPED); are Native American; and are Hispanic students. To ensure these priorities are met, WDE will, as an absolute priority, require that each subgrant project meet one or more of the criteria. (Application page 34)

**Weaknesses:**

It is unclear as to whether the applicant will serve poverty levels in the highest need situations according to their formula.

**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:**

The applicant specifies that all early learning potential partners must submit a record of effectiveness in improving early literacy development as part of the subgrant application and all public school kindergarten teachers in the State of Wyoming (including all TANF preschools) are asked to complete the Instructional Foundations for Kindergarten (IF-K). (Application page 35)

**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:**

The applicant develops an innovative series of workshops that will assist prospective subgrantees to ensure that the curriculum and materials are aligned with state standards. Subgrantees have the opportunity to work with the Common Core Coalition and WDE Striving Readers staff throughout the grant writing process to ensure that appropriate materials are chosen for implementation.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant is not thorough and there is a confusing description of the "submission of a record of effectiveness".

Sub Question

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 management plan is appropriate to implement the objectives of the project. There are project objectives, timeline, milestones and who is responsible documented and appropriate in the Project Management Plan to produce a solid program. (e36)

**Weaknesses:**

The "who" will be responsible is clear but there is a lack of clearly defined responsibilities for what they are responsible for accomplishing. (e36)

Reader's Score: 5

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant included very strong resume for key personnel (e0-e21) with relevant expertise and a wide range of experience including literacy, reading, special education, professional development, and deaf education. The applicant has an adequate staff to produce the desired results. (e40), (e53)

**Weaknesses:**

The project director has the greatest number of responsibilities, but a resume is not included for this person. (Appendix G)

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 presents a strong State Literacy Team made up of eighteen members from across the state with experience in literacy implementation and leadership B-grade 12 to provide a diversity of perspectives in the design and implementation of the proposed project. (e41)

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

There is a lack of representation from Native American or Hispanic communities.

**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: 18**

**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 of Wyoming is committing substantial support and resources to carry out state available activities. (e42). Alignment of funds (e4) is strong and maintains a coherent approach to funding and implementing effective literacy instruction, particularly for disadvantaged/at risk students.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant was not thorough in the description of resources for children with special needs. The applicant has an unrealistic allocation, 2-3% of fees, for evaluation when the standard fee is 8-10%

**Reader's Score: 8**

- 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 WDE allocation of funds meets the guidelines for 15, 40, 40 percent distribution. (e42-e45)  
Costs are appropriate to the number of objectives, design and depth of the project. (e43-e45)

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**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 applicant includes a table on e46 as evidence of integrating state, federal and local funds with a plan to sustain the project after the end of the grant. The project is front loaded to enable an immediate and responsible start.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness 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:**

There is a formula in place based on the number of students and number of teachers based on the size of the school staff and number of children birth-age 5, K to grade 5, grades 6-8 and grades 9-12 that will support the program. (e44)

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness noted.

**Reader's Score:** 3

**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 provides evidence that the WEN system will connect "far-flung" LEAs and enable them to input and share information. (e48)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant is confusing in the use of technology and focuses on the website as the major technology in the project. There is no evidence of using technology as a support and/or teaching tool in the classroom. (e48)

No evidence that technology will be used to give access to students with limited-English-proficiency and students with special needs, who cannot access traditional print.

**Reader's Score:** 2

**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 will use monthly interaction with LEAs to monitor, model and dialogue with grant recipients. (e48)  
There is evidence that there will be significant district and state assessments to ensure quality, to raise student achievement and to close the achievement gap. (e4-e6)

**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 documented the 2011 technology collaboration initiative which includes LEA technology directors, curriculum directors, teachers, and other parties directly involved with technology decisions. These specialists will meet face-to-face annually to plan how technology can support learning. This same group will meet, virtually via WEN-Video, once per quarter to continuously assess needs and discuss best practices.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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