

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 3:57 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Augusta School District -- District Office ,Augusta Public Schools County
Office of Education (S385A100083)

Reader #1: *****

Points Possible Points Scored

Questions

Evaluation Criteria

Absolute Priority 1

1.Absolute Priority 1	0	0
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Absolute Priority 2

1.Absolute Priority 2	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Evaluaton Criteria

Absolute Priority 3

1.Absolute Priority 3	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Requirement

Requirement

1.Requirement	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Evaluation Criteria

Core Element 1

1.Core Element 1	0	0
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Core Element 2

1.Core Element 2	0	0
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Core Element 3

1.Core Element 3	0	0
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Core Element 4

1.Core Element 4	0	0
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Core Element 5

1.Core Element 5	0	0
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High Quality Professional Development

1.Professional Development	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Selection Criteria

Need for the Project

1.Need for Project	10	9
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Project Design

1.Project Design	60	48
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	19
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	4
Sub Total	100	80

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	5
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Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	3
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Sub Total	10	8
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Total	110	88
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Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel - 4: 84.385A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Augusta School District -- District Office ,Augusta Public Schools County Office of Education (S385A100083)

Questions

Evaluation Criteria - Absolute Priority 1

1. Priority 1: Differentiated Levels of Compensation for Effective Teachers and Principals:

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that --

It will develop and implement a PBCS that rewards, at differentiated levels, teachers and principals who demonstrate their effectiveness by improving student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as part of the coherent and integrated approach of the local educational agency (LEA) to strengthening the educator workforce.

In determining teacher and principal effectiveness as part of the PBCS, the LEA - -

- (a) Must give significant weight to student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice), based on objective data on student performance;
- (b) Must include observation-based assessments of teacher and principal performance at multiple points in the year, carried out by evaluators trained in using objective evidence-based rubrics for observation, aligned with professional teaching standards; and, if applicable, as part of the LEA's coherent and integrated approach to strengthening the educator workforce; and
- (c) May include other measures, such as evidence of leadership roles (as defined in the Federal Register notice), that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

In determining principal effectiveness as part of a PBCS, the LEA must give significant weight to student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) and may include supplemental measures such as high school graduation and college enrollment rates. In addition, the applicant must demonstrate that the differentiated effectiveness incentive payments will provide incentive amounts that are substantial and provide justification for the level of incentive amounts chosen. While the Department does not propose a minimum incentive amount, the Department encourages applicants to be thorough in their explanation of why the selected incentive amounts are likely high enough to create change in the behavior of current and prospective teachers and principals in order to ultimately improve student outcomes.

General:

- (a) The applicant has appropriate plans to use student test score data on state measures and SAT school performance tests, as well as growth on student test scores in categories from below basic to basic or from proficient to advanced. (p. 11, 18).
- (b) The applicant has appropriate plans to use observation based assessments of teacher performance at 4-6 times a year using the TAP Instructional rubric that is based on Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards aligned with national board standards. (p. 24, 25). It is unclear if principals will also be observed with the TAP.
- (c) The applicant has appropriate plans to include other measures of teacher effectiveness, such as leadership roles of mentoring, end of course exams, the Grade 11 Literacy Exam, and portfolios containing lesson plans and student work. (p. 50, 52). The applicant did not provide a rationale for determining that teachers would receive a 5% pay increase and principals would receive 10% and explain why they believe that those amounts will be sufficient to change behavior.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Absolute Priority 2

1. Priority 2: Fiscal Sustainability of the Performance-Based Compensation System (PBCS):

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that - -

(a) The applicant has projected costs associated with the development and implementation of the PBCS, during the project period and beyond, and has accepted the responsibility to provide such performance-based compensation to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) who earn it under the system; and

(b) The applicant will provide from non-TIF funds over the course of the five-year project period an increasing share of performance-based compensation paid to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) in those project years in which the LEA provides such payments as part of its PBCS.

General:

(a) The applicant has appropriate plans to provide performance based compensation to teachers with stipends for teaching in hard to fill subject areas and high needs areas, incentives based on student performance and teacher efficacy of up to \$7500 annually, and career ladder increases of \$15000 a year as they progress up the careeer ladder. (p. 15, 16, 22).

(b) The applicant has appropriate plans to provide non TIF funds from local funds, state funds for professional development and other federal programs like the National School Lunch Act and English Language Learner funds to sustain the project and reduce reliance on TIF funds over the 5 year grant period on a continually decreasing scale (p, 47)

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluaton Criteria - Absolute Priority 3

1. Priority 3: Comprehensive Approaches to the Performance-Based Compensation System:

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that - -

The proposed PBCS is aligned with a coherent and integrated strategy for strengthening the educator workforce, including in the use of data and evaluations for professional development and retention and tenure decisions in the LEA or LEAs participating in the project during and after the end of the TIF project period.

General:

(a) The applicant has appropriate plans to use a clinical supervision model of pre and post conferencing before and after observations and develop individual growth plans for each teacher based on those observations and conferences and use that input for evaluating retention and tenure. (p. 21, 26)

Reader's Score: 0

Requirement - Requirement

1. REQUIREMENT: Comment on the quality of the applicant's description of how its proposed PBCS will provide educators with incentives to take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles (as defined in the Federal Register notice.

General:

The applicant has appropriate plans to recruit teachers as master and mentor teachers by incentives of \$15,000 annually for increased days of service and additional responsibilities (p. 16).

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 1

1. Core Element 1:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's plan for effectively communicating to teachers, administrators, other school personnel, and the community at-large the components of its performance based compensation system.

General:

The applicant has an extensive communication plan to announce activities and outcomes of the project. The plan is comprehensive in scope to inform both the community and staff through such vehicles as a yearly evaluation and progress report (p. 23). The key district staff will create a communication plan to generate buy in and to communicate the phases, goals, resources and accountability plan to stakeholders (p. 23). Communication strategies are extensive as they include weekly cluster meetings and quarterly school and district wide staff development meetings, informal communications online, and quarterly presentations by the Leadership Team to stakeholders (p. 35).

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 2

1. Core Element 2:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's involvement and support of teachers, principals, and other personnel (including input from teachers, principals, and other personnel in the schools and LEAs to be served by the grant) and the involvement and support of unions in participating LEAs (where they are the designated exclusive representatives for the purpose of collective bargaining) that is needed to carry out the grant.

General:

The applicant has appropriately provided for involvement of teachers and principals by forming a leadership team composed of representatives from each position in the district to guide the project (p. 23). The applicant has appropriately documented support for the project by letters of support from the school principals, but has not documented support for the project from teachers with similar letters of support. The applicant has appropriately planned that in the absence of a union they will include the district personnel committee to participate in the development, implementation and governance of the project (p. 35).

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 3

1. Core Element 3:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's implementation, or plan to implement, a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as a significant factor, as well as classroom observations conducted at least twice during the school year. The evaluation process must: (1) use an objective, evidence-based rubric aligned with professional teaching or leadership standards and the LEA's coherent and integrated approach to strengthening the educator workforce; (2) provide for observations of each teacher or principal at least twice during the school year by individuals (who may include peer reviewers) who are provided specialized training; (3) incorporate the collection and evaluation of additional forms of evidence; and (4) ensure a high degree of inter-rater reliability (i.e., agreement among two or more raters who score approximately the same).

General:

(1) The applicant has appropriate plans to use an objective evidence based rubric of the TAP that is aligned with professional standards from the National Board for Professional Teacher Standards.(p. 12, 25). (2) The applicant has appropriate plans to observe each teacher 4-6 times per year using observers who have been trained with the measure. (p. 41). (3) The applicant has appropriate plans to collect other forms of evidence, such as teacher portfolios of lesson plans and end of unit tests and student work. (4) The applicant appropriately provided for establishing inter rater reliability as part of the yearly certification process in training evaluators, but did not address how the process of how inter rater reliability would be established with the measure (p. 25).

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 4

1. Core Element 4:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's implementation or plan to implement, a data-management system that can link student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems.

General:

The applicant has appropriate plans to use the TAP system that allows for online data tracking of student achievement and analysis of teachers' performance and student achievement scores. (p. 32). The applicant has appropriate plans to upgrade their data management system to the SAS value added assessment system as a web based application for online data monitoring and train teachers and principals in how the system works (p. 33). The applicant has appropriate plans to coordinate the system with human resources and the payroll system for teachers and principals using the TAP online computerized data base (p. 34).

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 5

1. Core Element 5:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's plan for ensuring that teachers and principals understand the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS, and receive professional development that enables them to use data generated by these measures to improve their practice.

General:

The applicant has appropriate plans to train teachers and principals in becoming competent in using information gathered from the TAP online data system for monitoring faculty evaluations to improve classroom practices. (p. 33). The applicant has appropriate plans to form a data systems committee as a subcommittee of the Leadership Team to lead the data management and collection processes (p. 34).

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - High Quality Professional Development

1. High Quality Professional Development:

Comment on the applicant's demonstration that ---

Its proposed PBCS will include a high-quality professional development component for teachers and principals consistent with the definition of the term professional development in section 9101(34) of the ESEA. The applicant must demonstrate that its PBCS has a professional development component in place, or a specific plan for developing one, that is directly linked to the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS. The professional development component of the PBCS must - -

(1) Be based on needs assessed either at the high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) participating in the applicant's proposed PBCS or LEA-wide;

(2) Be targeted to individual teacher's and principal's needs as identified in the evaluation process;

(3) Provide --

(a) Those teachers and principals in participating TIF schools who do not receive differentiated compensation based on effectiveness under the PBCS with the tools and skills they need to improve their effectiveness in the classroom or school and be able to raise student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice); and

(b) Those teachers and principals who are deemed to be effective and who, therefore, receive differentiated compensation under the PBCS, with the tools and skills they need to (1) continue effective practices in the classroom or school and raise student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice), and (2) successfully assume additional responsibilities and leadership roles (as defined in the Federal Register notice);

(4) Support teachers and principals to better understand and use the measures of effectiveness in the PBCS to improve practice and student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice); and

(5) Include a process for regularly assessing the effectiveness of this professional development in improving teacher and leadership practice to increase student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) and making modifications necessary to improve its effectiveness.

General:

(1) The applicant has appropriate plans to hire a professional development coordinator to assist the district in developing, implementing and evaluating a staff development plan. The applicant did not clearly describe a formal needs assessment process such as a survey, but did provide for examining student test data by school and by teacher and assessing need by principals conferencing with individual teachers. (p. 27).

(2) The applicant has appropriate plans to link professional development to individual teacher's growth plans in participating schools to target individual teacher's needs. (p. 27).

(3) The applicant has appropriately planned for professional development for teachers who do not receive differentiated compensation based on effectiveness. The applicant has

appropriate plans to provide professional development in a variety of formats for teachers (p. 27) and to train principals on effective decision making (p. 30), involve principals in the state Leadership Academy Principal Institute for professional development (p. 29) and get principals' input into their ideas for additional professional development opportunities (p. 30).

(4) The applicant has appropriate plans to train all teachers on the evaluation rubric and its ratings of teacher competency on a 1-5 point scale to inform teachers of the performance standards to which they will be held accountable (p. 24, 25).

(5) The applicant has clearly provided for an evaluation of the professional development to be embedded into the local evaluation plan. (p. 54).

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Need for the Project

1.(A): Need for the project (10 points):

In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the applicant establishes that--

1) The high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) whose educators would be part of the PBCS have difficulty--

(i) Recruiting highly qualified or effective teachers, particularly in hard-to-staff subjects or specialty areas, such as mathematics, science, English language acquisition, and special education; and

(ii) Retaining highly qualified or effective teachers and principals.

(2) Student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) in each of the schools whose educators would be part of the PBCS is lower than in what the applicant determines are comparable schools in the LEA, or another LEA in its State, in terms of key factors such as size, grade levels, and poverty levels; and

(3) A definition of what it considers a "comparable" school for the purposes of paragraph (2) of this selection criterion is established.

Strengths:

(1) The applicant appropriately demonstrated need for the project by narrative depictions of a rural and isolated area with faculty who are among the lowest paid in the country (p. 1,2). Need was further documented by descriptive statistics by selecting schools with 100% of students eligible for free and reduced lunch (p. 3) and 41.3% of students reporting feeling unsafe at school, a high minority population (p. 8), and a drop out rate that is twice as high as a nearby district (p. 5). Need was further enhanced by documentation of teachers' low salary as most teachers are paid the state minimum of \$29,000 a year (p. 3). The applicant clearly identified hard to fill positions in mathematics, special education, secondary science, and English/language arts/social studies. (p. 4). The applicant further clearly documented need for the project by describing difficulty in retaining teachers with a turnover rate of 20% and 11 of 53 positions vacant and only 85% of teachers who are certified. (p. 3).

(2) The applicant appropriately documented need for the project by descriptive statistics of achievement test scores for each project school that indicate low academic proficiency (p. 8-10). The applicant appropriately demonstrated that the two elementary project schools score lower and achieve less than a comparable school (p. 9-10). The applicant appropriately demonstrated that the high school has been in year two of an improvement plan with drop out rates of more than twice the state average with 82% scoring below proficiency on a literacy exam and 73% scoring below proficiency on mathematics compared to the state average of 29%. (p. 10-11).

(3) The applicant provided a clear and appropriate definition of a comparable school by selecting a comparison elementary school that is demographically similar to two of the project schools in terms of student ethnic minority composition, size, grade level configuration, poverty levels and location. (p. 9).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide comparable school data to indicate achievement comparisons between the project high school and a comparison high school of similar demographic characteristics in the district or state.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Project Design

1.(B): Project design (60 points)

In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the proposed PBCS--

(1) Is part of a proposed LEA or statewide strategy, as appropriate, for improving the process by which each participating LEA rewards teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) in high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) based upon their effectiveness as determined in significant part by student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice). With regard to the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other personnel, the Secretary will consider whether--

(i) The methodology the LEA or SEA proposes to use in its PBCS to determine the effectiveness of a school's teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) includes valid and reliable measures of student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice);

(ii) The participating LEA would use the proposed PBCS to provide performance awards to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) that are of sufficient size to affect the behaviors of teachers, principals, and other personnel and their decisions as to whether to go to, or remain working in, the high-need school; and

(iii) The applicant provides a clear explanation of how teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) are determined to be "effective" for the purposes of the proposed PBCS.

(2) Has the involvement and support of teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools), including input from teachers, and principals, and other personnel in the schools and LEAs to be served by the grant, and the involvement and support of unions in participating LEAs where they are the designated exclusive representatives for the purpose of collective bargaining that is needed to carry out the grant;

(3) Includes rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate levels of effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as a significant factor, as well as classroom observations conducted at least twice during the school year;

(4) Includes a data-management system, consistent with the LEA's proposed PBCS, that can link student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems; and

(5) Incorporates high-quality professional development activities that increase the

capacity of teachers and principals to raise student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) and are directly linked to the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS.

Strengths:

(1) The applicant has clear plans to use valid and reliable measures of state achievement test data and student growth for performance based incentives to assess increases in achievement aimed at reaching at least 20% growth in student achievement. (p. 16, 18, 21, 22).

2) The applicant has appropriately documented support for the project by letters of support from the proposed project schools' principals. (p. 80-82). In the absence of a union, the applicant has appropriately provided for input into the planning and oversight of the project from the elected district personnel committee (p. 35). The project will be overseen by a Leadership Team composed of teacher and administrator representatives from each school (p. 34). In addition, the applicant appropriately provides for input from key stakeholders by establishing a communications subcommittee that will be formed from the Leadership Team to provide input into developing the communication plan. (p. 36).

(3).The applicant has appropriate plans to use a well known and valid and reliable measure to evaluate the efficacy of the project teachers. The applicant has appropriately planned to use the TAP Instructional Rubric based on research from experimental design studies and the professional literature in educational psychology. (p. 25). The instrument is appropriately aligned with national and state teacher standards, such as the National Board for Professional Teacher Standards and the California Standards for The Teaching Profession. (p. 25). The applicant has appropriate plans to provide sufficient incentives in the forms of bonuses for teachers of at least 5% of their annual salaries and principals of at least 10% of their annual salaries. (p. 19). Teachers in high needs schools or those in high needs subjects will appropriately receive an annual retention bonus of \$5000 as will Master and Mentor teachers (p. 15, 20). These performance rewards should be sufficient to retain teachers and encourage and reward leadership and improvement in teaching skills and student growth.

(3) The applicant has appropriate plans to make the evaluation system transparent by training all teachers in the use of the TAP (p. 25). The applicant also has appropriate plans to conduct classroom observations of each teacher 4-6 times per year and determine teacher professional development and growth plans based on those observations, lesson plans, student work and student achievement data (p.24).

(4) The applicant has appropriate plans to purchase an upgrade to their data management system that will allow TAP data to be linked to human resources and payroll (p.32).

Weaknesses :

(1) The applicant did not cite and provide references for the research on which the TAP is based or cite the specific studies that support their statement that the 26 indicators within 4 categories of the TAP have been demonstrated by research to reflect effective practice. (p. 25). No plan was provided for establishing inter-rater reliability. The applicant did not provide a clear definition of effective teachers or principals.

The recruitment incentive of \$2000 extra salary seems insufficient to attract teachers in high needs subject areas such as mathematics compared to salaries they could obtain in industry or other nonschool settings. (p. 20)

(2) The applicant failed to provide documentation of support for the project by including letters of support from teachers, key stakeholders or other non-administrative staff in the participating schools.

(5) The plan for professional development appears to be inadequate for high needs subject areas such as reading with provision for only 3 contact hours of training per semester which would not appear to meet the goal of having half the professional development or 30 hours be in subject specific areas (p. 29). Much of the plan for professional development is vague or nonspecified, such as the training content for principals (p. 29) or the seminars, institutes and workshops listed on page 27 as part of professional development.

The topic or content of specific trainings and their frequency of offerings, duration and providers are not specified. No provisions are made in the timeline or budget for the scholarships to out of field teachers mentioned as part of professional development on page, 21.

Reader's Score: 48

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project

1.(C): Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project (25 points):

In determining the adequacy of the support for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which--

- (1) The management plan is likely to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, and includes clearly defined responsibilities and detailed timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;
- (2) The project director and other key personnel are qualified to carry out their responsibilities, and their time commitments are appropriate and adequate to implement the project effectively;
- (3) The applicant will support the proposed project with funds provided under other Federal or State programs and local financial or in-kind resources; and
- (4) The requested grant amount and project costs are sufficient to attain project goals and reasonable in relation to the objectives and design of the project.

Strengths:

- (1) The applicant has appropriately planned for the management of the project to be facilitated by a Leadership Team composed of key district personnel, school administrators, one mentor and one master teacher and district faculty members from the personnel committee to meet monthly to oversee the project (p. 37). Subcommittees will be formed to construct time specific work plans for specific project responsibilities and areas of oversight during the first planning year (p. 37). The applicant has clearly explicated timelines and milestones matched to project objectives that appear to be realistic and appropriate for accomplishing the goals of the project (p. 39-41). The management plan for the first year is well explained.
- (2) Although no project director has been identified, the applicant has established relevant qualifications for this full time role with a minimum of 5 years of related experience coordinating state and federal grant projects (p. 44) . Other key personnel are well qualified for their role responsibilities given their prior related professional experiences.
- (3) The applicant has clearly planned for cost sharing that increases over the life of the project by using local funds as well as specific state and federal funds and tapping local businesses and philanthropic funding sources to sustain the project and supplement grant funds (p. 48).
- (4) The budget appears to be reasonable and adequate to support most grant activities.

Weaknesses:

- (1) The management plan could be enhanced by requiring the professional development coordinator to be hired to have had past experience with these role responsibilities in education and working familiarity with the variety of professional development vendors and packages for content specific areas as well as general insructional improvement. There is no implementation plan for years 2-5.

(4) The projected costs for professional development appear to be low given the directive of 60 hours per teacher of professional development per year.

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of Local Evaluation

1.(D) Quality of Local Evaluation (5 points):

In determining the quality of the local project evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant's evaluation plan--

(1) Includes the use of strong and measurable performance objectives (that are clearly related to the goals of the project) for raising student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice), increasing the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools), and retaining and recruiting effective teachers, principals, and other personnel;

(2) Will produce evaluation data that are quantitative and qualitative; and

(3) Includes adequate evaluation procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

(1) The evaluation plan is clearly designed to address 5 relevant research questions regarding the process and impact of the project in a quasi-experimental design. (p. 51-53). In designing the measures to address these questions the applicant has appropriately planned to use objective student achievement measures, such as scores on state tests, literacy tests scores, and end of unit measures,

(2) The evaluation plan appropriately provides for quantitative data, such as surveys that measure faculty attitudes toward the project, annual and biannual reports of student achievement on state tests, attendance records, demographic indicators, benchmark exam scores, and school and district designations of adequate yearly progress (p. 48-50). In addition, the evaluation plan provides for appropriate qualitative data, such as classroom observations, lesson plans and student work as documents, and two focus group interviews with project participants and members of the Leadership Team (p. 51). The evaluation plan details appropriate analysis plans for both quantitative data by ANOVA and chi square analyses and qualitative data by thematic analysis (p. 54-55).

(3) The applicant has appropriately provided for evaluations to be conducted at mid year and end of year each year to allow for continuous evaluation (p. 49). Feedback will be appropriately provided by annual and biannual reports of achievement (p. 49). The applicant has appropriately planned that in the second through the fifth year of the project the evaluation reports will more heavily consider the degree to which compensation incentives resulted in changes in student achievement (p. 51). Results will be disseminated in quarterly reports and annual evaluations provided to stakeholder groups, district administrators and the Leadership Team (p. 55). A continuous action plan will be developed from these and shared at district personnel meetings, school board meetings and with local stakeholder groups (p. 56).

Weaknesses:

No evaluator was identified nor were qualifications described for the evaluator to indicate if the evaluation would be internal or external and how the evaluation would be related to the district.

Reader's Score: 4

Priority Questions

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority: Use of Value-Added Measures of Student Achievement. (Up to 5 points):

To meet this competitive preference priority, the applicant must demonstrate, in its application, that the proposed PBCS for teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) will use a value-added measure of the impact on student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as a significant factor in calculating differentiated levels of compensation provided to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools).

Under this priority, the applicant must also demonstrate that it has a plan to ensure that, as part of the PBCS, it has the capacity to (1) implement the proposed value-added model (e.g., through robust data systems that collect the necessary data and ensure data quality), and (2) clearly explain the chosen value-added model to teachers to enable them to use the data generated through the model to improve classroom practices.

Strengths:

The applicant appropriately described the use of multiple value added measures including value added measures of the impact on student growth as a factor in calculating differentiated levels of compensation for teachers and principals, including state test data, designations of adequate yearly progress, end of unit measures, Literacy Test scores, and student work. The applicant has clear plans to use online data systems to record and link data to teachers' performance incentives and professional growth plans. The applicant has clear plans to train all teachers in the teacher evaluation measure and its rubrics and categories to enable them to use data to improve their classroom performance and generate professional development and growth plans (p. 34).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority: Increased Recruitment and Retention of Effective Teachers to Serve High-Need Students and in Hard-to-Staff Subjects and Specialty Areas in High-Need Schools. (Up to 5 points):

To meet this competitive preference priority, the applicant must demonstrate in its application that its proposed PBCS is designed to assist high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) to (1) serve high-need students (as defined in the Federal Register notice), (2) retain effective teachers in teaching positions in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas, such as mathematics, science, special education, and English language acquisition, and (3) fill vacancies with teachers of those subjects or specialty areas who are effective or likely to be effective. The applicant must provide an explanation for how it will determine that a teacher filling a vacancy is effective or likely to be effective. In addition, applicants must demonstrate, in their applications, the extent to which the subjects or specialty areas they propose to target are hard-to-staff. Lastly, applicants must demonstrate, in their applications that they will implement a process for effectively communicating to teachers which of the LEA's schools are high-

need and which subjects and specialty areas are considered hard-to-staff.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrated that the project is designed to serve high needs schools based on selecting three schools with 100% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch and having achievement scores below state or local comparative schools. (2) The applicant appropriately demonstrated that the project would use salary incentives to retain effective teachers in hard to staff subjects and areas of high need based on yearly assessments of those areas of need (p. 20)
(3) The applicant appropriately planned to determine if filling a teacher vacancy is effective by looking for increases in student achievement scores of at least 20% each year and a 50% reduction in teacher turnover, increases in teachers' and principals' annual evaluation scores and turnover rate analysis to determine if recruitment and retention strategies are effective (p. 21).

Weaknesses:

Criteria for hiring highly qualified teachers in areas of need was not described. There was no rationale for why teachers would get an increase of only 5% and principals would get 10%. It is unclear how the proposed planned salary incentives would differ from the applicant's current performance incentives system.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 8/6/10 3:57 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 3:57 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Augusta School District -- District Office ,Augusta Public Schools County
Office of Education (S385A100083)

Reader #2: *****

Points Possible Points Scored

Questions

Evaluation Criteria

Absolute Priority 1

1.Absolute Priority 1	0	0
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Absolute Priority 2

1.Absolute Priority 2	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Evaluaton Criteria

Absolute Priority 3

1.Absolute Priority 3	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Requirement

Requirement

1.Requirement	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Evaluation Criteria

Core Element 1

1.Core Element 1	0	0
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Core Element 2

1.Core Element 2	0	0
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Core Element 3

1.Core Element 3	0	0
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Core Element 4

1.Core Element 4	0	0
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Core Element 5

1.Core Element 5	0	0
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High Quality Professional Development

1.Professional Development	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Selection Criteria

Need for the Project

1.Need for Project	10	10
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Project Design

1.Project Design	60	45
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	20
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	4
Sub Total	100	79

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	5
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Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	3
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Sub Total	10	8
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Total	110	87
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Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel - 4: 84.385A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Augusta School District -- District Office ,Augusta Public Schools County Office of Education (S385A100083)

Questions

Evaluation Criteria - Absolute Priority 1

1. Priority 1: Differentiated Levels of Compensation for Effective Teachers and Principals:

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that --

It will develop and implement a PBCS that rewards, at differentiated levels, teachers and principals who demonstrate their effectiveness by improving student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as part of the coherent and integrated approach of the local educational agency (LEA) to strengthening the educator workforce.

In determining teacher and principal effectiveness as part of the PBCS, the LEA - -

- (a) Must give significant weight to student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice), based on objective data on student performance;
- (b) Must include observation-based assessments of teacher and principal performance at multiple points in the year, carried out by evaluators trained in using objective evidence-based rubrics for observation, aligned with professional teaching standards; and, if applicable, as part of the LEA's coherent and integrated approach to strengthening the educator workforce; and
- (c) May include other measures, such as evidence of leadership roles (as defined in the Federal Register notice), that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

In determining principal effectiveness as part of a PBCS, the LEA must give significant weight to student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) and may include supplemental measures such as high school graduation and college enrollment rates. In addition, the applicant must demonstrate that the differentiated effectiveness incentive payments will provide incentive amounts that are substantial and provide justification for the level of incentive amounts chosen. While the Department does not propose a minimum incentive amount, the Department encourages applicants to be thorough in their explanation of why the selected incentive amounts are likely high enough to create change in the behavior of current and prospective teachers and principals in order to ultimately improve student outcomes.

General:

The applicant describes a PBCS that gives significant weight to student growth as measured by both standardized assessments and overall growth for non-core subject areas. The plan includes several annual observations of teachers based on the TAP system (adapted from Charlotte Danielson's work), and differentiated roles and responsibilities for a career ladder approach for teachers. (p. 13) The amounts to be provided for compensation and for differentials based on working in high needs subjects and/or schools are substantial and can be as high as \$15,000 per year if an individual earns all of the bonuses available under this plan.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Absolute Priority 2

1. Priority 2: Fiscal Sustainability of the Performance-Based Compensation System (PBCS):

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that - -

(a) The applicant has projected costs associated with the development and implementation of the PBCS, during the project period and beyond, and has accepted the responsibility to provide such performance-based compensation to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) who earn it under the system; and

(b) The applicant will provide from non-TIF funds over the course of the five-year project period an increasing share of performance-based compensation paid to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) in those project years in which the LEA provides such payments as part of its PBCS.

General:

The applicant provided a detailed discussion of its current costs for its present PBCS approach and for transitioning this current system to the new PBCS under the TIF grant project. (p. 47) The reallocation of district resources for the new PBCS is also discussed. The district's share of the cost would increase each year of the grant to 75% in the final year of the project. (p. 48)

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluaton Criteria - Absolute Priority 3

1. Priority 3: Comprehensive Approaches to the Performance-Based Compensation System:

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that - -

The proposed PBCS is aligned with a coherent and integrated strategy for strengthening the educator workforce, including in the use of data and evaluations for professional development and retention and tenure decisions in the LEA or LEAs participating in the project during and after the end of the TIF project period.

General:

The applicant provided a detailed discussion of its strategies for strengthening the workforce, including the use of student outcomes data and information from TAP-based observations of teachers, for employment and for bonus distribution purposes. (p. 54). The strategies also include providing additional compensation for teachers working in high needs schools and/or content areas. It appears that data from the classroom observations will be used for professional development purposes. It is less clear if these data would be used for employment decisions.

Reader's Score: 0

Requirement - Requirement

1. REQUIREMENT: Comment on the quality of the applicant's description of how its proposed PBCS will provide educators with incentives to take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles (as defined in the Federal Register notice.

General:

The applicant provided a table showing the differentiated responsibilities of its career ladder/leadership roles and the associated pay differentials. (p. 16 and p. 22, tables 5 and 6). The system includes both mentor and master teacher levels with varied responsibilities for these roles. The bonus incentives offered are substantial and as

much as more than \$15,000 annually.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 1

1. Core Element 1:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's plan for effectively communicating to teachers, administrators, other school personnel, and the community at-large the components of its performance based compensation system.

General:

The applicant describes a comprehensive communication plan for district stakeholders that includes establishing a communications committee with representation from all internal stakeholders including teachers and administrators to develop the communication activities. There will be staff meetings, notices, input sessions, surveys, and a variety of other methods used to communicate with stakeholders about the PBCS. It is less clear how the community at large will be involved in the communication plan. (p. 35)

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 2

1. Core Element 2:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's involvement and support of teachers, principals, and other personnel (including input from teachers, principals, and other personnel in the schools and LEAs to be served by the grant) and the involvement and support of unions in participating LEAs (where they are the designated exclusive representatives for the purpose of collective bargaining) that is needed to carry out the grant.

General:

The applicant's design includes several committees comprised of the key stakeholders, including teachers and administrators. There is no union in the district but there is a committee known as the "District Personnel Committee" (p. 35) that will "participate in the development, implementation, and governance of the PBCS. The Personnel Committee is comprised of 3 elementary teachers, 3 high school teachers, and one preschool staff member. They are elected each year during the District general faculty meeting by secret ballots collected from the entire faculty. This committee meets quarterly throughout the year to review and comment on District personnel policies." (p. 35) Letters of support were provided by 3 principals. There were no other letters of support provided.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 3

1. Core Element 3:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's implementation, or plan to implement, a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as a significant factor, as well as classroom observations conducted at least twice during the school year. The

evaluation process must: (1) use an objective, evidence-based rubric aligned with professional teaching or leadership standards and the LEA's coherent and integrated approach to strengthening the educator workforce; (2) provide for observations of each teacher or principal at least twice during the school year by individuals (who may include peer reviewers) who are provided specialized training; (3) incorporate the collection and evaluation of additional forms of evidence; and (4) ensure a high degree of inter-rater reliability (i.e., agreement among two or more raters who score approximately the same).

General:

The applicant plans to use the TAP assessment, which is based on the work of Charlotte Danielson and has a scoring rubric. In addition, the district will use value-added information for core teachers and an overall school growth model for non-core teachers. A graph shows the relative weight of each of these factors in the PBCS system and similar information is provided in Table 6. (p. 22) There will be several yearly observations. It is not clear what process would be intended for inter-rater reliability although the applicant mentions the concept of inter-rater reliability. (p. 25). Recertification per se does not establish inter-rater reliability, but only the reliability of that individual to score accurately against a rubric.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 4

1. Core Element 4:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's implementation or plan to implement, a data-management system that can link student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems.

General:

The applicant provided a discussion of the limitations of its current data system, and will contract for the further development and upgrading of its data system to be able to link data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems. (p. 44). The district will also hire a fiscal specialist to assure the integration of these systems.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 5

1. Core Element 5:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's plan for ensuring that teachers and principals understand the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS, and receive professional development that enables them to use data generated by these measures to improve their practice.

General:

The applicant has a communication plan that involves representation from all stakeholders. There is also an extensive discussion of the professional development plan that is to be tied to the evaluation information and student outcomes information. The professional development plan includes looking at the data generated by student outcomes for generating individual professional development plans. It is less clear, however, how the principal evaluation component and professional development component fit into the project as there is considerably less information provided regarding administrators as compared to teachers. (p. 27)

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - High Quality Professional Development

1. High Quality Professional Development:

Comment on the applicant's demonstration that ---

Its proposed PBCS will include a high-quality professional development component for teachers and principals consistent with the definition of the term professional development in section 9101(34) of the ESEA. The applicant must demonstrate that its PBCS has a professional development component in place, or a specific plan for developing one, that is directly linked to the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS. The professional development component of the PBCS must - -

(1) Be based on needs assessed either at the high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) participating in the applicant's proposed PBCS or LEA-wide;

(2) Be targeted to individual teacher's and principal's needs as identified in the evaluation process;

(3) Provide --

(a) Those teachers and principals in participating TIF schools who do not receive differentiated compensation based on effectiveness under the PBCS with the tools and skills they need to improve their effectiveness in the classroom or school and be able to raise student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice); and

(b) Those teachers and principals who are deemed to be effective and who, therefore, receive differentiated compensation under the PBCS, with the tools and skills they need to (1) continue effective practices in the classroom or school and raise student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice), and (2) successfully assume additional responsibilities and leadership roles (as defined in the Federal Register notice);

(4) Support teachers and principals to better understand and use the measures of effectiveness in the PBCS to improve practice and student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice); and

(5) Include a process for regularly assessing the effectiveness of this professional development in improving teacher and leadership practice to increase student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) and making modifications necessary to improve its effectiveness.

General:

The applicant provided an extensive discussion on the professional development component. (p. 28-30) The plan includes using mentor and master teachers to lead efforts to analyze student achievement to identify weaknesses, researching potential strategies to include in the professional development, and holding meetings with cluster teachers to discuss findings and strategies. (p. 28) Table 7 provided a listing of anticipated professional development activities tied to the needs of administrators and teachers. (p. 29-30) Reviewing the effectiveness of the professional development plan is included in the evaluation design. (p. 54) The degree of involvement of principals in professional development other than to use data to inform school plans, however, is unclear. It is not clear how or if principals are observed. All teachers and principals appear to be included in professional development.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Need for the Project

1.(A): Need for the project (10 points):

In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the applicant establishes that--

1) The high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) whose educators would be part of the PBCS have difficulty--

(i) Recruiting highly qualified or effective teachers, particularly in hard-to-staff subjects or specialty areas, such as mathematics, science, English language acquisition, and special education; and

(ii) Retaining highly qualified or effective teachers and principals.

(2) Student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) in each of the schools whose educators would be part of the PBCS is lower than in what the applicant determines are comparable schools in the LEA, or another LEA in its State, in terms of key factors such as size, grade levels, and poverty levels; and

(3) A definition of what it considers a "comparable" school for the purposes of paragraph (2) of this selection criterion is established.

Strengths:

The applicant provided a detailed discussion of its context, including the rural nature of the low income area, the fiscal and health challenges faced by local families, and the high needs status of all three of its schools (two elementary schools and one high school). The high needs recruitment areas are special education, math and science. (p. 3) The district salary schedule is the lowest in the state, with the state minimum salary as the pay for "most teachers." (p. 3) The applicant defined a comparable school district located nearby for comparison purposes based on size and poverty status. The applicant district has lower achievement than the comparison district. (p. 8-9). The applicant district is very small, with a total of 3 schools, 550 students and 53 teachers. (p. 14) There would be an annual retention bonus of about \$5000 for teachers of subjects identified as hard to staff and a recruitment bonus of \$2000 for teachers of math, science and special education willing to work in high needs schools. (p. 20)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Project Design

1.(B): Project design (60 points)

In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the proposed PBCS--

(1) Is part of a proposed LEA or statewide strategy, as appropriate, for improving the process by which each participating LEA rewards teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) in high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) based upon their effectiveness as determined in significant part by student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice). With regard to the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other personnel, the Secretary will consider whether--

(i) The methodology the LEA or SEA proposes to use in its PBCS to determine the effectiveness of a school's teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) includes valid and reliable measures of student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice);

(ii) The participating LEA would use the proposed PBCS to provide performance awards

to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) that are of sufficient size to affect the behaviors of teachers, principals, and other personnel and their decisions as to whether to go to, or remain working in, the high-need school; and

(iii) The applicant provides a clear explanation of how teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) are determined to be "effective" for the purposes of the proposed PBCS.

(2) Has the involvement and support of teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools), including input from teachers, and principals, and other personnel in the schools and LEAs to be served by the grant, and the involvement and support of unions in participating LEAs where they are the designated exclusive representatives for the purpose of collective bargaining that is needed to carry out the grant;

(3) Includes rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate levels of effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as a significant factor, as well as classroom observations conducted at least twice during the school year;

(4) Includes a data-management system, consistent with the LEA's proposed PBCS, that can link student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems; and

(5) Incorporates high-quality professional development activities that increase the capacity of teachers and principals to raise student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) and are directly linked to the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS.

Strengths:

The applicant's plan to implement the PBCS is clearly explained. All of the components are either in place, such as the professional development approach and the TAP observation instrument, or will be in place during the planning year, such as the enhanced data system. The compensation system based on the various identified student growth and other factors is clear, and explained in chart as well as narrative form (p. 16, p. 19). The model meets the technical requirements specified in the grant criteria listed above. The applicant has involved school personnel in the development and operation of the proposed PBCS, and will continue this involvement over the grant period. The applicant has an evaluation component that will address the consistency of implementation over time. (p. 49)

Weaknesses:

The small size of the applicant's district and teacher work force (550 students total, 53 teachers total) raises the question of the overall effectiveness of the differentiated approach. For example, the differentiated status of having both mentor and master teachers, each one of whom is supposed to support clusters of other teachers, begs the issue of who all the teachers to be supported would be. If more than several mentor and master teachers are identified, there would not be many other teachers left in the "career" designation to be assisted by these mentor and master teachers. It's not clear that this project needs this number of differentiated career ladder positions to be effective. (p. 16)

The district already has a PBCS system in place with additional compensation bonuses for retention and other purposes, and already has most of the components of the federal PBCS model already operational. The district's current model would be discontinued in favor of the TIF model, but the actual differences between both models seem slight and not sufficient to justify an entirely new project. It is not clear how the new project would result in any better educational outcomes for students than the current system, since most of the elements would be the same or similar.

The reasons for the lack of student achievement compared to the neighboring similar district are not clear. Absent this information, it is difficult to see how adjusting the compensation already being provided would somehow result in improved student achievement.

The principal component is not sufficiently addressed in all aspects of the project design.

The professional development design, while seemingly comprehensive, does not exhibit the characteristics of high quality professional development as it seems to consist primarily of isolated, one-time occurrences of insufficient duration and intensity. (p. 29). For example, the Standards-based teaching training would only be 3 contact hours per semester. This is not sufficient to bring about any lasting changes in instructional planning or practice. The training on the PBCS itself would only be 2 hours annually. Again, this is not sufficient time for effective professional development.

It is not clear what would happen in this system to non-core teachers at the high school. They seem to have been left out entirely.

It is not clear how the value-added approach is any different from the approach now being used that incorporated test scores.

Reader's Score: 45

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project

1.(C): Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project (25 points):

In determining the adequacy of the support for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which--

- (1) The management plan is likely to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, and includes clearly defined responsibilities and detailed timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;**
- (2) The project director and other key personnel are qualified to carry out their responsibilities, and their time commitments are appropriate and adequate to implement the project effectively;**
- (3) The applicant will support the proposed project with funds provided under other Federal or State programs and local financial or in-kind resources; and**
- (4) The requested grant amount and project costs are sufficient to attain project goals and reasonable in relation to the objectives and design of the project.**

Strengths:

The applicant provided a management plan indicating who would have overall responsibility for the project initially and then over time. (p. 37). A chart is provided showing the project's management plan with objectives, activities, responsible persons, and milestones. (p. 39) Qualifications of key staff are indicated (p. 42) and these staff appear qualified for their roles in the project. The applicant is committing significant local funds to support the project. (p. 45) A table shows the key uses of TIF funds with accompanying narrative showing the key uses of district funds. (p. 46) The project budget appears adequate and reasonable to attain project goals.

Weaknesses:

The time commitments of the key personnel are not clear. The implementation timeline is for only the first year of the project. It is not clear that the professional development coordinator would need to have prior experience in providing professional development.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Local Evaluation

1.(D) Quality of Local Evaluation (5 points):

In determining the quality of the local project evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant's evaluation plan--

(1) Includes the use of strong and measurable performance objectives (that are clearly related to the goals of the project) for raising student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice), increasing the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools), and retaining and recruiting effective teachers, principals, and other personnel;

(2) Will produce evaluation data that are quantitative and qualitative; and

(3) Includes adequate evaluation procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant provided a highly detailed local evaluation plan with evaluation questions and accompanying information detailing the qualitative and quantitative information that would be used to address these questions. (p. 50) The evaluation plan includes feedback loops to the project's management, at district personnel meetings, school board meetings, and with other local stakeholder groups. (p. 56)

Weaknesses:

The level of technical detail provided in the evaluation plan was significantly above that of the rest of the application narrative. This raises the question of who would be conducting this evaluation, which is not explained, and how whoever the evaluator would be relates to the rest of the district and its operations.

Reader's Score: 4

Priority Questions

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority: Use of Value-Added Measures of Student Achievement. (Up to 5 points):

To meet this competitive preference priority, the applicant must demonstrate, in its application, that the proposed PBCS for teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) will use a value-added measure of the impact on student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as a significant factor in calculating differentiated levels of compensation provided to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools).

Under this priority, the applicant must also demonstrate that it has a plan to ensure that, as part of the PBCS, it has the capacity to (1) implement the proposed value-added model (e.g., through robust data systems that collect the necessary data and ensure data quality), and (2) clearly explain the chosen value-added model to teachers to enable them to use the data generated through the model to improve classroom practices.

Strengths:

The applicant indicates it will use the Sanders model of value-added measures of student achievement. Training in value-added analysis is included within the professional development plan for teachers and principals. (p. 30) The value-added data would be incorporated within the performance compensation for core teachers. (p. 19)

Weaknesses:

None were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority: Increased Recruitment and Retention of Effective Teachers to Serve High-Need Students and in Hard-to-Staff Subjects and Specialty Areas in High-Need Schools. (Up to 5 points):

To meet this competitive preference priority, the applicant must demonstrate in its application that its proposed PBCS is designed to assist high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) to (1) serve high-need students (as defined in the Federal Register notice), (2) retain effective teachers in teaching positions in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas, such as mathematics, science, special education, and English language acquisition, and (3) fill vacancies with teachers of those subjects or specialty areas who are effective or likely to be effective. The applicant must provide an explanation for how it will determine that a teacher filling a vacancy is effective or likely to be effective. In addition, applicants must demonstrate, in their applications, the extent to which the subjects or specialty areas they propose to target are hard-to-staff. Lastly, applicants must demonstrate, in their applications that they will implement a process for effectively communicating to teachers which of the LEA's schools are high-need and which subjects and specialty areas are considered hard-to-staff.

Strengths:

The applicant operates three identified high needs schools and has a need for special education, math and science teachers. The applicant plans to recruit such individuals and/or to provide incentives for local teachers to get the training they need to qualify for such positions. The district would offer additional incentive bonuses to work in high needs schools and/or hard to staff positions that could amount to \$15,000 or more. (p. 20)

Weaknesses:

Since the district already has most of the elements of a PBCS in place and already offers retention and other incentives for teachers in high needs schools and/or high needs assignments, it is not clear what would be different in the proposed project or bring about a different situation with respect to recruitment/retention in these areas.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 3:57 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 3:57 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Augusta School District -- District Office ,Augusta Public Schools County
Office of Education (S385A100083)

Reader #3: *****

Points Possible Points Scored

Questions

Evaluation Criteria

Absolute Priority 1

1.Absolute Priority 1	0	0
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Absolute Priority 2

1.Absolute Priority 2	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Evaluaton Criteria

Absolute Priority 3

1.Absolute Priority 3	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Requirement

Requirement

1.Requirement	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Evaluation Criteria

Core Element 1

1.Core Element 1	0	0
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Core Element 2

1.Core Element 2	0	0
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Core Element 3

1.Core Element 3	0	0
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Core Element 4

1.Core Element 4	0	0
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Core Element 5

1.Core Element 5	0	0
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High Quality Professional Development

1.Professional Development	0	0
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Sub Total	0	0
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Selection Criteria

Need for the Project

1.Need for Project	10	8
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Project Design

1.Project Design	60	36
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	17
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	3
Sub Total	100	64

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	5
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Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	2
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Sub Total	10	7
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Total	110	71
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Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel - 4: 84.385A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Augusta School District -- District Office ,Augusta Public Schools County Office of Education (S385A100083)

Questions

Evaluation Criteria - Absolute Priority 1

1. Priority 1: Differentiated Levels of Compensation for Effective Teachers and Principals:

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that --

It will develop and implement a PBCS that rewards, at differentiated levels, teachers and principals who demonstrate their effectiveness by improving student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as part of the coherent and integrated approach of the local educational agency (LEA) to strengthening the educator workforce.

In determining teacher and principal effectiveness as part of the PBCS, the LEA - -

- (a) Must give significant weight to student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice), based on objective data on student performance;
- (b) Must include observation-based assessments of teacher and principal performance at multiple points in the year, carried out by evaluators trained in using objective evidence-based rubrics for observation, aligned with professional teaching standards; and, if applicable, as part of the LEA's coherent and integrated approach to strengthening the educator workforce; and
- (c) May include other measures, such as evidence of leadership roles (as defined in the Federal Register notice), that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

In determining principal effectiveness as part of a PBCS, the LEA must give significant weight to student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) and may include supplemental measures such as high school graduation and college enrollment rates. In addition, the applicant must demonstrate that the differentiated effectiveness incentive payments will provide incentive amounts that are substantial and provide justification for the level of incentive amounts chosen. While the Department does not propose a minimum incentive amount, the Department encourages applicants to be thorough in their explanation of why the selected incentive amounts are likely high enough to create change in the behavior of current and prospective teachers and principals in order to ultimately improve student outcomes.

General:

Reviewer Comment Priority 1:

Strengths:

Page 19 indicates that the program will assign a weight of 50% allocated to student growth based on the Arkansas State Benchmark Assessment and local End-of-Course exams.

There will be 4 observations conducted annually on teachers. Teachers who do not receive incentives due to low student achievement will be observed 6 times per year (p. 32).

Weaknesses:

Conducting 4-6 observations annually on all teachers is time consumptive. The project proposes to use the Mentors and Master Teachers to assist in the process of completing the observations. This may be problematic, as many contracts do not allow teachers to

evaluate other teachers.

There was insufficient information provided on the observations of Principals on how often and by whom these observations would be conducted.

The plan provides information on the use of a TAP Evaluation Rubric for teachers and principals. However, all the information on the TAP speaks only directly of use with teachers. Lacking this information, use of the TAP with Principals may be unjustified.

The narrative provided an explanation of extra leadership roles (i.e., Career, Mentor, and Master Teacher, as outlined on page 16). However, no specific selection criteria for these roles was provided, especially criteria tied to actual student performance beyond general mention. Measureable performance targets for determining each role were not provided. In addition, the applicant provided incentive figures for each of the additional leadership roles. Incentives lack differentiation in that recruitment and retention bonuses were identical for all three roles, despite variance in their responsibilities. The proposal fails to provide justification for the level of incentive amounts chosen. Mentor and Master teachers would be removed from the classroom part-time to assume new duties and additionally are both paid an additional \$15,000 on top of their current base salary. They would also be eligible to receive up to another \$7,500 incentive based on their effectiveness in raising student performance yet do not have a full teaching load. Teachers with full loads are only eligible for \$5,000 performance incentive pay. The budget narrative states that a total of 11 teachers would be identified by district personnel (p. 17) to become Mentor or Master Teachers. Potentially, these 11 teachers could earn \$39,952 base + 2,000 recruitment bonus + \$5,000 retention bonus + \$15,000 stipend + \$7,500 performance pay. This equals \$69,452 for 11 teachers, while other teachers who are not "tapped" even though they may also be successful, only have the opportunity to earn \$39,952 base + \$5,000 = \$44,952. The opportunities for all 53 teachers to earn substantive compensation pay does not appear to be equal and fair. The identification of Mentors and Master Teachers is done by district personnel and not by virtue of a tiered system of reward, with specific measureable criteria in which any teacher can self-determine to participate. While creation of internal support structures is valuable, these jobs do not fulfill the intent of the competition in providing a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account specific measures of student growth.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Absolute Priority 2

1. Priority 2: Fiscal Sustainability of the Performance-Based Compensation System (PBCS):

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that - -

(a) The applicant has projected costs associated with the development and implementation of the PBCS, during the project period and beyond, and has accepted the responsibility to provide such performance-based compensation to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) who earn it under the system; and

(b) The applicant will provide from non-TIF funds over the course of the five-year project period an increasing share of performance-based compensation paid to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) in those project years in which the LEA provides such payments as part of its PBCS.

General:

Reviewer Comment Priority 2:

Strengths:

The budget narrative provides indication that the district accepts full responsibility for funding the compensation system beyond the funding year by demonstrating an increasing share of the financial burden such that they assume 100% responsibility by year 5 of the grant.

The applicant provides a general explanation of how the district will derive the funds to increasingly sustain the project up to 100% in year 5. Admittedly on page 15, there is no sustainability plan in place. However, a plan will be developed in the planning year, with specific information on what will be needed in the plan and how it will be developed provided on pages 46-48.

A majority of the costs to sustain the PBCS will be derived from a modification of the current pay system.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluaton Criteria - Absolute Priority 3

1. Priority 3: Comprehensive Approaches to the Performance-Based Compensation System:

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that - -

The proposed PBCS is aligned with a coherent and integrated strategy for strengthening the educator workforce, including in the use of data and evaluations for professional development and retention and tenure decisions in the LEA or LEAs participating in the project during and after the end of the TIF project period.

General:

Reviewer Comment Priority 3:

Strengths:

Teacher evaluations are used to inform retention and tenure decisions by comparison of areas in which teachers score high/low to student achievement goals and school-wide policies, procedures and goals (p. 24).

The results from the observations are used as part of the measure to determine teacher effectiveness. Follow-up regarding professional development uses cluster meetings, professional development training, continuing observations, and activities specifically designed to improve skills based on evaluations (p. 25).

Weaknesses:

There was no discussion in the narrative explaining how data would be used to make retention and tenure decisions.

Reader's Score: 0

Requirement - Requirement

1. REQUIREMENT: Comment on the quality of the applicant's description of how its proposed PBCS will provide educators with incentives to take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles (as defined in the Federal Register notice.

General:

Reviewer Comment:

Strengths:

Teachers can engage in other additional duties such as tutoring or attending professional development activities (p. 18).

Weaknesses:

Teachers who engage in other responsibilities will be paid according to traditional means (i.e. \$115/ day with no tie to subsequent student achievement) rather than be paid because the teacher has applied his or herself and has earned a higher level of pay due to the academic success of their students. Therefore the challenge within this competition is to turn the traditional model inside out. Rather than be asked to assume the additional responsibility of tutoring or attend specific professional development, the teacher would determine the need to tutor students or attend professional development to help students succeed by improving their instructional skills. Subsequent increased student achievement provides the opportunity for the teacher to earn performance pay and increased levels of responsibility. Performance pay would exceed pay for intermittent incidental responsibilities as externally determined by administration. The spirit of the competition is teacher and principal self-determination in seeking out opportunities for career advancement while improving their practice for increased student achievement.

The narrative provided an explanation of extra leadership roles (i.e. Career, Mentor, and Master Teacher, as outlined on page 16. However, no specific selection criteria for these roles was provided, especially criteria tied to actual student performance beyond general mention. Measureable performance targets for determining each role were not provided. In addition, the applicant provided incentive figures for each of the additional leadership roles. Incentives lack differentiation in that recruitment and retention bonuses were identical for all three roles, despite variance in their responsibilities. The proposal fails to provide justification for the level of incentive amounts chosen. Mentor and Master teachers would be removed from the classroom part-time to assume new duties and additionally are both paid an additional \$15,000 on top of their current base salary. They would also be eligible to receive up to another \$7,500 incentive based on their effectiveness in raising student performance yet do not have a full teaching load. Teachers with full loads are only eligible for \$5,000 performance incentive pay. The budget narrative states that a total of 11 teachers would be identified by district personnel (p. 17) to become Mentor or Master Teachers. Potentially, these 11 teachers could earn \$39,952 base + 2,000 recruitment bonus + \$5,000 retention bonus + \$15,000 stipend + \$7,500 performance pay. This equals \$69,452 for 11 teachers, while other teachers who are not identified even though they may also be successful, only have the opportunity to earn \$39,952 base + \$5,000 = \$44,952. The opportunities for all 53 teachers to earn substantive compensation pay does not appear to be equal and fair. The identification of Mentors and Master Teachers is done by district personnel and not by virtue of a tiered system of reward accompanied by specific measureable criteria in which any teacher can self-determine to participate. While creation of internal support structures is valuable, these jobs do not fulfill the intent of the competition in providing a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account specific measures of student growth.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 1

1. Core Element 1:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's plan for effectively communicating to teachers, administrators, other school personnel, and the community at-large the components of its performance based compensation system.

General:

Reviewer Comment Core Element 1:

Strengths:

A marketing plan will be developed by key district staff to generate buy-in of the project (p. 23). This would include inclusion of an annual evaluation and progress report, feedback from meetings, workshops, and local parent nights, communication of initiative phases, goals, resources, and accountability.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 2

1. Core Element 2:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's involvement and support of teachers, principals, and other personnel (including input from teachers, principals, and other personnel in the schools and LEAs to be served by the grant) and the involvement and support of unions in participating LEAs (where they are the designated exclusive representatives for the purpose of collective bargaining) that is needed to carry out the grant.

General:

Reviewer Comment Core Element 2:

Strengths:

The plan involves the creation of a Leadership Team comprised of representatives from each position in the district (p.23).

Letters of support from three principals were included in the appendices.

Weaknesses:

There is no union. So, instead a District Personnel Committee will participate, comprised entirely of teachers to review and comment on District personnel policies. There was no mention of how the District Personnel Committee was involved in any of the planning for the project. There were no letters of support from the District Personnel Committee or Superintendent included in the appendices.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 3

1. Core Element 3:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's implementation, or plan to implement, a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as a significant factor, as well as classroom observations conducted at least twice during the school year. The evaluation process must: (1) use an objective, evidence-based rubric aligned with professional teaching or leadership standards and the LEA's coherent and integrated approach to strengthening the educator workforce; (2) provide for observations of each teacher or principal at least twice during the school year by individuals (who may include peer reviewers) who are provided specialized training; (3) incorporate the collection and evaluation of additional forms of evidence; and (4) ensure a high degree of inter-rater reliability (i.e., agreement among two or more raters who score approximately the same).

General:

Reviewer Comment Core Element 3:

Strengths:

The project will use a TAP Evaluation Rubric.

Teachers and principals are to be observed at least four times per year. Low performing teachers will be observed 6 times per year.

End-of-course exams are to be used as additional evidence of student growth (p. 31).

Weaknesses:

Claims of research to support the TAP (e.g. p. 25, 27) evaluation rubric were not documented with citations from actual research.

The TAP rubric is stated to be for both teachers and principals, administered by trained personnel. However, no information was provided on the principal component of the evaluation. More information is needed on how principals would be evaluated (e.g. how often, by whom, etc).

Without needed detail, it is difficult to determine if observing all personnel at least 4 times per year is a feasible goal.

There was no discussion of inter-rater reliability. The company who sells the TAP would be providing the training (budget narrative).

The opportunities for all 53 teachers to earn substantive compensation pay does not appear to be equitable and fair. The identification of Mentors and Master Teachers is done by district personnel and not by virtue of a tiered system of reward, with specific measureable criteria in which any teacher can self-determine to participate. While creation of internal support structures is valuable, these jobs do not fulfill the intent of the competition in providing rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account specific measures of student growth. The applicant reflects traditional ways of thinking about career advancement. The challenge of this grant is to go beyond these traditional ways of thinking and develop systems that provide and promote opportunities for teachers and principals to advance themselves (internal locus of control), and to provide needed resources and supports for staff to meet their own individualized professional growth goals.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 4

1. Core Element 4:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's implementation or plan to implement, a data-management system that can link student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems.

General:

Reviewer Comment Core Element 4:

Strengths:

The budget narrative identifies that an outside consulting firm will develop the robust data management system that will tie student performance and staff evaluations into teacher and principal payroll within human resources.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 5

1. Core Element 5:

Comment on the quality of the applicant's plan for ensuring that teachers and principals understand the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS, and receive professional development that enables them to use data generated by these measures to improve their practice.

General:

Reviewer Comment Core Element 5:

Strengths:

Since the TAP company who developed the TAP Evaluation Rubric will be delivering the professional development, they will ensure that teachers understand the elements of the rubric and how these elements would specifically be measured.

Weaknesses:

How the principals would be evaluated, and subsequently trained on the evaluation components remains unclear. More information is needed to provide understanding and clarity.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - High Quality Professional Development

1. High Quality Professional Development:

Comment on the applicant's demonstration that ---

Its proposed PBCS will include a high-quality professional development component for teachers and principals consistent with the definition of the term professional development in section 9101(34) of the ESEA. The applicant must demonstrate that its PBCS has a professional development component in place, or a specific plan for developing one, that is directly linked to the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS. The professional development component of the PBCS must - -

(1) Be based on needs assessed either at the high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) participating in the applicant's proposed PBCS or LEA-wide;

(2) Be targeted to individual teacher's and principal's needs as identified in the evaluation process;

(3) Provide --

(a) Those teachers and principals in participating TIF schools who do not receive differentiated compensation based on effectiveness under the PBCS with the tools and skills they need to improve their effectiveness in the classroom or school and be able to raise student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice); and

(b) Those teachers and principals who are deemed to be effective and who, therefore, receive differentiated compensation under the PBCS, with the tools and skills they need to (1) continue effective practices in the classroom or school and raise student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice), and (2) successfully assume additional responsibilities and leadership roles (as defined in the Federal Register notice);

(4) Support teachers and principals to better understand and use the measures of effectiveness in the PBCS to improve practice and student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice); and

(5) Include a process for regularly assessing the effectiveness of this professional development in improving teacher and leadership practice to increase student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) and making modifications necessary to improve its effectiveness.

General:

Table 7 on page 30 shows that training on value-added analysis is a component of the professional development.

The applicant will evaluate the professional development system. The Leadership Team Professional Development Subcommittee will conduct an annual review and analysis of student and teacher progress in the context of the resources and systems that support professional development activities (p. 30).

The results from the observation are then used to determine teacher effectiveness. This is followed by drafting of professional development goals and activities specifically designed to improve skills.

Weaknesses:

While attempting to implement rigorous requirements by which staff must annually engage in professional development (i.e. 60 hours annually-page 26) is noteworthy, in reality this may not be feasible given the constraints of other teaching responsibilities. Table 7 on page 29 provides a detailed professional development plan. However the hours listed in the plan, when added up constitute well over the 60-hour rigorous requirement previously mentioned. For example, when added up, teachers will be engaging in or 92 hours of professional development. Principals will be required to engage in 86 hours of professional development annually. Furthermore, when comparing these figures to the need for substitute teachers within the budget narrative to cover teachers engaged in

professional development during the duty day, the 1000 hours requested annually will not begin to cover the number of hours required, forcing the majority of the hours to be spent during after-duty hours. While it is better to keep teachers in the classroom, the number of hours spent outside the duty day might place an undue burden on teachers. If you use the 60 hour figure, that would amount to approximately 2180 hours outside the duty day or over 41 hours per teacher. Using the 92 hours figure, 4098 after school hours would equate to over 77 hours.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Need for the Project

1.(A): Need for the project (10 points):

In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the applicant establishes that--

1) The high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) whose educators would be part of the PBCS have difficulty--

(i) Recruiting highly qualified or effective teachers, particularly in hard-to-staff subjects or specialty areas, such as mathematics, science, English language acquisition, and special education; and

(ii) Retaining highly qualified or effective teachers and principals.

(2) Student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) in each of the schools whose educators would be part of the PBCS is lower than in what the applicant determines are comparable schools in the LEA, or another LEA in its State, in terms of key factors such as size, grade levels, and poverty levels; and

(3) A definition of what it considers a "comparable" school for the purposes of paragraph (2) of this selection criterion is established.

Strengths:

The narrative provides a strong case for need based on poverty rates within the district, low compensation rates for teachers, and lack of resources to support improvements in learning environments. All three schools within the district have a 100% poverty rate (p. 1, 2-3), lack of familial educational attainment (p. 5), poor mental, emotional, and physical health indicators (p. 5-7), drug use (p. 7) among the student population, and continual decline in the graduation rate and increases in dropout rates (pp. 10-11).

The dismal student achievement data for each of the three schools in the district is provided on pages 9-11 demonstrates that there is high need for systemic change within the district. Two of the three schools are in some stage of identification as a school in need of improvement by the state, due to lack of ability to make AYP

Of the 10 teachers that left the district, 50% of them were teachers from identified critical need shortage areas.

The narrative provides an explanation of how the comparable school district was identified (p. 9).

Pages 11-12 offer details of what objectives need to be addressed during plan development.

Weaknesses:

The applicant provides research citing the three top reasons for leaving a school district as low salaries, social isolation, and geographic isolation. Geographic isolation is posed as a factor in recruiting and retaining high quality teachers. However, in the comparable district that is only 9 miles away, student achievement is not affected by its geographic location (data provided on pages 9-10), thereby eliminating isolation as a causal factor in the serious lack of student achievement.

A turnover rate of 20% is not highly unusual. Many districts experience turnover rates that average or hover around 20% and demonstrate significantly higher levels of student performance. Therefore, retention may be less of an issue than recruitment of high quality teachers. Additionally, without exit survey data, it would be difficult to ascertain if those teachers leaving the district are leaving due to pay, or other reasons which may impact this decision.

On page 11 the applicant admits that past efforts at providing monetary incentives to drive improvement in student achievement were attempted. However, given the dismal student achievement results provided, past monetary incentives have done little to bring about the desired change, casting doubt whether this program would yield positive results. Many factors (or lack thereof) can produce the disparaging student data. Perhaps there are systemic factors having a greater influence on lack of student achievement that are external to teacher pay, and geographic isolation.

There was little to no mention of principals and other personnel in the discussion, even though these groups are targeted for incentives within this program.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Project Design**1.(B): Project design (60 points)**

In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the proposed PBCS--

(1) Is part of a proposed LEA or statewide strategy, as appropriate, for improving the process by which each participating LEA rewards teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) in high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) based upon their effectiveness as determined in significant part by student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice). With regard to the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other personnel, the Secretary will consider whether--

(i) The methodology the LEA or SEA proposes to use in its PBCS to determine the effectiveness of a school's teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) includes valid and reliable measures of student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice);

(ii) The participating LEA would use the proposed PBCS to provide performance awards to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) that are of sufficient size to affect the behaviors of teachers, principals, and other personnel and their decisions as to whether to go to, or remain working in, the high-need school; and

(iii) The applicant provides a clear explanation of how teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) are determined to be "effective" for the purposes of the proposed PBCS.

(2) Has the involvement and support of teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools), including input from teachers, and principals, and other personnel in the schools and LEAs

to be served by the grant, and the involvement and support of unions in participating LEAs where they are the designated exclusive representatives for the purpose of collective bargaining that is needed to carry out the grant;

(3) Includes rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate levels of effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as a significant factor, as well as classroom observations conducted at least twice during the school year;

(4) Includes a data-management system, consistent with the LEA's proposed PBCS, that can link student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems; and

(5) Incorporates high-quality professional development activities that increase the capacity of teachers and principals to raise student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice) and are directly linked to the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS.

Strengths:

Pages 13-14 outline the overarching goal and subsequent objectives of the project. The project will use a planning and implementation period in year one of the grant (p. 14).

Additional compensation will be provided to teachers who accept assignments in the identified critical shortage areas.

The plan involves the creation of a Leadership Team comprised of representatives from each position in the district (p.23).

The project will use a TAP Evaluation Rubric and the company who developed the TAP will conduct professional development. Teacher TAP Evaluations would be entered into a comprehensive online data system (p. 25) and cross walked with student achievement data to determine eligibility for performance compensation.

Teachers and principals are to be observed at least four times per year. Low performing teachers will be observed 6 times per year.

The budget narrative identifies that an outside consulting firm will develop the robust data management system that will tie student performance and staff evaluations into teacher and principal payroll within human resources.

A Professional Development Coordinator will be hired to oversee all activities.

Weaknesses:

Some outcomes are not stated in measureable terms. Outcomes are not aligned to the objectives previously stated in the narrative.

Defined criteria for determining "effective" for hiring highly qualified staff were not provided.

Determination of "effectiveness" is confusing. On page 14 the narrative states that student achievement will improve to 80% of students attaining proficiency on state assessments and local end-of-course exams. However, in Table 6 on page 22, there is conflicting information. It states that principals at high school will score 60% and principals of elementary will score 80%. Core teachers must score 60% at both high school and elementary levels. Non-core teachers must score 80% at the elementary level. It is unclear how the targeted scores were derived and why principals and teachers target scores would be different. Core teachers target scores are also different from non-core teachers. Additionally, value-added models make use of student projected target scores, based on their own past performance and a pool of peers who perform similarly. In light of using a growth model, perhaps a better measure might be the % of students who meet

their projected targets for annual growth.

The TAP rubric is stated to be for both teachers and principals, administered by trained personnel. However, no information was provided on the principal component of the evaluation. (e.g. how often, by whom, how principal evaluations would be tracked and aligned to student achievement, etc.) in the determination of eligibility to receive performance compensation.

Without needed detail, it is difficult to determine if observing all personnel at least 4 times per year is a feasible goal.

There was no discussion of inter-rater reliability since the company who sells the TAP would be providing the training (budget narrative).

The opportunities for all 53 teachers to earn substantive compensation pay is inequitable and therefore unfair. The identification of Mentors and Master Teachers is done by district personnel and not by virtue of a tiered system of reward, with specific measureable criteria in which any teacher can self-determine to participate. The applicant reflects traditional ways of thinking about career advancement. The challenge of this grant is to go beyond these traditional ways of thinking and develop systems that provide and promote opportunities for teachers and principals to advance themselves (internal locus of control), and to provide needed resources and supports for staff to meet their own individualized professional growth goals.

While attempting to implement rigorous requirements by which staff must annually engage in professional development (i.e. 60 hours annually-page 26) is noteworthy, in reality this may not be feasible given the constraints of other teaching responsibilities. Table 7 on page 29 provides a detailed professional development plan. However the hours listed in the plan, when added up constitute well over the 60-hour rigorous requirement previously mentioned.

Reader's Score: 36

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project

1.(C): Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project (25 points):

In determining the adequacy of the support for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which--

- (1) The management plan is likely to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, and includes clearly defined responsibilities and detailed timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;**
- (2) The project director and other key personnel are qualified to carry out their responsibilities, and their time commitments are appropriate and adequate to implement the project effectively;**
- (3) The applicant will support the proposed project with funds provided under other Federal or State programs and local financial or in-kind resources; and**
- (4) The requested grant amount and project costs are sufficient to attain project goals and reasonable in relation to the objectives and design of the project.**

Strengths:

A Leadership Team will be created to govern and provide oversight to all project activities and subcommittees formed to address various components of the project (i.e., data systems, communications, capacity building, professional development, student achievement and accountability, and human resources (p. 37). Each subcommittee will

develop a specific work plan for their area during the planning year.

Table 8 on pages 39-41 is tied directly to project objectives found on page 14 and is for year one of the plan.

The Federal Programs Administrator has the experience to implement a large federal project.

Job descriptions were provided for the positions to be hired (i.e. Project Coordinator, Fiscal Specialist, and Professional Development Coordinator. Time allocations appear adequate to meet project objectives effectively (pp. 44-45).

Over the course of the five year project period Augusta School District will provide \$2,359,938 in funds to support the project (p. 1)

Requested grant amounts and project costs appear to be sufficient and reasonable.

Weaknesses:

A management plan for years two through five was not provided (pp.39-41).

Reader's Score: 17

Selection Criteria - Quality of Local Evaluation

1.(D) Quality of Local Evaluation (5 points):

In determining the quality of the local project evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant's evaluation plan--

(1) Includes the use of strong and measurable performance objectives (that are clearly related to the goals of the project) for raising student achievement (as defined in the Federal Register notice), increasing the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools), and retaining and recruiting effective teachers, principals, and other personnel;

(2) Will produce evaluation data that are quantitative and qualitative; and

(3) Includes adequate evaluation procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The project will employ the use a variety of both quantitative and qualitative measures using mixed-model techniques (p. 54).

An external evaluation consultant will be hired to develop the evaluation plan.

Quarterly and annual reports will provide information to be shared with stakeholder groups and the Leadership Team for discussions that lead to ongoing improvements in the program (p. 55).

Weaknesses:

Components to be evaluated are not directly tied to project objectives (p. 49) and not specifically aligned to measureable outcomes. It is therefore difficult to determine if all objectives of the project are appropriately and effectively included and measured.

The measures mentioned on pages 50-53 are aligned to the research questions, which do not align with the objectives as previously stated in the narrative.

Reader's Score: 3

Priority Questions

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority: Use of Value-Added Measures of Student Achievement. (Up to 5 points):

To meet this competitive preference priority, the applicant must demonstrate, in its application, that the proposed PBCS for teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools) will use a value-added measure of the impact on student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice) as a significant factor in calculating differentiated levels of compensation provided to teachers, principals, and other personnel (in those sites in which the grantee wishes to expand the PBCS to additional staff in its schools).

Under this priority, the applicant must also demonstrate that it has a plan to ensure that, as part of the PBCS, it has the capacity to (1) implement the proposed value-added model (e.g., through robust data systems that collect the necessary data and ensure data quality), and (2) clearly explain the chosen value-added model to teachers to enable them to use the data generated through the model to improve classroom practices.

Strengths:

The applicant has identified the SAS EVAAS Value Added Model as the one the project will employ (p. 33) and will be providing professional development on the use of value added data to improve student achievement (Table 7). The applicant has adequately demonstrated that they are able to implement the value-added model as described in the narrative.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority: Increased Recruitment and Retention of Effective Teachers to Serve High-Need Students and in Hard-to-Staff Subjects and Specialty Areas in High-Need Schools. (Up to 5 points):

To meet this competitive preference priority, the applicant must demonstrate in its application that its proposed PBCS is designed to assist high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) to (1) serve high-need students (as defined in the Federal Register notice), (2) retain effective teachers in teaching positions in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas, such as mathematics, science, special education, and English language acquisition, and (3) fill vacancies with teachers of those subjects or specialty areas who are effective or likely to be effective. The applicant must provide an explanation for how it will determine that a teacher filling a vacancy is effective or likely to be effective. In addition, applicants must demonstrate, in their applications, the extent to which the subjects or specialty areas they propose to target are hard-to-staff. Lastly, applicants must demonstrate, in their applications that they will implement a process for effectively communicating to teachers which of the LEA's schools are high-need and which subjects and specialty areas are considered hard-to-staff.

Strengths:

The narrative provided a breakdown of hard-to-staff areas and aligned content areas of teachers who left the district to these need areas. Half of the teachers who left in the last year taught in areas identified as hard-to-staff.

Weaknesses:

The PBCS will serve high-need students. The targeted schools all meet the definition of high-need.

Defined criteria for determining "effective" for hiring highly qualified staff in hard-to-staff areas were not provided.

Regarding retention, determination of "effectiveness" is confusing. On page 14 the narrative states that student achievement will improve to 80% of students attaining proficiency on state assessments and local end-of-course exams. However, in Table 6 on page 22, there is conflicting information. It states that principals at high school will score 60% and principals of elementary will score 80%. Core teachers must score 60% at both high school and elementary levels. Non-core teachers must score 80% at the elementary level. It is unclear how the targeted scores were derived and why principals and teachers target scores would be different. Core teachers target scores are also different from non-core teachers. There is no timeline, so it is unclear if these target scores are expected annually for staff to earn performance compensation. Additionally, no rationale or justification was provided as to why teachers will receive 5% and principals will receive 10% of their salary if eligible to receive performance compensation. These discrepancies in identifying eligibility for performance compensation calls into question the ability of the project to retain highly qualified personnel.

Reader's Score: 2

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