

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:20 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Tennessee Department of Education -- Federal Programs, (S385A100143)

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	5
Project Design		

1.Project Design	60	35
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	23
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	3
Sub Total	100	66

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	4
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Competitive Preference Priority 2

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

Panel #17 - Panel - 17: 84.385A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Tennessee Department of Education -- Federal Programs, (S385A100143)

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 TN-TIF program plan utilizes a hybrid model (page 34) where eligibility for awards is determined by both individual performance and team performance. A team may be a school. In this PBCS an individual or group from two to all of the employees in the school may participate. The TN-TIF program requires the greatest emphasis on individual educator performance (e.g., 50 % 75 percent) with less weight on the team and/or school units (e.g., 25 % 50 percent). The TN-TIF program awards high-performing teachers and principals significant financial incentives, ranging from \$2,000 for recruitment/retention incentives (Page 37) to more than \$10,000 for performance incentives for top performers with an average award of \$3000. Awards will be determined by the LEA with the local education association with the state as final approver.

On page 136 of the proposal, the conclusion states that "Tennessee law has stepped out nationally in codifying changes to how teacher evaluations will now be done. Among the new teacher evaluation policy changes are an expectation that ALL teachers get annually evaluated and that student performance will count 50% towards a teacher's evaluation rating. A stakeholder representative, state-level teacher evaluation committee is working on the how to for making this part of [the] law operational.

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:

Educator bonus payments are based on estimated awards to 1,800 educators, or roughly 45 percent of school personnel, with an estimated average \$3,000 per educator in Year 2. Each subsequent year, the average award amount from federal TIF funds is reduced by \$500 per year as other federal, state and local funds are reallocated. Totals per year for educator bonuses are \$5.4 million in Year 2, \$4.5 million in Year 3, \$3.6 million in Year 4, and \$2.7 million in Year 5. TN has considered sustainability by including career ladder funds as a supplement that will increase over the next 20 years as career ladder teachers retire. They state that other funds federal and state may be repurposed (page 39) as per the First to the Top legislation. This includes salary guides where years of experience above three and additional degrees may not be considered as important as student achievement

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluaton Criteria - Absolute Priority 3

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

Comment on how well the applicant demonstrates that - -

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

General:

Reviewer Comment Priority 3:

Members of the TN education community have spent more than a year exploring opportunities and challenges associated with PBCS.(page 7) The narrative cites several studies on compensation and also several studies of what has gone wrong in the past when other PBC systems have been tried. TN now has an opportunity to implement a PBCS due to the RTTT and TN diploma project (page 8) First to the Top legislation. The narrative indicates that TN is aligned to several current national initiatives, the American Diploma Project, Common Core Standards and the current push towards college and career readiness. TN has initiated a P-20 State Longitudinal Data System (page 9) to be able to track growth pre-k

through college. This system will give a 360-degree view of a student from physical health to educational health. The TVAAS results are also included in the system to address the value added component. Even the amount of time a teacher spends with a student is tracked (page 9). An evaluation system is being created to be piloted in 2010-2011. FTTT legislated that teacher evaluation is based on 50% student achievement (35% student growth and 15% other measures) and 50% on multiple classroom observations. According to the narrative much of what is requested by the TIF grant is already in place in a coherent and integrated strategy. The TN plan is for 105 high need schools in 14 districts.

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:

In general, the awards for the PBCS vary from \$2000 for recruitment bonuses to \$10000 with a average award of \$3000. The precise amounts are determined by the LEAs and approved by the state. The top 10 to 15 percent of performers are considered exemplary and considered for the upper bound of the awards. The lower bound of \$1200 to \$1800 (page 37) represents the amount awarded for recruitment and retention along with performance around the 60th percentile. Additional responsibilities are not mentioned in the PBCS. Since specific awards are to be made by LEAs and the SEA has approval after the selection by the LEAs, specifics of the actual incentive awards are not fully identified. TN has not met this priority because the awards are not clearly defined. TN has provided too general a description of the process with a insufficient coverage of the awards area.

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:

TN intends to implement a multi-pronged communication strategy to delivery information about the program (page 16), including web-based emails, video/CD medium, in-person and electronic engagements, and professional news media productions that provide for two-way communications among the TN-TIF Design Team and participating schools and school systems. They will also offer a series of six online strategic compensation courses (table 4 page 17) offered during the TN-TIF planning year to personnel in participating schools. These courses, which are already part of Tennessee's First to the Top reforms, will be widely available and provide a comprehensive overview of PBCS and TN-TIF considerations so districts understand fully what is to come before getting too far into implementation.

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:

TN stated (page 15) that for more than a year, a broad-based group of stakeholders has engaged school and state-level community leaders in discussion around educator compensation reform generally and the TIF program specifically. Tennessee participated in the National Governors Association's Policy Academy on Differentiated Compensation (page 16), which was designed to create new models of teacher compensation. The leadership team not only included members from the Governor's Office of State Planning and Policy, Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee School Boards Association, Tennessee Board of Education, and Tennessee Education Association but also superintendents and other educators representing large and small, urban and rural school systems. Since legislation is in place with the RTTT and FTTC, unions seem to be a moot point and are not considered.

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:

A series of six online courses (page 16) will be implemented to indoctrinate participating schools into the program. These courses are on establishment of a PBCS and are already a part of FTTC. Educator effectiveness (page 23) is to be measured by a five section rubric, contribution to student learning measured by student growth to no less than 50% of the evaluation, evidence of professional skills from observations, ongoing professional learning measured through observations, contribution to ongoing school development measured by evidence of leadership and other measures, and evidence of professional leadership which according to the table is measured by evidence of leadership. This last measure is somewhat unclear and circular. This will be piloted in 2010-2011. The frequency of observations is not yet established as was evident with the statement (page 27) "A central component is multiple, annual observations of principal and teacher professional practice. Multiple annual observations do not seem clear. This is especially true when reading the statement on page 114 "The frequency of evaluations was found to be a problem, as well. Most local districts negotiated agreements, if they have one, defer to state law for governing how often teachers get evaluated. In the following statements TN refers to the FTTC specification for the state's advisory committee to develop and validate the new educator evaluation system including

observations during 2010-11. TN had included the literature on evaluations currently in place or in development nationally and internationally. It was not immediately apparent how TN will ensure inter rater reliability for their rubric scoring.

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:

TN has initiated creation of state longitudinal data system (SLDS) (page 9) which is to "combine data on student outcomes pertaining to education, health, children services, among others to provide a "360-degree" view of the student. The SAS Institute (contractor) and Battelle for Kids will also work to expand access to and training on data dashboards using the SLDS, including communicating results from the Tennessee Value Added Assessment System (TVAAS) to teachers and principals and developing several pre-service teacher training institutions. Student-teacher linkages are managed and verified by Randa Solutions, a Nashville-based educational technology firm. Randa's linkage software records the percentage of time each teacher spent with each student in core academic subjects, including English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies." This is a rather intrusive initiative, and, while made with good intentions, may need to be checked against data safeguard laws like HIPPA that might delay some of the linkages that have been made. To this extent the ambitious nature of the plan seems to be a weakness and detracts from the quality of the proposal.

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:

As mentioned earlier, RTTT legislation has pre-empted many aspects of TIF and TN is already conducting a series of six online courses to train districts on the PBCS to be established. TN has allowed a planning year (page 17) which coincides with the FTTT legislation to establish much of the program.

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:

Professional development in this proposal appears to be limited to use of TVAAS data and training on the PBCS itself. There are 6 online courses covering PBCS implementation topics. Topics addressed include, (1) Overview of PBCS generally (2) What to consider when beginning PBCS, (3) Review options for performance measurement within TN-TIF parameters, (4) Steps to move from PBCS design to implementation and payout, (5) How to respond to performance data and feedback, and (6) Strategies to monitor progress of PBCS over time. PD for teacher and principal effectiveness is mentioned in the literature citations, but not addressed in the narrative. Sufficient PD is identified for PBCS and data usage, but not for increasing skills which are equally necessary.

As for the requirements for high quality professional development:

1. PD needs have not been assessed at the high needs schools.

2. Individual teacher and principal needs as identified in the evaluation process are not discussed.

3. Support for teachers and principals to better understand the PBCS are addressed in the six courses, but not for improving best practices, becoming effective, or improving student performance.

4. Nothing was mentioned about assessing the professional development for effectiveness in improving teacher and leadership practices.

Based on the above mentioned points TN has not met the requirement for high quality professional development.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Need for the Project

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths:

TN has identified for the purpose of the TIF 105 high need schools in 14 districts have been identified for the project.

A bonus of \$2000 has been cited for recruiting and retention.

Data are included to identify student achievement for the multiple schools in multiple domains.

All of the above are necessary but not sufficient strengths for meeting the need criteria.

Weaknesses:

The data in the tables (6 unnumbered pages of high need schools documentation following page 50) are not interpreted sufficiently for a reviewer to be able to comprehend their meaning. Care should be taken to present data in a clear and comprehensible manner. Comparable schools are not identified and the methodology for selecting comparability is not identified. There is no definition for comparable schools as required for this section.

Reader's Score: 5

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 design is congruent to state and federal legislation, FTTT and RTTT, along with the TIF grant. (see page 7)

Involvement by the teachers union was documented. (page 64) This will be sought during the first year of the TIF.

Data systems will eventually link mental and physical health along with educational health according to the narrative. (page 31)

Professional development for understanding the PBCS and TVAAS data seems adequate.

Weaknesses:

Validity and reliability of the measures used have not been discussed in the narrative.

(3.) Rigor of the evaluation instrument cannot be determined at this time since it has not been revised for piloting. State data in the longitudinal data system and TVAAS data are used in the evaluation process but validity and reliability of neither has been established in the proposal.

Involvement of upper level administrative personnel, governor's office, school boards, and legislators has been documented and salary guides under this proposal will be "repurposed" (page 39) without input from teachers or principals. Collective bargaining units have been rendered moot by legislation.

Professional development for skills improvement seems to have been ignored.

Well being is never really defined. (Abstract and page 10)

11. More than 50 percent of teachers have TVAAS data attributable to them at the classroom level and virtually every principal has TVAAS data reporting the growth of students at their respective schools (page 26). For those individuals without classroom-level TVAAS results available to them, the TN-TIF program will measure their contribution to student growth using a "within school team- and/or school-level effectiveness score. This last sentence is nebulous at best and really shows up a weakness in the proposal.

(4.) Table 8 on page 40 identifies that the data management system is in progress (not complete) at both the state and local level.

Reader's Score: 35

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 is likely to achieve the objectives of the project since it has the support of state law,

The project director is the SEA along with the LEAs

TN has sufficient funds under federal and state programs to be able to continue the program

There appears to be sufficient funds in relation to the design.

Weaknesses:

Specific personnel responsible for the project along with cv's were not supplied. Dr. Debbie Owens filed as program director, but she only appeared on the application as director and nowhere else.

Reader's Score: 23

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:

TN has identified research both national and international for use in constructing the measures to be piloted in 2010-11. (page 28)
Courses have been constructed to assist in the training on how to address the PBCS. (page 43)
Quantitative data and the use thereof have been identified.(page 44 and following)

Weaknesses:

The actual system has not been constructed yet and will have to be established.(page 28)
Sufficient qualitative data has been overshadowed by the quantitative data.(page 47)
The element of feedback has been left to future establishment.(page 30)
Continuous improvement has been addressed only with respect to usage of data. More detail is necessary in this area.

Reader's Score: 3

Priority Questions

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 1

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

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

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

Strengths:

TN has selected the TVAAS as their value-added model (page 32). The use of the TVAAS has been in existence for some time.
The TVAAS will be explained to the 105 schools in a course on data.

Weaknesses:

The chosen model TVAAS was named but not explained in the narrative. There was an attachment that covered the TVAAS (appendices). The explanation given in the appendix was rather technical for general understanding of the program. Access will be given to the value added system but there is no real PD addressed for understanding the system.

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:

Recruitment and retention have been addressed and a dollar figure assigned.

Weaknesses:

Outside of offering more money, no "difficult to recruit" specialty areas, or methods of recruitment for those specialty areas have been addressed. A justification for paying math and science teachers more has been proffered because of the market, but no plan for recruiting was offered.

TN has not demonstrated that the PBCS will help high need schools:

1. Serve high need students.
2. Retain effective teachers in hard to staff subjects.
3. Fill vacancies with effective or likely to be effective teachers.

Additionally TN has not demonstrated the extent to which the subjects or specialty areas they propose to target are hard-to-staff. TN did not propose to target any area in their proposal.

TN has no demonstrated that they will implement a process for effectively communicating to teachers which subjects and specialty areas are considered hard-to-staff.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:20 PM

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Applicant: Tennessee Department of Education -- Federal Programs, (S385A100143)

Reader #2: *****

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Questions		
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Sub Total	0	0
Evaluaton Criteria		
Absolute Priority 3		
1.Absolute Priority 3	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Requirement		
Requirement		
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1.Core Element 5	0	0
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1.Professional Development	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
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1.Need for Project	10	5
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1.Project Design	60	45
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1.Adequacy of Support	25	20
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1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	2
Sub Total	100	72

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	5
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Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	3
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Sub Total	10	8
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Total	110	80
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Technical Review Form

Panel #17 - Panel - 17: 84.385A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Tennessee Department of Education -- Federal Programs, (S385A100143)

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:

Strengths

Proposal presents a clear plan for teacher and principal evaluations that will be based on student achievement measures and classroom visits. In determining the 50% awarded for student achievement, 35% will be based on student growth measures and 15% on other student achievement measures. (page e10) Other measures such as educator leadership and contribution to student and community well-being will be considered. (page e24) Annual evaluations of teachers, that will occur at least twice each year, will include a discussion of strengths and weaknesses and remediation if needed. Principal performance contracts may include benchmarks such as graduation rates, ACT scores and student attendance. (page e24) Since the teacher evaluation instrument will be piloted during the 2010-2011 school year, the proposal includes a one year planning period. (page e21) Incentive awards are of appropriate size ranging from \$2000.00 for recruitment/retention to more than \$10,000.00 for performance. For budgeting purposes they have used the average amount of \$3000.00. (page e37)

Weaknesses

Well being of students is not defined.

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:

Strengths

A strong plan is proposed in which the applicant has presented a projection of the costs associated with the development and implementation of the incentive program. The planning committee has made a projection in the number of teachers that will receive incentives during the first year of the program and have budgeted for this amount. The budget projects an increase in amounts in the following years and covers this projection with a local matching fund that increases each year. (pages 37-39) Matching funds in the budget show an increase of at least \$500 per teacher per year, so that at the end of the grant, local matching funds will account for \$1500 of each incentive. Their goal is that the federal funds would be replaced entirely by the 6th year sustaining their program completely. (page e39)

Weakness

The budget summary for non-federal funds does not contain any data.

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:

Strengths

The project executes an adequate plan in which teachers and principals will engage in effective practice networks. These groups will identify high-quality teaching and leadership practices and disseminate this finding statewide. (page e33)The state will also continue to expand their traditional and alternative training programs for both

principals and teachers in an effort to increase their supply of teachers in hard to fill areas. Several strategies will be used to facilitate this effort which includes six online strategic courses. (page e16) Evidence is provided that the professional development will ensure that teachers and principals understand the PBCS system, how they will be evaluated, and how the evaluation feedback will be used to foster improvements. (page e16)
Weaknesses
None noted

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:

Strengths

Details in the proposal justify additional incentives for educator leadership and contribution to student and community. (page e37) Top performers, who demonstrate these qualities, can earn up to an additional \$10,000.00.

Weaknesses

Table 5 states that the primary mechanism for evaluating contributions to ongoing school development and evidence of leadership will be evidence of leadership. This is very unclear and there is no evidence of how this will be measured. (p. e24)

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:

Strengths

The proposal presents adequate evidence that prior planning included a representative group of stakeholders from school districts and the state that planned and presented the ideas to local school districts. Interested local school systems were then allowed to sign commitments. (page 7 and 15) They also present a plan to communicate information about the program to school system personnel in a variety of formats some of which will provide an opportunity for two-way communications. To make this plan even stronger, a series of six online strategic compensation courses will be offered during the planning year. (page e16)

Weaknesses

None noted

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 2

1. Core Element 2:

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

General:

Strengths

The proposed plan to execute a program in which program staff will facilitate a collaborative planning process for determining the features of each schools performance based educator pay plan within the guidelines set forth by the planning team is a strong quality. This allows for teacher input while giving parameters in which to work. (page e18)

Weaknesses

None noted

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:

Strengths

A strong plan in which teacher and principal evaluations will be focused on student achievement measures as determined by the state testing system and classroom visits. In determining the 50% awarded for student achievement, 35% will be based on student growth measures and 15% on other student achievement measures. (page e10) Other measures such as educator leadership and contribution to student and community well-being will be considered. (page e24) Rubrics will be developed to align with the new standards and assessments. (page e10) Observations will be conducted by trained individuals to ensure inter-rater reliability. (page e16)

Weakness

Student well being is not defined in the context of the proposal.

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:

Strengths

A positive aspect to this plan is the fact that the applicant already has a comprehensive data system that links student information with teachers. The initial planning year will be used to make sure these systems include the data gathered in school inspections. (page e21)

There will also be an evaluation of the local data-management and system capacity of each LEA. (page e22)

Weaknesses

The data system already in place does not link student achievement data to teacher and principal payroll. (page e22)

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:

Strengths

A strong aspect of this plan is that once evaluations have occurred, teachers and principals will be placed in effective practice networks. These groups will identify high-quality teaching and leadership practices and disseminate these findings statewide. (page e33)

The state will also continue to expand their traditional and alternative training programs for both principals and teachers in an effort to increase their supply of teachers in hard to fill areas. Several strategies will be used to facilitate this effort. (page e10)

Professional development will be provided to ensure that teachers and principals understand the PBCS system, how they will be evaluated, and how the evaluation feedback will be used to foster improvements. (page e16)

Weaknesses

The proposal is lacking details as to how the effective practice networks will be implemented and used to improve teaching locally. (page e33)

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:

Strengths

A strong professional development plan will be provided to ensure that teachers and principals understand the PBCS system. (page e33) An online needs assessment will be implemented to ensure that the plan meets the immediate needs for professional development. (appendix 2.1A-1) The annual evaluation of teachers and principals will be used to guide their professional development. (appendix D-5-1) This will ensure that the needs of teachers who do not qualify for incentives are met and that the professional development targets their areas of weakness. To ensure that the professional development plan addresses the needs of the students, many specialized sessions are presented. i.e. Content specialty work sessions will be implemented for the target schools in a series of ten regional workshops held to deliver new content and effective practice models. (page e1) Tennessee Reading Summits will be held for 136 school systems focused on adolescent literacy in middle and high schools. (page 2) This plan will ensure that teachers and principals receive professional development that enables them to use data generated by evaluation measures to improve their practice. (page e63) Effective teachers and principals will engage in effective practice networks. These groups will identify high-quality teaching and leadership practices and disseminate this finding statewide. (page e33)

Weaknesses

The details of the professional development plan that will assist teachers in improving student achievement are limited. There is discussion of effective practice networks, but how this relates to improvement locally is vague. (page e33) There is no evidence that the professional development will be assessed on a regular basis.

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:

High need schools are identified in the proposal and a table containing data on student need is included. A strong case of need is presented in the proposal. High need schools are identified in the proposal and a table containing data on student need is included. (p.e12) The three-year average TCAP Criterion Referenced Test scores on the mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies assessments ranged between 39 and 45 points, or the equivalent of 5 to 11 points below the average score in Tennessee. The proposal addresses recruitment and retention of teachers. (page e14) A review was presented and their findings were that the training, working conditions, and non-teaching opportunities for teachers differ significantly by teaching field, yet the salary schedule within a school district treats all teachers the same.

Weaknesses:

Even though there is a table of student achievement data included, the data is not interpreted. (p. e14) Comparable schools are not determined so evidence that student achievement in the schools is lower than the comparison school cannot be determined.

Reader's Score: 5

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 proposal presents a clear plan for teacher and principal evaluations that will be based on student achievement measures and classroom visits. In determining the 50% awarded for student achievement, 35% will be based on student growth measures and 15% on other student achievement measures. (page e10) Other measures such as educator leadership and contribution to student and community well-being will be considered. (page e24) Annual evaluations of teachers, that will occur at least twice each year, will include a discussion of strengths and weaknesses and remediation if needed. Principal performance contracts may include benchmarks such as graduation rates, ACT scores and student attendance. (page e24) Since the teacher evaluation instrument will be piloted during the 2010-2011 school year, the proposal includes a one year planning period. (page e21) Incentive awards are of appropriate size ranging from \$2000.00 for recruitment/retention to more than \$10,000.00 for performance. Student achievement will be reported using the state student testing data system. (page e21) A year of prior planning that involved all stakeholders has occurred. (page e8) The initial planning year will be used to do an assessment of the data management systems of all involved parties and then a plan will be implemented to implement an effective overall system. (page e21) Local education agencies have access to this data and it can be linked with teacher evaluations. (page e21) Incentive awards are of appropriate size ranging from \$2000.00 for recruitment/retention to more than \$10,000.00 for performance. For budgeting purposes they have used the average amount of \$3000.00. (page e37) The involvement of the teachers unions is documented and a data system will be implemented that will link student

achievement to teacher performance. (page e7 and e15) A strong professional development plan will be provided to ensure that teachers and principals understand the PBCS system. (page e33) An online needs assessment will be implemented to ensure that the plan meets the immediate needs for professional development. (appendix 2.1A-1) The annual evaluation of teachers and principals will be used to guide their professional development. (appendix D-5-1) This will ensure that the needs of teachers who do not qualify for incentives are met and that the professional development targets their areas of weakness. To ensure that the professional development plan addresses the needs of the students, many specialized sessions are presented. i.e. Content specialty work sessions will be implemented for the target schools in a series of ten regional workshops held to deliver new content and effective practice models. (page e1) Tennessee Reading Summits will be held for 136 school systems focused on adolescent literacy in middle and high schools. (page 2) This plan will ensure that teachers and principals receive professional development that enables them to use data generated by evaluation measures to improve their practice. (page e63) Effective teachers and principals will engage in effective practice networks. These groups will identify high-quality teaching and leadership practices and disseminate this finding statewide. (page e33)

Weaknesses:

The plan was developed with involvement of upper level administration with no input from teachers. (page e10)

Reader's Score: 45

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project

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

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

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

Strengths:

The proposal includes a planning year to ensure that everything is in place when the program is fully implemented. (page e16)The plan includes courses which have been constructed to assist with the training of administrators. (page e28) Evidence that local resources will increase each year to a full support level by the sixth year guarantees sustainability of the program. (page e39) The management plan will enhance the objectives of this plan and a collaborative team with state and local representatives is

involved. (page e7 and e15)

Weaknesses:

The planning team and their roles with implementation are not documented in the proposal. The plan contains no evidence of how it will raise student achievement.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Local Evaluation

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

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

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

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

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

Strengths:

A clear evaluation plan has been proposed and will be conducted by an outside evaluation team. (page e44-46) The plan will provide both ongoing feedback for continuous improvement along with summative results on the effect of the program on student achievement and educator effectiveness. Quantitative and qualitative data will be used to support the implementation of the objectives of this plan. These objectives will focus on student achievement, teacher performance and the hiring and retention of teachers. Annual surveys administered to district and school officials and interviews conducted will provide data on the implementation experience. Annual surveys to school personnel in participating schools will give provide an understanding of educatorsâ attitudes, behaviors, and school cultures. (page e45) They will also evaluate the levels and trends of educator turnover before and after the implementation.

Weaknesses:

Even though Appendix 2.A-1 provides clear goals for the project there are no measurable objectives listed for each goal.

Reader's Score: 2

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:

A strong plan is presented that will use value-added measures. Teacher and principal evaluations will be based on student achievement measures and classroom visits. In determining the 50% awarded for student achievement, 35% will be based on student growth measures and 15% on other student achievement measures. Other measures such as educator leadership and contribution to student and community well-being will be considered. (page e10) Annual evaluations of teachers will include a discussion of strengths and weaknesses and remediation if needed. Principal performance contracts may include benchmarks such as graduation rates, ACT scores and student attendance. (page e24) Since the teacher evaluation instrument will be piloted during the 2010-2011 school year, the proposal includes a one year planning period. (page e37) There is a plan for introducing the system and all of its components to local education agency personnel. (page e16)

Weaknesses:

None noted

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Preference - Competitive Preference Priority 2

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

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

Strengths:

Evidence that this program will benefit high needs schools is documented with the following data: More than 100 high-needs schools with approximately 73 percent of their students qualifying for free or reduced lunch will participate. The state average is 38%. The students in these schools performed 5 to 11 points lower than the state average on mathematics, language arts, science and social studies over the last three years. (page e e11-12)

Weaknesses:

The plan is weak in the area of recruitment and retention. They also do not provide an explanation for how it will be determined that a teacher filling a vacancy is effective or likely to be effective.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:20 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 8/6/10 4:20 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Tennessee Department of Education -- Federal Programs, (S385A100143)

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	7
Project Design		

1.Project Design	60	45
Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project		
1.Adequacy of Support	25	20
Quality of Local Evaluation		
1.Quality of Local Eval.	5	4
Sub Total	100	76

Priority Questions

Priority Preference

Competitive Preference Priority 1

1.Competitive Priority 1	5	4
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Competitive Preference Priority 2

1.Competitive Priority 2	5	3
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Sub Total	10	7
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Total	110	83
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Technical Review Form

Panel #17 - Panel - 17: 84.385A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Tennessee Department of Education -- Federal Programs, (S385A100143)

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 has done an exceptional job in outlining major differences that justify differentiated levels of compensation for classroom teachers. These can be summarized as follows: average non teaching opportunities vary, for example, physical science high school teachers and for elementary teachers; it is easy for a principal to hire an elementary teacher, but hard for a principal to hire a science, mathematics, or SPED teacher; and most importantly, there is considerable variability in teacher effectiveness. Further, the applicant provides research-based evidence on the impact of highly effective teachers on student performance. The applicant's plan includes a mandate that guides the evaluation of educators where no less than 50% of teacher and principal evaluations will be based on objective student achievement measures using the state's value added assessment system (p. 10).

Additional evaluation tools will include evaluations of classroom and position observations and written assessments. Teachers are to be observed twice a year by trained individuals in an assessment that includes other forms of evidence with four to five rating categories (p. 28). Table 4, included in the narrative, outlines the :Strategic

Compensation Plan" (p. 17).

In addition, principals are subject to performance contracts to specific benchmarks such as graduation rates (p. 24). The Education Department is also developing, reviewing, and/or refining additional assessment tools: formative assessments, interim assessments, benchmark assessments, summative assessments aligned to the state standards, and educator observation protocols.

The applicant cites an average award of \$3000 for recruitment/retention and performance incentives explaining the state's plan to consider the financial sustainability after the funding period (p. 37). A logical and research-based discussion was included justifying the level of incentives that will be offered.

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 provides a thoughtful and well-developed budget of projected costs for their plan (p. e5). It was also attentive to addressing sustainability of its plan after the funding period. For this effort, the state plans to redirect state, career ladder funds; re-purposing a percentage of the teacher degree premium; a projected increase in local matching funds; and, private or local funds. By the end of the grant period, performance based compensation will come entirely from state funds and from private and local funds (p. 39).

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 is committed to implementing a coherent and comprehensive plan for strengthening its workforce. Collaborating with the University of Tennessee, the applicant plans to expand a P-20 Longitudinal System that will include communicating results from the state's Value Added Assessment System to teachers, principals, and pre-service teacher training institutions (p. 9).

The applicant plans to use these data and evaluation for professional development, for awards based on performance, and for making "high stakes personnel decisions." Value added measures will not immediately be tied to high stakes decisions, but will be used to provide feedback to schools (p. 23).

The applicant wants a planning year in order to more fully develop its educator evaluation system that will include an evidence-based rubric of teacher and principal performance that will provide effective educators with incentives. The applicant has met the requirements of this priority.

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 state's plan includes implementing an incentive and reward system for effective teachers and principals to engage in "effective practice networks" and take leadership roles. Table 5, "Mechanisms for Evaluating Educator Effectiveness" in the that includes leadership as one of the measures to be used for evaluating effectiveness (p. 24).

The applicant has met the requirements of this criterion, which provides incentives for educators for additional responsibilities and leadership roles.

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 spent a year discussing its plan with a leadership team that includes members from the governor's office, School Board Association, the state Board of Education, the Education Association, and superintendents from urban and rural LEAs. More than 100 high needs schools have committed to participating and 14 LEAs have signed commitments to the state's plan.

The applicant's narrative stresses the importance of communicating with key stakeholders, which it considers a priority, and provides an outline of a communication strategy to

deliver information about its plan. This includes web-based emails, video/CD mediums, in person and electronic engagements, and professional news media productions. In addition, the applicant provides a list of possible topics to include when discussing an overview of its plan in participating schools. The applicant has met or exceeded the requirements of this core element

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 2

1. Core Element 2:

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

General:

The applicant has outlined a plan to communicate with the staff in all participating schools (p, 23). It has held conversations with various stakeholders for over a year, has obtained letters of support from various educational organizations, and has obtained the commitments of 14 LEAs and over 100 high need schools (e77). The applicant is a right to work state. The evidence suggests that the applicant has the support it needs to implement its plan. The applicant has met the requirements of this core element.

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 state's plan includes an educator observation system based on objective, evidence based rubrics aligned to the state standards, observations that are conducted twice a year by trained individuals ensuring a high degree of inter-rater reliability, the integration of multiple measures to validate observations along a 4 to 5 rating scale, formative feedback and summative results, and a process to use observations to inform practice for both individuals and teams (see Action Plan, Appendix 1, p. e175).

The applicant plans to continue to improve its comprehensive evaluation system by including examples from the Ofsted System and the International System for Teacher Observation and Feedback model, which is being developed (p, 19). Evidence provided includes sample indicators such as "deep knowledge of academic discipline," "deep

knowledge of pedagogy," "ability to engage students in meaningful learning," and "establishes conditions for learning" (p. 30). The applicant has met or exceeded the requirements of this core element.

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's data assessment system has used a value added measure to understand how schools and individual teachers are contributing to student academic growth. It is prepared to use this system to link teacher and principal pay plans using student growth as a significant factor to educator payroll and HR systems (p. 21). The applicant's plan in this area, which is to be fully developed during a planning year, appears designed to support the goals of the project. (p. e). The applicant has met the requirements of this core element.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - Core Element 5

1. Core Element 5:

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

General:

The applicant has outlined a plan to communicate with the staff in all participating schools, and the evidence indicates that it understands the importance of "buy in" by critical stakeholders (p. 6). The applicant plans to expand its assessment system to allow greater educator access to teachers including data generated by specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness. Starting in January 2010, every educator in the state was provided with an access account, and requisite hardware and software was provided in each school building (p. 26). The state is currently planning a large scale effort to train educators in interpreting and apply assessment results to be used as a tool to inform practice (p. 9). The applicant has met the requirements of this core element.

Reader's Score: 0

Evaluation Criteria - High Quality Professional Development

1. High Quality Professional Development:

Comment on the applicant's demonstration that ---

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

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

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

(3) Provide --

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

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

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

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

General:

The applicant's plan is comprehensive and addresses all requirements of this criterion. Its plan includes a high quality professional development plan for teachers and principals that directly linked to specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness. The professional development plan is based on the current and future needs of 100 high need schools and LEAs that have committed to the state's plan (p. 5).

The state is currently considering the inclusion of successful models generated by educators based on evidence of instructional and student learning needs. The comprehensive evaluation system presented is designed to provide meaningful and ongoing feedback aligned to state standards and assessments to support individual educators in improving their practice. Refer to Table 6, Sample Indicators of Professional Practice (p. 30).

The state's plan includes implementing an incentive and reward system for effective teachers and principals to engage in "effective practice networks" (p. 33). These networks will identify high quality teaching and leadership practices that will be synthesized and disseminated statewide.

The applicant outlines a process to assess the effectiveness of professional development in improving teacher and leadership practice to increase student achievement by collecting data from the educators such as survey data. An innovative feature in the state' plan is their effort to examine the relationship between non-cognitive student outcomes such as attendance, high school GPA, college readiness, college retention, and other measures of "well-being" (p. 31).

The applicant's plan is comprehensive and well developed.

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 has identified and obtained the written commitment of 100 high need schools and 14 LEAs and has established that these schools have difficulty recruiting and retaining highly qualified or effective teachers and principals (p. 5). The applicant makes a compelling argument that its single salary schedule works to the detriment of overall teacher quality that negatively impacts teacher recruitment and retention in high need participating schools (p. 2). Evidence documents that students in the high needs participating schools in its plan have an academic performance level that is below expectation in core content areas. The applicant has met most of the requirements of this criterion.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide a definition for what it considers a comparable school for the comparison purposes. A table is provided (p. 4), and tables are also provided in the appendix (p. e40), but no information or discussion is provided that clearly explains that data presented.

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 applicant provides a comprehensive methodology to determine the effectiveness of teachers and principals that is guided by several mandates: no less than 50% of teacher and principal evaluations will be based on student achievement measures; evaluations will integrate classroom or position observations with written assessment; evaluations will integrate reviews from previous evaluations and personal conferences to include discussions of strengths, weaknesses and remediation; principals are subject to performance contracts that may specify other benchmarks such as student attendance (pp. 25-24). The applicant outlines a thoughtful, research-based, sustainable plan that provides performance awards to teachers and principals; components of the evaluation plan are outlined on Table 5, page 24.

Recognizing the importance of early buy-in by teachers, principals, and other personnel in participating schools, the applicant has provided an extensive campaign using multiple mediums to fully explain its plan to educators. The applicant spent a year holding discussions with a various critical stakeholders who were involved in developing the state's plan.

The state's plan includes a rigorous and transparent educator observation system, which uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, based on objective, evidence based rubrics aligned to the state standards, observations that are conducted twice a year by trained individuals, the integration of multiple measures to validate observations along a 4 to 5 rating scale, formative feedback and summative results, and a process to use observations to inform practice for both individuals and teams.

The applicant plans to use data and evaluation for professional development, for awards based on performance. Value added measures will eventually be tied to high stakes decisions, but will immediately be used to provide feedback to schools. The applicant wants a planning year in order to more fully develop its educator evaluation system that will include an evidence-based rubric of teacher and principal effectiveness. An innovative feature is a plan to examine the relationship between non-cognitive student outcomes such as attendance, high school GPA, college readiness, college retention, and other measures of "well-being" (p. 31).

The applicant's project design is generally strong although some weaknesses are noted.

Weaknesses:

Although professional development activities explaining different components of the plan proposed by the applicant are outlined, there is little detail on professional development activities designed to address skills improvement for teachers, principals, or others to raise student performance in high need schools.

Some information is provided on a proposed Value-Added Academy (p. 22), which refers to "capturing and disseminating learning resources and other promising practices will occur through an Electronic Learning Center." However, it appears that the extensive activities outlined in many documents in the appendix focus almost exclusively on professional development for educators to learn to use the new evaluation system.

The applicant makes several references to examining non-cognitive student outcomes (p. 31). However, no information is provided on how to assess these outcomes, on who will determine what outcomes will be examined, and on how these outcomes will be examined. There appears to be a curious lack of parental involvement and input on such a potentially sensitive area. Because students in high need and high poverty schools and their parents may be members of vulnerable populations, several ethical issues may be raised.

The applicant makes several suggestions on its plan to meet the sustainability needs of its plan including using funds from special program resources earmarked for the state's Career Ladder Program (p. 38). However, no evidence is provided that these suggestions have been discussed and approved by teachers, principals, other school personnel, or their union representatives. Several of these weaknesses in the proposed plan are serious limitations.

Reader's Score: 45

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project

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

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

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

Strengths:

The applicant's plan is generally realistic and designed to be achievable. The identified project director and key personnel are from the Tennessee Department of Education who are likely knowledgeable and capable of managing the proposed plan. A description of the key personnel was provided (pp. e188-189).

Evidence on the sustainability of the project and on support from the 14 LEAs who signed cooperative agreements was included, and letters of support were provided (p. e43-53).

The provided budget (p. e5) and budget justification (p. e)) appear adequate to meet the ambitious plans outlined in the application.

Weaknesses:

Although descriptions of key personnel were included, vitas and other supporting materials on the qualifications of key personnel in charge of not only managing but also implementing the proposed plan are missing from the application. Also missing is a list of the corresponding responsibilities of key personnel.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Local Evaluation

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

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

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

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

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a thoughtful plan using differentiated levels of compensation for effective teachers; principals and other personnel to raise student performance in high need schools. The applicant's plan will produce evaluation quantitative and qualitative data as part of a well designed evaluation system (p.10, p. 30).

The applicant has provided a research-based level of compensation that is sustainable. Evaluation will be conducted by Tennessee's Consortium on Research, Evaluation, and Development; examples of planned activities include "identify and support research, evaluation, and development activities," "coordinate data and access required to carry out these activities," and "monitor progress toward successfully meeting project goals," (Appendix 5.A-1, p. e90). The quality of the applicant's plan is largely adequate in meeting the requirements of this criterion although some significant weaknesses were found.

Weaknesses:

The focus of the plan is on implementing a well-designed plan calling for differentiated levels of compensation for effective teachers and principals in high need schools in order to raise student achievement. Including more details or examples on raising student achievement would have strengthened the application.

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's plan includes a mandate that guides the evaluation of educators where no less than 50% of teacher and principal evaluations will be based on objective student achievement measures using the state's value added assessment system (p. 24).

The state's data management system will be updated to allow linking student achievement to educator payroll and HR systems (pp. 21-22). Additionally, the state clearly articulates a step-by-step plan to explain its plan to educators in participating schools. The applicant has partially met the requirement of this priority.

Weaknesses:

Although use of a value added model is referenced, no clear explanation of the model is included, and details on how it would be used are provided

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:

STRENGTHS:

The applicant clearly outlines a plan to assist students in 100 high need schools in the state by establishing a differentiated compensation system for effective teachers and principals. A major goal of the plan is to encourage the recruitment and retention of effective teachers in hard to staff content areas to high need schools for the purpose of increased student performance.

The applicant has done an exceptional job in outlining reasons for differentiated levels of compensation for effective classroom teachers. For example, average non-teaching opportunities among teachers vary; there are differences in non-teaching employment opportunities between a physical science high school teachers and an elementary teacher (pp. 2-3). It is easy for a principal to hire an elementary teacher, but hard for a principal to hire a science, mathematics, or SPED teacher. Most importantly, there is considerable variability in teacher effectiveness (p. 7).

The state articulates understanding of the need for transparency and for early buy in from teachers, principals and other school personnel. It includes a well-developed communication plan using different mediums to explain its plan fully to educators and to the general public (p. 15, p. e0). These communication channels include the web, email, news productions, and online courses.

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant provides a compelling argument for a differentiated compensation for educators as related to the marketplace, it does not fully discuss the need to recruit or retain effective or highly effective teachers, principals, and other school personnel especially those in hard to staff content areas. The applicant does not adequately discuss a plan to identify effective teachers' behaviors and link those behaviors to student performance.

Reader's Score: 3

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