

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:04 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching -- , (S385A100089)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Evaluation Criteria		
Absolute Priority 1		
1.Absolute Priority 1	0	0
Absolute Priority 2		
1.Absolute Priority 2	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Evaluaton Criteria		
Absolute Priority 3		
1.Absolute Priority 3	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Requirement		
Requirement		
1.Requirement	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Evaluation Criteria		
Core Element 1		
1.Core Element 1	0	0
Core Element 2		
1.Core Element 2	0	0
Core Element 3		
1.Core Element 3	0	0
Core Element 4		
1.Core Element 4	0	0
Core Element 5		
1.Core Element 5	0	0
High Quality Professional Development		
1.Professional Development	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Need for the Project		
1.Need for Project	10	9
Project Design		

1.Project Design	60	50
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	15
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	3
Sub Total	100	77

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	3
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Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	2
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Sub Total	10	5
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Total	110	82
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Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel - 7: 84.385A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching -- , (S385A100089)

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:

This proposal puts forth a PBCS plan aligned to professional development opportunities and differentiated leadership roles for teachers and principals. It uses multiple methods of evaluation including formal observations using TAP protocols, as well as classroom observation and student data. At the core of the PBCS is improved student learning. Student growth is fifty percent of the teacher and principal effectiveness evaluation. The incentive amount is adequate.

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 has provided costs adequate to support the development and implementation of the PBCS. The participating LEAs will reallocate existing federal, state, and local resources to fund the current award amount at progressively increasing levels and after the grant period ends.

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 LEAs in this proposed PBCS are collaborating with NIET because they are of highest need as indicated on state assessments (E12). The proposal is supported by LEA strategies identified by the superintendents to improve the process for rewarding teachers and principals (E14), as well as address the recruitment and retention of effective educators and those in hard-to-staff subjects.

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 proposed PBCS program will provide the LEAs with an evaluation system tied to differential leadership roles and additional compensation based on its goal of improved student performance. The plan provides educators with a maximum five percent salary increase which the LEAs and NIET has deemed sufficient. Teachers will have the opportunity to apply for master and mentor teacher based on their ability to improve student achievement. The compensation amounts for these positions are adequate. The receipt of incentives is tied to school performance and leadership roles. The proposal states this would allow educators to receive pay comparable to neighboring districts.

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 thorough communication plan outlined in the proposal offers multiple channels for sharing the PBCS with internal and external stakeholders. Participating schools will receive ongoing professional development on the TAP model and the evaluation system used. The LEAs will also communicate to community stakeholders.

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:

NIET will provide ongoing technical assistance to the collaborating LEAs to ensure successful implementation of the program model. During the planning period requested, participating teachers and administrators will be actively involved in the planning and implementation of the project. At this point the level of involvement of unions is not known in planning and implementing the PBCS

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 proposed evaluation employs protocols and standards developed by TAP, however their alignment to state standards is not known. Participating educators will receive multiple observations throughout the school year to assess their instructional practice. Data collected will be classroom artifacts, interviews, student work as well as summative data from state assessments. Student growth is a significant factor in the teacher and principal evaluation. Data will be collected by administrators, master teachers and peers allowing for inter-rater reliability. Additionally these individuals will receive professional development on the evaluation instrument.

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 will contract with NIET to use its Content Organization Data Entry (CODE) data management system. It will link Human Resources and payroll to student achievement data.

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:

Participating teachers and administrators will be involved in ongoing professional development to build their understanding of the PBCS program and the TAP model. They will learn about the evaluation instrument and of the leadership opportunities available to them. However, teachers still need to vote prior to implementation.

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 proposed project will address the academic needs of two rural LEAs (E3). A thorough needs assessment reveals that these schools are high poverty and high minority, have lower achievement data than comparable schools, and low graduation rates.

The evaluation system will collect data on student performance on formative and summative assessments to inform professional development activities targeted to the teacher or the school.

Teachers have multiple supports if they are not meeting standards indicated on the evaluation rubric. Master or mentor teachers can work with them individually through modeled lessons. They can work in cluster groups with peers and participate in the TAP professional development modules. Teachers and principals meeting the evaluation standards will earn additional compensation for their performance and have the opportunity to apply for additional leadership responsibilities. The PBCS model immerses participating teachers and principals into a culture of common language and support using the evaluation instrument as the foundation of their conversation and professional development. The assessment of educators in this model is ongoing as well as the monitoring of student growth. The model provides a feedback loop so that professional development and instructional practice is tied to student performance.

Interconnected is a periodic assessment to determine ensure that professional development is improving teacher and leader 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 proposed project will address the academic needs of two rural LEAs (E3). A thorough needs assessment reveals that these schools are high poverty and high minority, have lower achievement data than comparable schools, and low graduation rates.

The applicant provides clear criteria for defining a comparable school.

Weaknesses:

The applicant was challenged in finding comparable schools districts that matched its own school demographics (E-9).

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:

This proposal builds on lessons learned in previous attempts in building a PBCS program in these LEAs (E-11). These LEAs selected the TAP model to address low student achievement data and high teacher and principal turnover (E12). It is supported by the LEA strategies identified by the superintendents to improve the process for rewarding teachers and principals (E14).

The selection of the TAP methodology was chosen for its alignment to the LEA's strategy for rewarding effective educators in selected high need schools (E11). TAP will offer the district a PBCS program that creates differentiated compensation for principals, opportunities for career advancement, job embedded professional development and teacher and principal evaluations (E11).

In collaboration with the LEA, the applicant identifies an adequate compensation size of five percent over base pay as sufficient to influence retention behaviors of principals and teachers.

Educator effectiveness will be determined using multiple measures using the state's value added model, observations using TAP's evaluation instrument and other classroom based artifacts (E19). Effective teachers and principals would be defined as those who qualify for any portion of the awards (E33). Student growth is a significant part of effectiveness evaluation.

The classroom observation tool used is a standardized instrument used in all TAP schools. It provides multiple rating categories focused squarely on the connection between student performance and instructional practice. Classroom observations will occur multiple times over the course of a year.

The proposal enjoys support from the LEA Superintendent, the school board chair and the Great Schools Partnership (E39).

During the planning period, participating teachers and administrators will be involved in comprehensive year-long professional development to build their understanding of the PBCS program and the TAP model. They will work with the evaluation instrument as well as understand the leadership opportunities available to them.

The LEA will contract with NIET to use its Content Organization Data Entry (CODE) data management system. It will link Human Resources and payroll to student achievement data. It will also incorporate TVASS, the state's innovative assessment system.

Weaknesses:

The rigorous selection process may actually deter effective educators who can be guaranteed similar pay in neighboring school districts without the program requirements (E-16). Failure to gain the support of teachers could impact its implementation (E-36).

Reader's Score: 50

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 management plan was developed with input from multiple stakeholders. It provides an adequate planning period timeline needed to secure buy-in from participating schools, especially those whose teachers have not had the opportunity to vote on this PBCS.

The project director and other key personnel are more than capable to carry out their responsibilities. The time commitments are adequate and responsibilities are clearly defined.

The collaborating LEA will support the program with graduated non-TIF funds throughout and after the grant period.

The project costs and requested amount are acceptable to meet project goals as described.

Weaknesses:

The LEAs still needs to obtain the buy-in of its teachers (E-36) without which could impact the ability to execute this project despite its design.

Reader's Score: 15

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 documents a focused local evaluation plan centered on two purposes: to provide feedback for continuous improvement and to examine the implementation of the TAP program between schools (E1). The evaluation proposed identifies adequate performance objectives related to the goals of the project.

The comprehensive data collected will be both qualitative and quantitative including performance data collected through its data management system, TAP produced rubrics, state standardized assessments, student work, surveys, interviews and observations (E3).

Weaknesses:

Evaluation is based solely on TAP's definition of educator effectiveness which may or may not be aligned with the state and state assessment (E-34).

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 PBCS's data collection methodology includes student assessment data, teacher evaluation results, and teacher recruitment and retention data. This information can then be compared at the individual LEA level as well as nationally to provide the project additional feedback on its performance. Data will be analyzed to provide teachers at faculty meetings and individual conferences feedback to improve classroom practice (E29). Value added data will link teacher evaluation to student performance.

Weaknesses:

Specific performance measures are not spelled out which could lead to a low threshold to identify effectiveness.

Reader's Score: 3

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:

This proposal identifies specific recruitment measures to be taken to attract effective educators, including working with local colleges and universities. The Partnership will offer recruitment bonuses for new hires in hard to staff subjects (E-17). The PBCS includes student growth data to inform tenure decisions (E26), as well to transfers from within the district. The LEA will offer a recruitment and retention bonus (E15) for educators willing to teach hard- to-staff subjects.

Weaknesses:

The rigor of the selection process and the assumption of additional responsibilities could dissuade the very teacher it wants to attract since the pay differential among surrounding districts is minimal (E-17).

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching -- , (S385A100089)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Evaluation Criteria		
Absolute Priority 1		
1.Absolute Priority 1	0	0
Absolute Priority 2		
1.Absolute Priority 2	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Evaluaton Criteria		
Absolute Priority 3		
1.Absolute Priority 3	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Requirement		
Requirement		
1.Requirement	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Evaluation Criteria		
Core Element 1		
1.Core Element 1	0	0
Core Element 2		
1.Core Element 2	0	0
Core Element 3		
1.Core Element 3	0	0
Core Element 4		
1.Core Element 4	0	0
Core Element 5		
1.Core Element 5	0	0
High Quality Professional Development		
1.Professional Development	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Need for the Project		
1.Need for Project	10	10
Project Design		

1.Project Design	60	45
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	18
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	4
Sub Total	100	77

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	3
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Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	2
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Sub Total	10	5
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Total	110	82
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Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel - 7: 84.385A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching -- , (S385A100089)

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 application narrative provides strong evidence that the applicant will implement a differentiated compensation system for teachers and principals. The narrative notes that for teachers, students growth constitutes 50% of the weight of their score; the same applies to principals. Both the teacher and principal evaluation system includes multiple observations throughout the school year by trained evaluators using the TAP rubric. The incentive amount for teachers can range up to \$8000; for principals, the incentive amount can be up to 10% of their base salary (pages 16 and 33). These amounts appear to be sufficient to create change in behavior to improve student outcomes.

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 narrative provides sufficient evidence that the applicant has adequately budgeted projected costs to provide performance based compensation to staff during the grant period and beyond.

The application notes that the Partnership will increase its share of the performance based compensation payouts each year, covering 75% in year 5 (page 63).

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation 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 application fully meets this absolute priority. The narrative notes that the Partnership LEAs were part of previous reform initiatives that aligned to their strategy for increasing educator effectiveness. The Partnership selected TAP, which has a 10-year record of implementation, because TAP aligned with district needs, organizational goals, and initiatives regarding recruiting and retaining effective teachers for instructing high need students.

The TAP system incorporates analysis of data throughout the process, including staff meetings, small cluster meetings, and individual meetings with teachers. Professional development is planned based on needs from student achievement data, and data from teacher and principal observations, and evaluations. Teacher retention decisions (receiving a letter to continue employment) are based upon value added scores from the teacher's students (or school) along with teacher professional growth. All of these components of TAP are aligned with the Partnership's strategy for improving the workforce.

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 proposal includes extensive narrative on incentives for additional responsibilities with corresponding compensation increases. Teachers can receive additional compensation as they move from career teacher to mentor teacher to master teacher. Mentor teachers receive \$3,500 additional and Master teachers receive \$9,500 additional pay, which is sufficient to incentivize. Movement toward becoming a Master teacher is based upon a competitive, performance-based process (page 15). The position responsibilities and requirements increase, as well as the compensation. Also, the evaluation level needed to be eligible for performance based compensation increases from a 2.5 for career teacher to a 3.5 for Mentor teacher to a 4.0 for Master teacher (on a 5.0 scale).

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 narrative provides a thorough explanation of the internal and external communication strategies. Communications begin prior to beginning TAP, as teachers learn about the TAP system through a variety of forums and meetings. Following these opportunities to learn about TAP, a vote is taken. To be accepted by NIET into the TAP program, a school must have a positive vote of at least 70% of the teachers in the schools to move forward (page 36). The districts in the Partnership will have faculty votes in August 2010. Communications continue throughout the TAP implementation as various components of TAP are reviewed and acted upon during weekly TAP Leadership Team meetings, staff meetings, cluster meetings, and meetings between a Career teacher and a Mentor teacher.

With TAP, the compensation system is aligned and integrated with professional development, promotion or retention, and instruction. Therefore, weekly meetings and communications in the school with teachers, as well as professional development activities, all are directly connected to the compensation portion of TAP.

External communications include recruitment for teachers and principals at the Partnership schools.

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 narrative includes a complete description of the process of communication and involvement with teachers and principals prior to the project. The staff must demonstrate commitment to the TAP system by at least a 70% vote in favor of TAP prior to implementation. That vote will occur in August for the Partnership schools. Prior to the vote, the faculty will have been engaged numerous times in dialogue and discussions regarding the TAP program. The principal at each school provided a letter of support for TAP (see Appendix).

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 application narrative provides thorough and clear descriptions of both the teacher and principal evaluation systems. The evaluation systems for both teachers and principals use a multi component process. Included in the process is student growth, which comprises 50% of the calculated score. Both teachers and principals are observed multiple times during the year, and rated using an evidence based rubric. The results from observations and ratings are put into a data collection system, which supervisors can review to ensure consistency of ratings.

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 narrative provides a brief overview of the CORE data management system (pages 40-41). The applicant indicates that the TAP data management system (CORE) can match teacher evaluation data and value-added student assessment data, as well as link teacher evaluation data to HR and payroll 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 application thoroughly describes the manner in which teachers and principals learn about the evaluation process and how the evaluation links to professional development. Each component of the evaluation process (used to determine effectiveness) produces data, which is then used to structure professional development activities. The activities may be for an individual teacher (e.g., based on a classroom observation from a Mentor teacher), or they may be group activities (e.g., based on error patterns from a particular group of students on a test).

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's professional development system in TAP meets the required criteria. The professional development for teachers and principals in the TAP system is directly linked to results of components of the evaluation system. Classroom observation provides data for individual teacher professional development plans (page 43). Principal professional development activities may come from survey results, staff observation data, or student achievement results. The effectiveness of professional development is evaluated through a yearly NIET school review process, as well as by district-level TAP staff during regular visits to schools (page 50).

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 application documents that the partnership LEAs are rural, high poverty districts, with higher income districts nearby (page 3).

The location of the partnership LEAs close to districts with higher starting and average salaries have made recruiting and retention of staff difficult.

The narrative describes the turnover rate for teachers as an indication that the partnership LEA's salaries are not competitive and higher quality and more effective teachers, if hired by the partnership districts at all, leave to work in other districts (pages 6-7).

The narrative provides ample documentation that achievement in the partnership schools is lower than in comparable schools.

Comparable schools were closely matched to partnership schools based on size, grade levels, poverty levels and percent minority (pages 7-10).

Weaknesses:

No areas of weakness

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 TAP system is consistent with the Partnership LEA's efforts to improve teacher quality and increase student growth. The narrative provides a compelling explanation of the components of TAP that will ensure the Partnership schools' PBCS will be successful (page 11).

TAP intentionally aligns recruitment, promotion, evaluation, compensation, and professional development into an aligned system (page 14).

The application includes a clear and thorough explanation of the amount of funds teachers and principals will be eligible to receive through performance, as well as for promotion to mentor and master teacher positions (page 16).

The evaluation process uses multiple components, including student growth (which is 50% of the overall weight for both teachers and principals), observation (classroom for teachers; team and leadership for principals), and surveys for principals and teachers (page 21).

The performance awards can be as large as up to 10% of base salary, which is sufficient to impact behavior (page 33).

The staff in the consortium schools have not voted on the proposal; that is scheduled for August 2010. NIET requires a minimum 70% of staff to vote in favor of the TAP system for implementation (page 36).

Teacher and principal professional development plans are directly linked with results obtained from a component of the evaluation process.

Weaknesses:

The narrative does not include how a year's growth is calculated on the assessment.

The narrative does not address how much above a year's growth is "much more than" a year's growth, how that is determined, and whether it is a statistically significant difference in growth.

The narrative does not specify the assessment on which the growth measure will be calculated. Therefore, it is not possible to ascertain whether the instrument provides reliable measures of student growth.

The narrative does not clearly describe the data management system (CODE) to determine how well and in what form student achievement data can be linked to payroll and HR systems (page 42).

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 narrative includes a planning year timeline for the communication plan to fulfill Core Element A. This timeline includes specific monthly deadlines for milestones (page 53).

The application management plan is thorough and somewhat detailed. It includes tasks to ensure full and complete implementation of the TAP system. This focus on fidelity of implementation, a positive part of the management plan, ensures sustainability of TAP after the grant funding (page 54). The plan includes milestones for each of the five years of the grant, with appropriate activities denoted for each of the project goals. The plan includes the responsible party, and the year when each activity will be completed (pages 55-56).

The narrative includes information related to the qualifications and experience of the key project staff. The key staff have experience with similar projects, and the time commitments are sufficient and appropriate for carrying out their project responsibilities (pages 58-59).

The narrative notes the Partnership will increase its share of the funding for the program, and by year 5 cover 75% of the performance-based compensation payouts (page 63). The narrative describes a plan to redirect other federal and state funds to support implementation of the TAP program beyond the grant funding period.

The NIET has over ten years experience with the TAP system. As a project partner, NIET indicates the funds are sufficient and reasonable for full implementation with fidelity.

Weaknesses:

The timeline is inadequate regarding specific dates for milestone completion. A timeline with more precise dates (a month at a minimum) is needed to increase accountability and ensure the project is on track (pages 53-56).

The Project Director and three other key positions are unfilled and need to be hired (pages 59-60). This can present a stumbling block to timely completion of project activities and milestones, as time is needed to hire and train the new staff.

Reader's Score: 18

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 evaluation design and plan provided in the application narrative addresses the required criteria, with both qualitative and quantitative methods.

The narrative provides a thorough description of the evaluation plan. The goals are reasonable and appropriate, and aligned with the overall project objectives (pages 66-67).

The design seeks to provide maximum information for feedback to make the project more replicable and ensure improvement throughout the funding period. The narrative states the evaluator will provide regular communications to NIET and the Partnership (pages 70-71) .

Weaknesses:

The performance objectives are not measurable as described in the narrative, as they do not specify targets for performance or the amount of increases in performance (pages 67-68).

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 Partnership will use student value-added growth as 50% of the weight for both teacher and principal evaluation processes. The Partnership will contract with a vendor to calculate value-added scores (page 21). The narrative notes the Partnership will use CODE, a data management system designed for the TAP system, to manage teacher observations and other data collection activities which are a part of TAP. The application narrative clearly describes the communications it used with staff to explain the evaluation process, and how components of the evaluation process are directly linked with professional development activities and improved classroom practices.

Weaknesses:

The narrative does not provide enough information about the capacity of the applicant to implement the value-added model. Without a description of the value-added model that the applicant will use, along with information about the test that will be administered, it is not possible to assess the ability of the applicant to ensure data quality or communicate how to use the data generated through the model to improve classroom practices.

Reader's Score: 3

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:

Each of the schools in the Partnership are high need schools. In the position postings, the schools will note which positions are considered hard to staff. One of the Partnership middle schools has a high percentage of turnover, particularly in math (page 6).

Weaknesses:

The application does not sufficiently articulate how it will determine that a teacher filling a position is likely to be effective, except that if the teacher is willing to accept the position with the incentives instead of going to another district, they assume that teacher is higher "quality" than otherwise would have been hired without the incentives. It is unclear from the narrative whether the TAP system will be effective in retaining teachers in teaching positions in hard-to-staff subjects.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:04 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:04 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching -- , (S385A100089)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Evaluation Criteria		
Absolute Priority 1		
1.Absolute Priority 1	0	0
Absolute Priority 2		
1.Absolute Priority 2	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Evaluaton Criteria		
Absolute Priority 3		
1.Absolute Priority 3	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Requirement		
Requirement		
1.Requirement	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Evaluation Criteria		
Core Element 1		
1.Core Element 1	0	0
Core Element 2		
1.Core Element 2	0	0
Core Element 3		
1.Core Element 3	0	0
Core Element 4		
1.Core Element 4	0	0
Core Element 5		
1.Core Element 5	0	0
High Quality Professional Development		
1.Professional Development	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Need for the Project		
1.Need for Project	10	9
Project Design		

1.Project Design	60	45
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	15
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	3
Sub Total	100	72

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	2
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Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	2
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Sub Total	10	4
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Total	110	76
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Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel - 7: 84.385A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching -- , (S385A100089)

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 different compensation packages for principals and teachers based on their effectiveness. The plan calls for an examination of student achievement growth as one significant indicator for measuring teacher and principal effectiveness (p. 21). The plan expects teachers and principals to be evaluated at least twice per year in an observable situation. Opportunities for leadership roles will be part of the incentives (p. 23). The incentive amounts are significant and are justifiable for improving effectiveness.

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 has provided a reasonable 60 month budget for both the grant funds and local funds. The budget explains where additional funds will come from to sustain the program. Over the five years, the applicant takes on more fiscal responsibility for the performance-based compensation.

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 has proposed strategies for strengthening the educator workforce using data and evaluations for professional development, retention, and tenure through the use of the CODE system (p. 42), and the TAP (p. 43-4). The TAP is an ongoing, daily system that monitors teacher's skills and professional development. The application is aligned with the LEA strategy to strengthen the educator workforce in these schools.

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 designed multiple levels of teacher compensation and additional responsibilities including mentor and master teachers (p. 19). The program plans on providing training and incentives at all levels. The use of mentor and master teachers can help improve more teachers than a single administrator would be able to do. The amounts of the incentives are significant enough to have an impact on teacher effectiveness.

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 plan calls for a timeline to review the communication plan (p. 53). A public relationship firm will be used to help incorporate the feedback and provide regular communication (p. 53). Details of the communication plan are based on experiences NIET has had in other districts (p.38).

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 demonstrated support from teachers, principals and others with letters of support that indicate strong support from all involved including teachers and administrators (see attachments section 1).

The plan calls for an ongoing system of communication to keep the stakeholders involved including the community at-large. The teachers will officially vote their approval in the future after the project has been approved and explained in full to the staff.

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 implement a fair evaluation system for both teachers and principals and goes to great length to explain the system. The applicant has 10 years of experience with the TAP system and the applicant plans on continuing the success of the TAP system (p. 40-41). Using the data system (p.42), the applicant plans on providing transparency in this system. A minimum of 2 - 3 observations with pre and post conferences are planned each year. The evaluation will include student growth as a significant factor.

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 a data-management plan from a third party that the applicant has used before. It is designed to link student data to the payroll and human resource system. (p. 42). While the application is weak on providing details on this program, the fact that the NIET has used the program before indicates that it should be beneficial and is able to comply with the requirements of this section.

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 planning period designated to communicate with stakeholders (p.20). The districts involved require a vote of the faculty, so NIET plans presentations to the site staff to explain, answer questions, and provide feedback on the TAP system (p. 36).

The applicant has proposed professional development that will enable teachers and principals to use the evaluation data to make improvements in their effectiveness (p. 44).

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 two high-needs districts that this application is asking for assistance have been identified at the local, state and federal levels as in need (p. 4-5). The applicant targets teachers' needs, both individually and generally (p. 46). Ongoing staff development is planned for all levels of teachers and principals based on the evaluations of the teachers and principals (p. 46). Trained NIET personnel will provide face-to-face technical assistance to teachers in need (p.47). The plan calls for a support network of other TAP schools to help with the unique problems of these two districts (p. 47). The applicant has a process in place to regularly assess the effectiveness of the professional development in improving teacher and leadership practices to increase student achievement through the use of leadership team meetings and department cluster meetings (p. 44).

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:

Two rural school districts in Arkansas have been identified as high need districts for this application (Narrative, Abstract). The applicant has established difficulty in recruiting effective teachers and retaining effective teachers and principals (p. 5 - 6). These two rural districts have students that perform less successfully than students in comparable districts (p. 7).

A strong definition of comparable schools has been established (p.9).

Weaknesses:

These two districts were identified in 2007 as in need by the state government and received competitive state funding, which has now ended, for an alternate pay plan. It is difficult to understand what the two districts are going to do differently than what was done with the 2007 funding to turn these districts around with these federal funds (p. 11).

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:

The application is connected with the Arkansas statewide strategy for improving schools (p .19). It plans on rewarding teachers, principals and staff in high-needs schools based upon their effectiveness as determined in significant part by student growth (p. 29-30). The methodology is provided on how the LEA proposes to use the PBCS to determine the effectiveness of the staff although the growth amounts required to earn an award are not clear (p. 21).

The applicant provides some letters of support from staff and plans on earning the full support of the staff after the grant is awarded. This would be beneficial in jump-starting the PBCS.

The grant does provide a transparent and fair evaluation system that provides incentives for effectiveness (p. 29-34). The pre- and post- conference will be beneficial to improvement (p.41).

Professional development is targeted to teachers on an as needed basis which will be beneficial if the applicant has the resources to provide for various needs. Using a national resource such as NIET, this should be a fairly easy task.

Weaknesses:

The applicant provides an explanation on how staff can earn incentives for their effectiveness, however, it is unclear on how partial awards are given (p. 31). It is difficult to analyze the rigor of the program. It appears that student growth has to be greater than one year for a teacher to earn an award, but the applicant is unclear about how it will calculate the growth. The applicant does not state what assessment instrument will be used (p.26). There is a data-management system in place, but the applicant is unclear on how it will connect student achievement data to the teacher payroll system. The high-quality professional development activities are not specified, other than to say, they will target individual teachers' needs.

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 management plan focuses on the management team of NIET, a national non-profit organization that works with high-needs schools. It is well documented that NIET is successful in working with federal grants (p. 61-62). The project director and other key personnel yet to be hired will be well-qualified according to the application's plan and stated qualifications (p. 56). Funds are projected from other sources that will keep the project moving forward. The grant budget is reasonable and will be able to attain the project's goals. There is no evidence to suggest that the project director or key staff will have any issues with time commitments in order to effectively implement this project.

Weaknesses:

The application fails to provide a strong sustainable plan for this project. The timelines are minimal. There is no indication where the sources of sustainability funds reside.

Reader's Score: 15

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 provides an extensive local evaluation that provides quantitative and qualitative examples (p. 3). The evaluation procedures include opportunities for continuous feedback including staff attitudes towards the TAP system. The applicant has a web survey in place to gather the data (p. 3-4).

Conference calls and onsite visits quarterly will review feedback from staff (p. 4). Annual reports analyzing key data will come from the applicant and the LEA partner (p. 5).

Weaknesses:

The goals are not stated in measurable terms to ensure a valid evaluation plan (See pages 66).

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 describes the 360-degree assessment for principals' evaluation and other tools (p. 68). There is significant information to show that different levels of compensation can be earned by teachers and principals and that there is some value-added information that will be considered. The applicant has presented plans for explaining the value-added measures to the teachers in meetings.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not indicate what assessments students will take to be used for the value-added measures. The applicant has provided limited information about its capacity to implement the value-added measures.

Reader's Score: 2

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 has a strong plan to recruit teachers to fill vacancies generally speaking. The incentives proposed should be significant to retain highly-qualified staff (p. 16 - 18). The ongoing relationship with the state universities will assist the districts in their recruitment efforts (p. 18).

Weaknesses:

Since the applicant does little to address hard-to-staff positions, it is difficult to evaluate the applicant's plan to address this portion of the priority preference (p.17).

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted

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