

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:12 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , (S385A100116)

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	7
Project Design		

1.Project Design	60	50
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	79

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	4
--------------------------	---	---

Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	3
--------------------------	---	---

Sub Total	10	7
------------------	----	---

Total	110	86
--------------	-----	----

Technical Review Form

Panel #12 - Panel - 12: 84.385A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , (S385A100116)

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 PBCS described in the proposal incorporates differentiated levels of compensation, but it remains at \$2,500 for all three teacher levels (5.3% of the average salary) while assistant principals have a single bonus level of \$5,000 (6.55%) as do principals at \$10,000 (11%). A more equitable division of rewards or an explanation of the significant increase for administrators might be included. The level for teachers might be at the level high enough to create change in the behavior of current and prospective teachers, but this is a relatively low percentage of the average salary and may have little influence on many teachers, especially those who have higher than average salaries. The influence for change will be significantly higher on principals who have a significantly higher percentage of the average salary potentially available to them.

The compensation and rewards, offered through bonuses, will be available for teachers who are successful in accelerating the student achievement growth of their students (p. 20), consistent with the overall purpose of the TIF program. Other opportunities for rewards are described within the narrative, to include potential roles as master or mentor teachers, thus opening up leadership and additional responsibilities for teachers. As

these opportunities grow and more staff take advantage of them, capacity of the individual districts increases.

Student growth and observation-based assessments are key elements in the program. Classroom and leader observations account for half of the professional evaluation and are led by the Leadership Team, all members trained in conducting the evaluations (p. 26). A full description of the observations and the measurement used is clearly described in the narrative.

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 NOLA TIF project includes a budget for the year following federal funding when the participant districts and charter schools will continue to cover the costs. The sustainability of the project is a significant issue throughout, as the participants are allocated an increasing share each year, with 55% in year five.

According to the narrative, each of the NOLA TIF partners has signed an MOU committing to increasing levels of funding over the grant period until, by the end of the federal funding, the program is financially supported by the partners (p. 4). The appendix, however, does not include an MOU from one of the partners (FirstLine).

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:

Teacher effectiveness is a significant part of the NOLA TIF project to ensure a high quality instructional staff and increase student achievement. On-going and embedded professional development will be implemented, with a minimum of 90 minutes each week in

small groups led by master teachers. This amount of time, if focused, should be sufficient to address numerous topics in depth.

The PBCS outlined for NOLA TIF includes numerous strategies that impact retention and tenure as well. Using data from the Comprehensive Performance Management System across the state, schools will be able to identify educators who are not effective in influencing increased student achievement and student growth (p. 5). Recent state legislation will assist the participant districts in removing teachers and principals who are not effective, despite the intensive support provided to them during the early years of grant support. This ability will allow the schools and the districts to increase their percentages of effective teachers and, ultimately, successful students.

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:

Teachers receive additional compensation as master teachers or as mentor teachers (\$2,500 bonus) and these positions include additional responsibilities and leadership roles (p. 29). Additionally, other opportunities for leadership or additional responsibilities are embedded within the teacher evaluation and compensations system, all of which will build capacity for the individual teachers, the schools, and the 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:

According to the proposal, eight of the 29 schools included in the proposal are currently operating a modified NOLA TIF program and have addressed all five of the TIF Core Elements. The remaining 21 schools will be using Year 1 as a Planning Year to address the five Core Elements. The proposal does not, however, provide a description of how the eight schools (all within the Recovery School District) have met each of the Core Elements.

The implementation of NOLA TIF includes numerous tasks and activities that include communications and information sharing (p. 44-46) that could be considered a rudimentary communications plan. Elements in Table 9 suggest that the NOLA TIF Liaison and School coordinators will spend time giving and receiving information and that one TIF liaison at each school coordinates with the Project Director and district liaison as a point of communication (p. 45). The evaluators will prepare and offer reports on the program to the Project Director (p. 46).

Some elements of a communication, but few, are in place. Missing would be the assurance that all staff hear and understand all communications. A web site, regular open meetings, discussions at school faculty meetings, and other regularly scheduled updates would be appropriate.

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 eight Recovery School District Schools implementing the program in Year 1 indicate that they have the support of at least 75% of their teachers, although there is no documentation to support this. None of the schools in the application have union members.

MOUs by partners are included in the appendix (although one is missing) but do not address the involvement and support of schools personnel other than to offer a liaison to the grant advisory board meetings and to promote and participate in activities. This does not speak to any in-depth involvement.

While the schools within NOLA TIF are not represented by unions, within the state of Louisiana, a union leader stated that classroom educators support school improvement efforts (p. 36); this endorsement neither speaks to union support of the proposed compensation system nor to the level of involvement and support of teachers and other staff in the plan represented in the proposal.

As this topic is not addressed within the proposal for the 21 schools not currently participating in the modified TIF program, they will work on this Core Element during their Planning Year.

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 evaluation system described in the NOLA TIF application includes an emphasis on student growth and includes four observations annually. It uses an objective rubric, but minimal information is provided as to the development of the rubric itself. No information is provided regarding inter-rater reliability or specifics regarding the training of observers.

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 participant districts and charter schools will be able to access state systems that link student and teacher data at the classroom level and, ultimately, student growth data and teacher and principal effectiveness. A new program that will become available within the state will then link these same elements to the payroll system (p. 39).

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:

This area is not clearly addressed in the narrative for the eight schools that will begin implementation in Year 1; those schools with the Planning Year will be able to address these issues during the first year of the program. Professional development is described as an on-site, on-going, and embedded feature for teachers, allowing instructors of same grade or same subject to meet during the school day with a Master Teacher as well as individualized based on each teacher's need.

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 professional development plan is both small group (by subject area or grade level each week) and individualized, based on teacher need, data, observations, and other factors in the evaluation process. The proposal does not address working with teachers who have been unsuccessful at receiving additional compensation during an academic year in order to get back on track and increase their effectiveness in the classroom. The project does not include an evaluation of the professional development, either in its approach or its effectiveness.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Need for the Project

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths:

The applicant describes the collective need of 29 New Orleans schools within two districts and three Charter Management Districts that includes natural disasters, high crime, and low student achievement in most schools. The proposal offers useful background information with comparative national data to illustrate poverty, crime, and the uniqueness of the Recovery School District Model (p. 7-9). Table 3 (p. 15-16) provides extensive data on each participant school, allowing a quick overview of critical information. Evidence on Table 3 clearly shows that schools serve low-income, minority students.

Weaknesses:

While the impact of the hurricanes was significant for many schools in the city, no evidence was provided nor was there discussion of any direct impact on the schools identified for this proposal. Similarly, if the high crime rate and drug trafficking discussed on page 9 directly affect the target schools, data should be provided that show this link. Table 3 (p. 9) shows that two of the targeted schools have not yet opened, thus there is no evidence of the actual enrollment, or any need for the program or support. The six KIPP schools, while serving a low-income and high-minority population, have test scores that exceed (in some cases, significantly exceed) the State average in both ELA and math. (No points deducted here.)

The proposal could add more specifics regarding any difficulty of hiring teachers. Detailed information is provided on salaries of principals (p. 12) but not for teachers (in the middle, nationally).

The narrative text addresses teacher retention only at RSD; this addresses only 8 of the 29 schools (p. 13). Principal retention is not addressed for any of the schools. Table 2 (p. 13-14) would indicate a relatively young teaching staff across all of the schools, but there is no indication if any of these other schools are also new and might, understandably, be at the school less than three years. A column showing average years of teaching experience might have been useful.

For the purposes of comparable schools, the applicant used state averages rather than a similar set of schools or another district within the state (p. 14-16). This does not allow an actual comparison of schools to schools, relative to key demographic and school factors.

Reader's Score: 7

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 narrative provides background and historical context to document the State of Louisiana's commitment to a comprehensive teacher compensation system (p. 18-19) and how the NOLA TIF project continues and supports that commitment. The strategy proposed within the application encompasses two districts and numerous charter schools in a well-designed compensation system for high-need schools based upon teacher and principal effectiveness using student growth as a significant element (p. 19, 25). Methodologies will include state-developed measures that will involve, within the next few years, 50% teacher assessment based on a value-added model (p. 21). Observations are made of both teachers and principals throughout the year (p. 26), adding reliability. Appropriate details and explanations are provided.

The application, on Table 6 (p. 29), includes the size of the differential financial incentives expected to go to teachers, assistant principals, and principals following a successful year, ranging from 5.3% of salary (teachers) to 11% (principals). In each case, this percentage exceeds the recommended 5% minimum that would be expected to make a difference to educational professionals (p. 30-31) and affect behaviors.

The proposal includes a thorough description of the effectiveness plans for both teachers and school leaders (p. 32-33) along with an explanation of the state's SAS EVAAS data system that is able to track longitudinal student academic data by teacher (p. 31). These systems will allow NOLA TIF to follow a student's progress by teacher and monitor each teacher's progress while simultaneously observing and measuring the effectiveness of the teacher.

The narrative notes that the project has support from a broad range of stakeholders (p. 34), including the civic and business communities, and that each school has a minimum of 75% teacher support for the NOLA TIF program. Detailed MOUs are included from three of the four participants indicating administrative support (Appendix). While unions are not represented in the participant schools, the proposal describes their overall support of

the compensation model in the state (p. 35).

The evaluation systems for teachers and principals are multi-tiered and use student growth as a primary factor (p. 36-37). Observations are conducted four times annually, which should give evaluators an excellent opportunity to see true classroom interactions. Evaluators are trained and will use a research-based rubric; this will allow consistency among schools and between program years (p. 36).

The State Department of Education in Louisiana is developing a data-management system that will link student achievement, and many other factors, directly to their teachers and be of significant value as effective teachers are identified through the described processes and observations and additional compensations computed. This innovative system will accommodate the needs of the NOLA TIF project (p. 38-39)

Professional development is on-going and job-embedded, scheduled for a minimum of 90 minutes per week in subject area or grade level clusters (p. 40-41). This is a logical and strong approach to professional development. Sessions will be led by master teachers who will also work with teachers in their classrooms as needed; numerous support systems will be in place (p. 42).

Weaknesses :

The project includes several schools that have not yet opened, thus cannot be considered high-need schools. Other schools, even with low-income and high-minority student populations, have student achievement above state averages, thus the need is more limited.

The narrative notes on page 20 that cash bonuses will be paid to individual classroom teachers who are successful in accelerating the student achievement growth of their students and who score well on classroom evaluations. If these same classroom teachers are developing the classroom evaluations, this could create a significant conflict of interest for the teachers.

It should be clarified if any of the 29 participant schools also participated in the state's PBCS program and, if so, if any of the teachers were compensated above their normal salaries (p. 21). More transparency on the relationship of the NOLA TIF schools, the state PBCS schools, TAP, and the role in any successful R2T grant would be useful.

More information on any training for the members of both the teacher and principal evaluation and observation teams would be appropriate.

The bonus awards for teachers and principals outlined on Table 6 (p. 29) are inconsistent relative to the percentage of the salary they represent, with no explanation as to why a successful teacher might receive a bonus worth 5.3% of salary while the assistant principal and principal receive 6.55% and 11%, respectively (p. 30-31). All three levels of teacher (teacher, mentor teacher, master teacher) receive the same level of bonus, which may not adequately reflect the varying degrees of expertise they add to the school environment.

No details are provided regarding specific involvement and support of any teachers, principals, or other personnel at the participant schools other than the individuals who signed the MOUs. The proposal refers to multiple discussions at the school with partners, but no specifics are provided as to which partners, when the meetings occurred, and any outcomes (p. 34). CMO leaders had discussions with leaders at the state level, but there is little evidence of deep conversations with either teachers or principals. The application does not include an MOU from one of the partner schools (FirstLine).

The narrative notes that teachers will be observed by trained and annually recertified evaluators; more information on the specifics of that training, including the amount of time spent and if evaluators continue to work with a trainer throughout the year, would be important to understand the level of rigor of the observations. The rubric is based on research, but the research is not cited. No information is provided as to whether or not the teachers and principals are provided with the rubrics and other evaluation tools

prior to the evaluation year; an accommodation that would increase the transparency of the process.

While the new system being developed across the state should link student and teacher data at the classroom level, thus assist with the alignment of student achievement with teacher and principal payroll systems, the proposal does not provide a firm date when it will be operational. Until that time, there is no comprehensive data-management system in place for this program (p. 39).

The professional development opportunities for teachers are primarily limited to their school sites (p. 40-42). No information is provided regarding professional conferences or other roles and responsibilities that teachers can assume to increase their capacity to impact the achievement of their students.

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 proposal includes a detailed timeline (including tasks and responsible parties) that clearly illustrates a planning year and the subsequent four implementation years (p. 47-48); the level of detail is such that it provides guidance for the Project Director and key staff to follow to stay on time throughout the grant period. Roles and responsibilities of staff are clearly described on Table 9 (p. 44-46).

The narrative provides evidence that the participant schools will assume responsibility for an increasing share of the cost of the project each year (up to 55% by year 5) with total responsibility upon the conclusion of grant funding (p. 53-54); specific funding sources are provided. The amount of financial and in-kind support is substantial, a positive indication of long-term sustainability.

Weaknesses:

The management plan does not include an obvious depth of knowledge of large federal grant budget management. There is no indication that any of the project leadership have background in budget management or that the applicant has a positive history with grant project within budget. The NSNO has experience with large budgets (p. 52), but no mention is made specific to federal grant budgets. No fiscal representatives appear to be on the

TIF Leadership Team (p. 45). The ideal candidate for the position of Project Director must have project management experience with project budgets exceeding \$4 million, but it will be challenging to find candidates who meet all of these qualifications (experience as a Master Teacher, Certified Evaluator, etc.). No milestones are included on the timeline chart to determine if the project is on its way to meeting goals and objectives.

The key positions of full time Project Director and Administrator are left unnamed (p. 53), leaving job descriptions to stand in for their qualifications. While the qualifications listed in the job descriptions are substantial, there is no guarantee or requirement that the final candidates meet them all. The project might benefit from a staff member dedicated to accounting, recordkeeping, and records maintenance.

It remains unclear throughout the narrative and within both the budget and the budget narrative, the number of teachers actually expected to receive the \$2,500 bonuses, and the assistant principals and principals their \$5,000 and \$10,000 bonuses, respectively. It is difficult to track the budget narrative and locate corresponding areas on the budget. It would be important to restate the goals and tie them to project costs. It is unclear how many teachers and principals will be served, thus how many students.

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 proposal includes measurable performance objectives that reflect the specific goals of the project (p. 58-59) and include the instrument to be used and the type of statistical data analysis that will be conducted. Teacher and principal retention, student achievement, and fiscal sustainability are included in this plan.

Both qualitative (observer records) and quantitative (student achievement test data) evaluation data will be collected (p. 57-58).

Opportunities for feedback are incorporated into the evaluation plan (p. 58).

Weaknesses:

Performance objectives do not include principal recruitment; if this is not an issue for the participant schools (only teacher recruitment), the narrative should make that clear. (No points deducted)

For the purposes of comparable schools, the applicant used state averages rather than a similar set of schools or another district within the state (p. 14-16). This does not allow an actual comparison of schools to schools, relative to key demographic and school factors.

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 NOLA TIF project includes a value-added measure of the impact on student growth in its compensation system for both teachers and principals (p. 5, 25). It will be aided by a new state wide management system that will directly link student achievement and other student factors to teacher effectiveness (p. 38).

Weaknesses:

A significant portion of the required robust data system needed for the project (and that this project counts on) is not yet operational and there is no clear date when it will come on line (although it is expected within the next two years).

Reader's Score: 4

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 project is designed for 29 schools, all of which serve low-income and high-minority populations (p. 15-16). Teacher and principal retention is a primary goal of the project. Eight of the schools are already using a modified TIF program and have active and quality retention programs in place.

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not provide any evidence that any of the participant schools have hard-to-staff areas or documentation to show that retention of teachers in these fields is higher than in other fields. No information is provided on the effectiveness of new teachers (other than hiring highly qualified teachers, p. 58). The narrative does not offer an explanation regarding how teachers would be notified about which schools were designated high need and which areas difficult to staff.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:12 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:12 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , (S385A100116)

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	6
Project Design		

1.Project Design	60	57
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	21
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	4
Sub Total	100	88

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	5
--------------------------	---	---

Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	3
--------------------------	---	---

Sub Total	10	8
------------------	-----------	----------

Total	110	96
--------------	------------	-----------

Technical Review Form

Panel #12 - Panel - 12: 84.385A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , (S385A100116)

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 clearly demonstrates that the proposed program will provide a comprehensive and sustainable array of rewards and career advancement opportunities for teachers and principals. These rewards are clearly based on student growth (as defined in the Federal Register notice), based on objective data on student performance; observation-based assessments of teacher and principal performance four times a year; and other measures. The observation based assessments are done by members of a Leadership Team four times a year in announced and unannounced classroom observations. The Leadership Team will undergo annual training and certification in the use of rigorous classroom evaluation standards, known as the Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards. The standards include a 19-indicator, research-based rubric of effective teaching, spanning the sub-categories of instruction, designing and planning instruction, the learning environment and responsibilities. These observations will account for 50% of a teacher's or leader's evaluation. The applicant provides a clear justification for the incentive amount for teachers and principals. The amount is sufficient to serve as an incentive as it is over 5% of teacher's annual salary and 11% of principal's annual salary.

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 clearly projected costs associated with the development and implementation of the PBCS. The projection for the first year is less than following years because only eight of the targeted twenty nine schools have completed planning. The applicant assumes clear responsibility to provide performance-based compensation to teachers, principals, and others who earn it under the proposed guidelines. The applicant clearly demonstrates that they will assume an increasing share of performance-based compensation paid to teachers, principals, and other personnel for each year of the project and demonstrates how they will assume all of the costs for the sixth year when funding has ended. For example, most partners have signed MOUs indicating that they commit to provide matching funding on an increasing scale over the five-year funding period. By Year 6 of the program, 100% of all costs of sustaining the program will be funded by partners.

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 clearly demonstrates that the proposed PBCS is aligned with a coherent and integrated strategy for strengthening the educator workforce. The program clearly bases performance pay with teacher career advancement, highly effective professional development and meaningful evaluations. In addition, the program is thoroughly aligned with recent state legislation, which mandates statewide efforts to increase teacher effectiveness by requiring annual evaluations. The legislation mandates a Comprehensive Performance Management System statewide that clearly links student achievement to educator evaluations, professional development and support, schools and district accountability. Educator data will accurately inform retention and tenure decisions. State legislation also requires dismissal for educators who are still not evaluated as being effective after three years. (pages 4-5)

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 provides a clear description of how it will provide educators with incentives to take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles. For example, the program will target 29 high need schools (each with LEA status). The program will embed a PBCS in participating schools, which together reach over 12,400 public school students. The program goals are appropriately focused to: (a) Improve the capacity of partner schools to implement a comprehensive performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals; (b) increase the percent of effective teachers, principals and assistant principals in schools in partner schools; (c) increase student achievement; and (d) improve each school's ability to recruit and retain effective teachers, principals and assistant principals. Incentives are of a sufficient size to provide educators with incentives to take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles. (page 30)

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 1

1. Core Element 1:

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

General:

The applicant has already implemented a modified program in 8 of the targeted 29 schools. As a result, administrators, other school personnel, and the community at-large are already familiar with the components of its performance based compensation system. In addition, the applicant states that they have a plan for effectively communicating to teachers, administrators, other school personnel, and the community at-large the components of its performance based compensation system. However, the applicant does not provide the details of the plan.

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 clearly describes the involvement and support of teachers, principals, and other personnel. For example, in planning the proposal, teachers and leaders engaged in an "in-depth dialogue" with state leadership to discuss the proposed model, including planning, implementation and fiscal sustainability. The applicant has received support to implement the program from school principals, Boards of Directors, members of civic and business communities and at least 75% of teachers at targeted schools. (pages 34-35) In addition, the applicant demonstrates that the union does not operate in schools. However they do clearly demonstrate that the state Federation of Teachers is supportive of the system to produce effective teachers. (page 35)

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 3

1.Core Element 3:

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

General:

The applicant provides a clear and appropriate description of how it will implement a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation system for teachers and principals that will clearly differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories. The program will effectively embed a PBCS in 29 participating schools, which together will take into account student growth for over 12,400 public school students. The evaluation plan effectively meets the program criteria. For example, teachers in targeted schools will receive four observations a year by trained and annually recertified evaluators using a research-based rubric. The rubric has 19 observations-based indicators and five rating categories to allow for meaningful differentiation in effectiveness. Rubrics within the 5 major rating categories may be refined to mirror the cultural and educational strategies and affinities of each school. (pages 36-37)

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 clearly demonstrates the use of an appropriate data-management system that will link student achievement data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems. Schools will manage their teacher/leader observations and performance based

compensation calculations using the states web-based data management system. Using this system, authorized personnel will be able to generate analytical reports summarizing teacher performance. Reports on average total observation score and average on each performance standard will be generated by whole staff, clusters, grade-level, subject level, teacher type and individual teacher. The data management system will also track classroom and school-wide value-added scores.

The applicant does not adequately demonstrate that the data-management system is ready or will be ready for the next two years to link student achievement data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems. (page 39)

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 clearly demonstrates a plan for ensuring that teachers and principals understand the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness included in the PBCS. During the Planning and Implementation phases, the applicant will contract with an experienced PBCS contractor to provide program education, training and annual reviews. The proposal also clearly provides for ongoing, job-embedded professional development that enables teachers and principals to use data generated by these measures to improve their practice. For example, the school schedule will be restructured to provide time during the regular school day for teachers to participate in weekly cluster meetings. All teachers will participate in cluster meetings for at least 1.5 hours per week. (page 40) Teachers and leaders will develop personal growth plans annually to set personal goals for professional improvement. (page 41)

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 clearly demonstrates a high-quality professional development component for teachers and principals based on evaluation results gleaned from classroom observations and student value added data from the SAS system which will directly inform professional development. The school schedule will be restructured to provide time during the regular school day for teachers to participate in weekly cluster meetings. All teachers will participate in cluster meetings for at least 1.5 hours per week. (page 40) Teachers and leaders will develop personal growth plans annually to set personal goals for professional improvement. (page 41) This will enable teachers to be guided individually especially when they do not receive differentiated compensation under the PBCS. The Leadership Team is structured so that the principal and assistant principal at each school share responsibility for instructional leadership with master and mentor teachers and monitor individual teachers' professional growth. Principal professional development will be targeted to strengthen leadership capacity in targeted areas as identified through program observation tools. (page 43)

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Need for the Project

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates that the targeted schools are making progress recruiting and retaining educators but are still having difficulty attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers and leaders. For example, teacher retention data for 2009-2010 showed that 89.36% of teachers were retained, which is an improvement over 2008-2009, where only 67.81% were retained. Retention problems include state pay scales, which rank 28th in the nation. Experienced teachers are even harder to retain with 48% of the teachers having 3 years or less teaching experience and only 48% having 5 or more years' experience. (page 12)

The applicant clearly demonstrates that student achievement in each of the schools whose educators would be part of the PBCS is significantly low. For example, test data for 2009-2010 shows that students at targeted schools are scoring below state averages for BASIC in ELA and BASIC in Math in both economically disadvantaged and minority categories. (page 14)

The applicant provides a clear comparison of the targeted schools and schools across the state. For example, the poverty level for the targeted schools is 97% students in free and reduced lunch programs and 63.2% across the state. (page 16)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not adequately provide a comparison with a "comparable" school for the purposes of paragraph (2) of this selection criterion. Comparable school should be selected in terms of key factors such as size, grade levels, and poverty levels.

Reader's Score: 6

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 proposed PBCS is clearly a part of an appropriate strategy for 29 targeted high need schools to reward teachers, principals, and other personnel based upon their effectiveness. The applicant clearly demonstrates that it proposes to use includes valid and reliable measures of student growth such as state tests and tests created for non-tested grades. (page 22) Participating schools/LEAs will provide performance awards to teachers, principals, and other personnel that are of sufficient size to affect their behaviors. For example, the cash bonus is over 5% of teacher's annual salary and 11% of principal's annual salary. (page 29) The applicant will use an integrated system with multiple valid measures to evaluate teacher and principal effectiveness through student value-added growth assessments and classroom observations. The process will use an objective, evidence-based rubric aligned with professional teaching or leadership standards; and provide for four observations of each teacher or principal during the school year by a specially trained team. (pages 24-33)

The applicant clearly describes the 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). (pages 34-35) In addition, the applicant demonstrates that the union does not operate in schools. However, they do clearly demonstrate that the state Federation of Teachers is supportive of the system to produce effective teachers. (page 33-35)

The applicant provides a clear and appropriate description of how it will implement a rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation system for teachers and principals that will clearly differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories. The program will effectively take into account student growth for over 12,400 public school students. The evaluation process will: (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 four times during the school year by a specially trained team; (3) incorporate the collection and evaluation of additional forms of evidence; and (4) ensure a high degree of inter-rater reliability. (pages 36-37)

The applicant clearly demonstrates the use of an appropriate data-management system that will link student achievement data to teacher and principal payroll and human resources systems. Schools will manage their teacher/leader observations and performance based compensation calculations using the states web-based data management system. Using this system, authorized personnel will be able to generate analytical reports summarizing teacher performance. Reports on average total observation score and average on each performance standard will be generated by whole staff, clusters, grade-level, subject level, teacher type and individual teacher. The data management system will also track classroom and school-wide value-added scores. (pages 38-39)

During the Planning and Implementation phases, the applicant will contract with an

experienced PBCS contractor to provide program education, training and annual reviews. The proposal also clearly provides for ongoing, job-embedded professional development that enables teachers and principals to use data generated by these measures to improve their practice. For example, the school schedule will be restructured to provide time for all teachers to participate in cluster meetings for at least 1.5 hours per week. (page 40) Teachers and leaders will develop personal growth plans annually to set personal goals for professional improvement. (pages 40-41)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not adequately address observations of administrators.

The evaluation does not adequately address evaluation of the professional development program.

Reader's Score: 57

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project

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

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

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

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates a management plan that is likely to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The proposal provides job descriptions with clearly defined responsibilities. A detailed timelines outlines major tasks and expected implementation/completion dates. (pages 43-48 & attachments) Project management will be provided by a full time, experienced Project Director and Project Administrator who will lead and oversee the implementation of the program. (page 52) Resumes are provided to demonstrate appropriate experience . (attachments)

The applicant clearly demonstrates that the full time project director and other key personnel are well-qualified to carry out their responsibilities. Time commitments are clearly appropriate and adequate to implement the project effectively. Both the project director and project administrator are full time. Job descriptions and resumes are provided. (pages e44/attachment E)

The applicant clearly demonstrates that they will support the proposed project with funds provided under other programs and in-kind resources from partner schools. MOUs are provided. The applicant is providing in-kind management team input as well as providing in-kind office space use and office supplies through the duration of the program. By Year 6 of the program, schools' will contribute 100% of match funding. (pages 55/e27/attachment D/budget)

The applicant clearly demonstrates that 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. For example, the project sets aside performance award funding for all teachers and administrators and assumes that 100% of educators earn 100% of performance awards each year. (pages 53-56 & budget)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide an MOU from one of the partner schools, College Prep School.

The applicant does not sufficiently address milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (page 43)

Reader's Score: 21

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 clearly demonstrates the use of strong and measurable performance objectives. Appropriate and measurable objectives, targets, instrumentation, and data analysis methods are clearly described. Product or outcome objectives/measures will address goals of improved student achievement, teacher and administrator effectiveness, retention and recruitment, and school capacity to implement and sustain a PBCS (pages 58-59)

The evaluation will clearly produce comprehensive data that are quantitative and qualitative. For example, quantitative data will include the Annual Program Review, teacher and school value-added scores, teacher and administrator retention calculated by the evaluators and confirmed by state sources, school budgets and budget projections, number of participating schools, and scores by the schools. Qualitative sources will include an evaluator-developed implementation rubric, school observations, and interviews with administrators, and master, mentor, and career teachers. A table is provided that clearly demonstrates how each of these data elements will be used. (pages 58-60)

The evaluator will meet at least quarterly with the Project Director and Project Administrator to review progress against all measures to data and make recommendations for any mid-course corrections. (page 60)

Weaknesses:

The evaluation does not sufficiently address adequate procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. For example, there is no discussion of provision for feedback from participants or schools.

Reader's Score: 4

Priority Questions

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 1

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

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

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

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates that the proposed PBCS for teachers, principals, and other personnel will use a value-added measure of the impact on student growth as a significant factor in calculating differentiated levels of compensation provided to teachers, principals, and other personnel. For example, under the proposed program, 50% of performance bonuses for teachers, assistant principals and principals are linked to student value-added growth at the classroom and school-wide levels. (page 5) Applicant demonstrates strong capacity to implement the proposed value-added model. Professional development time will give the applicant focused time to clearly explain the chosen value-added model to teachers to enable them to use the data generated through the model to improve classroom practices. (pages 21-23)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 2

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

To meet this competitive preference priority, the applicant must demonstrate in its application that its proposed PBCS is designed to assist high-need schools (as defined in the Federal Register notice) to (1) serve high-need students (as defined in the Federal Register notice), (2) retain effective teachers in teaching positions in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas, such as mathematics, science, special education, and English

language acquisition, and (3) fill vacancies with teachers of those subjects or specialty areas who are effective or likely to be effective. The applicant must provide an explanation for how it will determine that a teacher filling a vacancy is effective or likely to be effective. In addition, applicants must demonstrate, in their applications, the extent to which the subjects or specialty areas they propose to target are hard-to-staff. Lastly, applicants must demonstrate, in their applications that they will implement a process for effectively communicating to teachers which of the LEA's schools are high-need and which subjects and specialty areas are considered hard-to-staff.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates that the program will be instrumental as a recruiting and retention tool at targeted Title I schools serving high needs students. The applicant has a modified program in place that has already demonstrated success in retaining teachers. School closures in the state have created a surplus of teachers even in areas hard to staff. The major difficulty has been in the quality and/or experience of the candidates for hire. With this program, the applicant plans to provide incentives and professional development that make ineffective teachers and leaders effective and improve retention. (pages 12-13)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not adequately demonstrate that they have hard-to-staff areas.

The applicant does not adequately demonstrate 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.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:12 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:12 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , (S385A100116)

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	56
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	22
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	4
Sub Total	100	91

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	4
--------------------------	---	---

Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	3
--------------------------	---	---

Sub Total	10	7
------------------	----	---

Total	110	98
--------------	-----	----

Technical Review Form

Panel #12 - Panel - 12: 84.385A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: New Schools for New Orleans -- , (S385A100116)

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:

New Schools for New Orleans (NOLA TIF) will include 29 high need schools (reaching 12,000 high need students) by the end of second year of the program. It will develop and implement a PBCS that rewards, at differentiated levels, teachers and principals who demonstrate their effectiveness by improving student achievement. The state of Louisiana has listed many New Orleans schools as recovery schools because of low performance. Louisiana has also mandated that LEAs engage in differentiated pay. (Pgs 1-3) Louisiana is one of six states that received a grant from the National Governors Association to develop a teacher compensation model.

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

- (a) has given significant weight to student growth based on objective data on student performance;
- (b) has included observation-based assessments of teacher performance at multiple points in the year. Leadership Team, who observe teachers four times a year, will have annual training in the SKR evaluation standards. (Pg. 26)
- (c) Leadership roles increase the effectiveness of teachers. NOLA TIF has roles and

additional compensation for master and mentor teachers built in to the proposal. (Pg 4)

In determining principal effectiveness as part of a PBCS, the LEA must give significant weight to student growth for the school. The VAL ED Assessment Model and the New Leaders for New Schools Evaluation tool will be used to determine principal effectiveness. It is uncertain how often principals will be observed and exactly what "observed" means in the case of administrators. (Pg. 28) The definition of school leader is uncertain. At times the terms seems to refer to principals and assistant principals, other times the term refers to master teachers and mentors.

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:

NOLA TIF partners, other than FirstLine College Prep, have signed MOUs indicating commitments to provide matching funding on an increasing scale over the five-year period. By year 6, 100% of all costs of sustaining the program will be funding by each partner. (Pg 4)

The incentive amounts appear to be appropriate. (Pg. 29) An explanation of bonus determination appears on page 30 and is based on the US Department of Education minimum recommendation of 5%.

NOLA TIF will hire two new full-time positions to direct and manage the program. In addition, executive master teachers and master teachers will perform their duties 100% of the time. It is uncertain how these positions will be funded following the term of the grant. (Pg. 44-45)

Matching funds are incrementally introduced during each year of the grant. NOLA will raise their level of commitment from 55% in year 5 to 100% in year 6. There is little evidence to determine how these dollars will be found. (Pg 53)

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:

NOLA TIF provides multiple career paths, ongoing applied professional growth, instructionally focused accountability, and performance-based compensation. Performance pay is aligned with career advancement, professional development, and meaningful evaluations. Pg. 4 Louisiana legislation HB 1033 mandates statewide efforts to increase teacher effectiveness by requiring annual evaluations. Pg 5

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:

NOLA TIF has provided career incentives that are linked to student achievement. Additional responsibilities and leadership roles are available to teachers. Full time non-teaching status goes to the Master Teachers.

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:

NOLA TIF has a communication plan that involves teachers and principals both before and during the project. Eight of the 29 schools will be involved in the grant the first year, with the additional 21 schools involved by the end of year 2. NOLA TIF will engage the support of at least 75% of the teachers, communicate the elements of the project, and utilize data management systems to make student data more accessible to all that need to use it for analyzing student achievement. Pg. 6 Twenty-eight of the partner schools have signed an MOU of support. Pg. 34 Input and support from the LFT, APEL, and LAP was obtained.

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:

NOLA TIF has engaged the support of teachers, principals, other personnel, and the local union, to garner their involvement and support. The incentive amounts appear to be appropriate. Pg. 29 An explanation of bonus determination appears on page 30 and is based on the US Department of Education minimum recommendation of 5%. Twenty-eight partners have signed an MOU of support. Pg. 34 Input and support from the LFT, APEL, and LAP was obtained.

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 appears to have a very clear plan for implementation of a rigorous, transparent and fair evaluation system for teachers and principals. Effectiveness is noted in student achievement, professional development, etc and used to differentiate pay. Pay differentiation is mandated by the state of Louisiana. Pgs. 19-31

The evaluation process includes clear objectives and an evidenced-based evaluation that aligns with the state of Louisiana's mandated framework to measure teacher and leader effectiveness. An annual evaluation must be made of all teachers and principals once per year using the state protocol. Though mentioned for both groups, the only example of an observation instrument was for teachers. Use of the state protocol and training of the leadership team increases inter-rater reliability. A trained leadership team will make four observations, announced and unannounced, per year. (pgs. 19; 26) Fifty percent of incentive pay is based on evidence of student growth. The other 50% is determined by observations, performance rubrics, external observations, 360-degree feedback and a learning environment index. (pgs. 22-23)

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:

NOLA TIF will use Louisiana's longitudinal data system, which has been recognized by the Data Quality Campaign 2009 as one of the nation's top 11 systems. Teachers will be able to use the Curriculum Verification and Reporting Portal beginning fall 2010 to access student data and determine student growth. Pgs. 22-23 There is evidence, Attachment C, that information from the student data system and the data on teacher and principal performance are linked to the incentive plan. Differentiated pay accounts for these data, plus years of experience and school performance.

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:

In-depth conversations with teachers and principals were had prior to the submission of the grant. (Pg. 34) MOUs were signed by each partner, except FirstLine College Prep. Input from Unions was obtained. Feedback is provided to teachers following each observation. Working groups will be convened as well as professional development workshops being held. These conversations helped ensure that teachers and principals had the buy-in needed and that they provided input into the system. The CVRP will enable every teacher to review aggregate growth data and individual summative assessment results for every student taught. The HCIS system will, in the next two years, add human capital data and teacher evaluation, certification, distribution, promotion, and compensation data resources available. Feedback is provided to teachers following each observation. Working groups will be convened as well as professional development workshops being held. (Pg 38-39)

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:

A professional development plan has been put into place based on the needs of the applicant. Most of the schools involved are among the highest-need schools in the district. Many are under Turnaround school processes which mandate continuous monitoring and improvement. Teachers and principals will be trained in the use of data and evaluations. Job-embedded professional development such as the use of cluster meetings will be utilized. One and one-half hour cluster meetings, lead by master and mentor teachers, will also be held weekly during school hours. Personal development plans will be initiated. Professional development will take place for the project leaders who will be observing and assessing the teachers and administrators. These data-driven meetings will cause teachers to examine student data, engage in collaborative planning, and learning of effective instructional strategies. It is uncertain how master teachers and administrators will receive training. It is also uncertain how the professional development will be evaluated. (pgs. 24, 39-43) Table 4 on page 26 provides the criteria needed for each teacher to qualify for incentive bonuses.

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:

New Orleans schools have a clear need for the project funds. Natural disasters, restructuring of struggling schools, high minority and high poverty factors, and high percentages of students below a basic level on state assessments are all indicators of need. (Pg. 7-13) New Orleans schools are making progress on recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers. A salary structure that ranks teachers' salaries at 28th in the nation and an experience indication that 48% of New Orleans teachers have been in the class for 3 years or less, indicates high need. (Pgs. 12-14)

Weaknesses:

Data provided for state averages suggests a high incidence of low assessment scores. The applicant did not address comparable schools to those 29 listed in the grant. (Pgs 14-15)

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 state of Louisiana has listed many New Orleans schools as recovery schools because of low performance. Louisiana has also mandated that LEAs engage in differentiated pay. Louisiana is one of six states that received a grant from the National Governors Association to develop a teacher compensation model. (Pgs 1-3) These determinations have assisted the applicant with a foundation of linking performance with differentiated compensation that will support this project.

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

(a) has given significant weight to student growth based on objective data on student performance;

(b) has included observation-based assessments of teacher performance at multiple points in the year. Leadership Team, who observe teachers four times a year, will have annual training in the SKR evaluation standards. (Pg. 26) Inter-rated reliability should be enhanced with this practice.

(c) has specified leadership roles that increase the effectiveness of teachers. NOLA TIF has roles and additional compensation for master and mentor teachers built in to the proposal. (Pg 4)

In determining principal effectiveness as part of a PBCS, the LEA must give significant weight to student growth for the school. The VAL ED Assessment Model and the New Leaders for New Schools Evaluation tool will be used to determine principal effectiveness. Both have clear links to objectives that support effective teaching. (Pg 28)

The incentive amounts appear to be appropriate. (Pg. 29) An explanation of bonus determination appears on page 30 and is based on the US Department of Education minimum recommendation of 5%.

Eight of the 29 schools will be on board the first year, with the additional 21 schools involved by the end of year 2. NOLA TIF will engage the support of at least 75% of the teachers, communicate the elements of the project, and utilize data management systems to make student data more accessible to all that need to use it for analyzing student achievement. Pg. 6 Twenty-eight partners have signed MOUs of support. Pg. 34 Input and support from the LFT, APEL, and LAP was obtained.

NOLA TIF will use Louisiana's longitudinal data system, which has been recognized by the Data Quality Campaign 2009 as one of the nation's top 11 systems. Teachers will be able to use the Curriculum Verification and Reporting Portal beginning fall 2010 to access student data and determine student growth. (Pgs. 22-23)

Professional development will take place for the project leaders who will be assessing the teachers and administrators. One and one-half hour cluster meetings, lead by master and mentor teachers, will also be held weekly during school hours. These data-driven meetings will cause teachers to examine student data, engage in collaborative planning, and learning of effective instructional strategies. (pgs. 24, 39-43)

Weaknesses:

The definition of school leader is uncertain. At times the term seems to refer to principals and assistant principals, other times the term refers to master teachers and mentors.

It is uncertain how often principals will be observed and exactly what "observed" means in the case of administrators. (Pg. 28)

It is uncertain how master teachers and administrators will receive training. It is also

uncertain how the professional development will be evaluated. (pgs. 24, 39-43)

Reader's Score: 56

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 appears to be appropriate for bringing the project to fruition. Responsibilities are clearly defined and milestones are provided. Time commitments are adequate for teachers, principals, and grant administration. (pgs. 47-48)

NOLA TIF partners, other than FirstLine, have signed MOUs indicating commitments to provide matching funding on an increasing scale over the five-year period. By year 6, 100% of all costs of sustaining the program will be funded by each partner. (Pg 4) Input and support from the LFT, APEL, and LAP were obtained.

The incentive amounts appear to be appropriate. (Pg. 29) An explanation of bonus determination appears on page 30 and is based on the US Department of Education minimum recommendation of 5%.

NOLA TIF will hire two new full-time positions to direct and manage the program. In addition, executive master teachers and master teachers will perform their duties 100% of the time. Time requirements for these personnel seem adequate for a grant of this magnitude. (Pg. 44-45)

Matching funds are incrementally introduced during each year of the grant. NOLA will raise their level of commitment from 55% in year 5 to 100% in year 6. (Pg 53)

Weaknesses:

It is uncertain how the director, manager, executive master teacher and master teacher positions will be funded following the term of the grant. More information on the existence and funding for these positions after grant would have been helpful in determining adequacy of the plan. (Pgs. 44-45)

Matching funds are incrementally introduced during each year of the grant. NOLA will raise their level of commitment from 55% in year 5 to 100% in year 6. There is little evidence to determine how these dollars will be found. (Pg 53)

Reader's Score: 22

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:

Clear objectives are provided for raising and assessing student achievement and personnel effectiveness. (pg. 19) Objectives are measurable in a generic manner. Most call for an increase in ability without specifying quantitatively what that increase might be. Objects appear attainable within the specified budget given the fact that a process is already in place as mandated by the state of Louisiana for many of the schools.

Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation data will be utilized. All information will be accessible in the data system as the project continues. Evaluation of recruitment efforts are in place. Clear evaluation protocol for teachers and administrators are provided. While an Annual Program Review rubric is mentioned and in placed; a rubric for accessing qualitative data from observations, professional development and cluster meetings will be developed and piloted in the first year of the project. (pgs. 58-60)

The evaluator will meet at least quarterly with the Project Director and Administrator to review progress. A written report will be submitted from that meeting and analysis of the data.

Weaknesses:

While an Annual Program Review rubric is mentioned and in placed; a rubric for accessing qualitative data from observations, professional development and cluster meetings will be developed and piloted in the first year of the project.

There is no evidence that feedback on the project will be provided beyond the written evaluation seen by the project staff. (pg. 60)

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 use of Louisiana's SAS EVAAS system for tracking longitudinal student data at the student level is appropriate. Louisiana mandated HB 1033 whereby 50% of performance bonuses for teachers and administrators are linked to student value-added growth at the classroom and school-wide levels. This project forms a strong base for the value-added model found in this proposal (Pg 5)

Teachers and principals will be trained in the use of the data system. Adequate time is provided for teachers to meet in cluster teams to discuss data and improvements needed. This training is supported by the training of the leadership team to provide more consistent observation evaluations.

Weaknesses:

While the state mandates 50% of performance bonuses for teachers and administrators are linked to student achievement, the other 50% is unclear. A clearly defined matrix of the breakdown of the components of the differentiated system would have been helpful.

It is a bit disconcerting that the applicant has not made provisions for the year lyevaluations to be made available to all personnel.

Reader's Score: 4

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:

NOLA TIF should allow New Orleans to more actively recruit teachers of hard-to-staff subjects. The district has built a talent pipeline through national recruitment efforts. They also have a good working relationship with Teach for America, New Teacher Project and the New Leaders for New Schools program. Increasing the pay scale is one venue through which this project will provide incentives for teachers in hard-to-staff areas and for administrators. (pg. 12) The funds will provide retention benefits in the form of increased professional development, career advancement, and differentiated pay. (Pg. 5-6; 13) Learning Communities will be formed to provide teachers with support for efforts that will lead to effective teaching and improved student achievement.

Weaknesses:

There is no evidence of retention difficulties for hard to staff areas. NOLA TIF could have more sufficiently explained the level of recruitment and retention in which they are engaged, in particular as they relate to hard-to-staff areas.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:12 PM