

The General Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Grant Program Competition FY 2012

Application Number S374A120038



Applicant Name: ASPIRE

Reviewer Code: 14A

SELECTION CRITERION (a) Coherent and Comprehensive Human Capital Management System

(HCMS). (45 points) We will consider the quality and comprehensiveness of each participating LEA’s HCMS as described in the application. In determining the quality of the HCMS, as it currently exists and as the applicant proposes to modify it during the grant period, we will consider the extent to which the HCMS described in the application is--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Aligned with each participating LEA’s clearly described vision of instructional improvement (10 points); and	10	9
<p>Comments</p> <p>The applicant has clearly described their vision of instructional improvement through the components of effective teaching in its teacher assessment instrument (p. e244-257). The components are comprehensive and consistent with best practices in the research literature. However, there is a limited explanation of the vision for principals. The PCBS has been piloted with integration of their HCMS, which uses data to address recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, promotion, dismissal, and professional development (p. e24-25, 27). The applicant has used formative evaluation data from educators to devise and revise the system, especially addressing a high turnover rate (p.e29-30). The applicant plans to revise its salary structure to address the current wide range of compensation within effectiveness levels of teachers to implement compensation “floors” based on effectiveness level versus other factors; these floors have yet to be determined, however (p.e30). Professional supports for teacher and principal improvement are multidimensional, including purchased and to-be-developed video/online resources, principal/superintendent support, “residency programs” (p.e34) and coaching. The residency programs are available for both teachers and principals (p.e34-35). The applicant addresses the special needs of new teachers with both coaching resources and the assumption that they might need time to become proficient. The applicant also describes a comprehensive educator career path, including opportunities for coaching, mentoring, and master teacher compensation close to that of administrators, or “enhanced” opportunity to move into administration (p.e35).</p>		
(2) Likely to increase the number of effective educators in the LEA’s schools, especially in high-need schools, as demonstrated by (35 points)-- (i) The range of human capital decisions for which the applicant proposes to consider educator effectiveness – based on the educator evaluation systems described in the application. (ii) The weight given to educator effectiveness--based on the educator evaluation	35	31

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<p>systems described in the application--when human capital decisions are made;</p> <p>(iii) The feasibility of the HCMS described in the application, including the extent to which the LEA has prior experience using information from the educator evaluation systems described in the application to inform human capital decisions, and applicable LEA-level policies that might inhibit or facilitate modifications needed to use educator effectiveness as a factor in human capital decisions;</p> <p>(iv) The commitment of the LEA’s leadership to implementing the described HCMS, including all of its component parts; and</p> <p>(v) The adequacy of the financial and nonfinancial strategies and incentives, including the proposed PBCS, for attracting effective educators to work in high-need schools and retaining them in those schools.</p>		
<p>Comments</p> <p>2i [Range of human capital decisions] The range of human capital decisions driven by effectiveness data include: recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, and professional development (p. e24-25, 27, 37). Compensation is also data driven. The applicant envisions career path opportunities as another venue for recruiting and retaining educators (p.e37). “Residency” programs are available to both new teachers and administrators to improve skills in their first year (p.e35). The application does not describe the process for dismissal for ineffective educators.</p> <p>2ii [The weight given to educator effectiveness] The applicant is devising an effectiveness “floors” system of compensation to replace their previous system, which they found was weighted on other factors than effectiveness. Though teachers have, in most part, supported this new system, the details for it are in development rather than in place or completely designed (p. e30, 65). The weight given to effectiveness in the professional development system is high—including the residency programs, the resources committed to developing additional teacher professional development, coaching, the length of the observation process, and the response to intervention approach to educator support (p. e 35,37, 24-25, 27, 37,). The applicant has pilot tested its integration of its system of determining educator effectiveness and HCMS decisions (p. e24-25).</p> <p>2iii [The feasibility of the HCMS] The applicant has pilot tested its integration of its system of determining educator effectiveness and HCMS decisions (p.e29-30). The applicant has included teachers in the decision-making process of changing the compensation system to reflect educator effectiveness more strongly (p.e65); data suggest significant teacher support. Budget allocations for career ladder opportunities appear to be</p>		

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adequate (Budget & Budget Narrative). The number of coaching positions across all of the applicants' schools seems to be too few to support the number of educators who will need professional development support to achieve the higher levels on their educator assessment system (Budget), however other professional development supports will be available.

(iv) [The commitment of the LEA's leadership] Memos of Understanding (pp. e130-265) from each of the participating LEAs are included that comprehensively describe the LEA leadership commitment to the requirements of this proposal. In addition, the charter management organization also affirms its commitment to the proposal.

(v) [The adequacy of the financial and nonfinancial strategies and incentives] The applicant proposes a tiered compensation system for experienced teachers, and proposes an initial tier placement by past evidence of student achievement and performance on a demonstration lesson. This system is designed to address the applicant's concern that there is presently too wide a discrepancy in compensation for highly effective educators. Highest paid teachers could earn close to the floor salary for administrators; the applicant also will provide career ladder opportunities for its most effective teachers.. The applicant proposes financial incentives for ineffective teachers as they progress. However, there is no clear way to dismiss ineffective teachers or principals. The applicant proposes nonfinancial strategies and incentives that include individualized professional development, a transparent evaluation system, and a career ladder for effective educators.

The resources committed to data management for both child and educator outcomes seems inadequate to support the number of schools proposed to implement data-driven decision-making (Budget, Budget Narrative).

TOTAL	45	40
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SELECTION CRITERION (b) - Rigorous, Valid, and Reliable Educator Evaluation Systems. (35

points) We will consider, for each participating LEA, the quality of the educator evaluation systems described in the application. In determining the quality of each evaluation system, we will consider the extent to which--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Each participating LEA has finalized a high-quality evaluation rubric, with at least three performance levels (e.g., highly effective, effective, developing, unsatisfactory), under which educators will be evaluated (2 points);	2	2
Comments		

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<p>The applicant has piloted an educator evaluation rubric based on the work of Charlotte Danielson and developed and piloted by teachers. The included rubric appears to be well written, clear, based on best practices from the research base, and has 4 levels of competence. The rubric is comprehensive, and includes measures regarding data-driven decision-making, planning, clarity of instructional objectives, instruction, reflection, assessment alignment, and family and community inclusion (p. e244-257).</p>		
<p>(2) Each participating LEA has presented (4 points)--</p> <p>(i) A clear rationale to support its consideration of the level of student growth achieved in differentiating performance levels; and</p> <p>(ii) Evidence, such as current research and best practices, supporting the LEA's choice of student growth models and demonstrating the rigor and comparability of assessments;</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>2i [Clear rationale] The applicant uses student growth percentiles to report yearly academic progress of schools, teachers, and students; the rate of change is reported as a percentile. This model allows educators/schools to measure the growth of students starting at varying baselines in the fall against a control group from the Los Angeles Unified School District. The model is clearly explained (p. e48-49). The strength of the model is that it compares individual students against comparable peers at baseline. It also allows comparison at both classroom and school levels in comparison to other schools serving children from low-income homes. <i>The weakness of the model is that it does not address the numbers of students who achieve benchmarks or "passing" achievement levels on state or other standardized tests.</i></p> <p>The applicant does say that they use the growth data to "analyze if students are growing enough to exceed state standards" (p. e48). Again, however, these data will only show growth and not achievement of benchmarks. A low-achieving student could, for example, grow dramatically compared to his/her peers but still not be anywhere close to graduation or college entrance exam standards. Similarly, a low-achieving school could post dramatic gains, but still fall far short of state standards. Growth data could be used, however, to provide valid context to other performance measures and analyses. The use of student data to drive personnel decisions could be strengthened by using a more composite approach to student</p>		

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outcomes.

The applicant does not compare the adequacy of student growth percentiles analysis in comparison to other models to assess student achievement.

2ii [Evidence supporting choice of student growth models/rigor of assessments]

The applicant does not provide support from the literature to support their choice of student growth percentiles. They do claim that the model is meaningful because it “takes into account each student’s starting point” (p.e48). The applicant provides no rationale for its use of Los Angeles Unified School District as its control group.

The applicant uses scores from the California Standards test as the basis for student growth percentiles analysis. Rigor of the test was not discussed.

(3) Each participating LEA has made substantial progress in developing a high-quality plan for multiple teacher and principal observations, including identification of the persons, by position and qualifications, who will be conducting the observations, the observation tool, the events to be observed, the accuracy of raters in using observation tools and the procedures for ensuring a high degree of inter-rater reliability (13 points);

13

6

Comments

The applicant has developed a teacher observation rubric based on the work of Charlotte Danielson and designed and tested by participating teachers. The instrument appears to be well-constructed, clearly-written, and comprehensive. The principal conducts observations; they are trained to “use the rubric in a fair, consistent manner.” The training is not described. The principals are trained by the same vendor to “insure inter-rater reliability.” However, no inter-rater reliability standard is described. No field-based inter-rater reliability process is described. The “vendor” is not identified. The process of the observation is described in some detail and includes examination by the principal of the lesson plan, a pre-observation meeting, teacher self-reflection, and written and face-to-face principal feedback. Presumably one lesson is observed, though this is not completely clear from the description offered by the applicant. Two formal, announced observations are conducted per year, in addition to 3 informal observations.

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<p>The rubric for assessing principal effectiveness (the “Principal Leadership Evaluation Summary”) measures strategic leadership, instructional leadership, school culture leadership, human resource leadership, stakeholder leadership, and managerial leadership skills. The tool was based on the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education, Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards, NC Principal. The application did not include a copy of the instrument. (p. e47-48, 50). Principals will be evaluated twice annually by superintendents. Although the applicant claims that “observation accuracy is ensured by a well-developed rubric and associated training” (p.348), no description of the training is included. No standard for inter-rater reliability is included. No training or field-based inter-rater reliability procedure is included. Two plus observations are conducted per year. There is no description of what events are observed.</p>		
<p>(4) The participating LEA has experience measuring student growth at the classroom level, and has already implemented components of the proposed educator evaluation systems (4 points);</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>The applicant currently uses the student growth percentiles model and breaks down their analysis by individuals, classes, grades, and schools. The applicant has piloted components of their proposed educator evaluation systems.</p>		
<p>(5) In the case of teacher evaluations, the proposed evaluation system (6 points) — (i) Bases the overall evaluation rating for teachers, in significant part, on student growth; (ii) Evaluates the practice of teachers, including general education teachers and teachers of special student populations, in meeting the needs of special student populations, including students with disabilities and English learners;</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>5i [Evaluation/student growth] Forty percent of the teacher evaluation is based on student growth percentiles: 30% on individual student growth percentiles and 10% on the schoolwide student growth percentiles; this is a substantial percentage of the evaluation total (p.e49).</p>		

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<p>5ii [Evaluation/special student populations] The applicant includes that a teacher must demonstrate “achievement growth” with highest-need students in order to move to the Master teacher level. The application does not specify the level of achievement growth needed to do so.</p>		
<p>(6) In the case of principal evaluations, the proposed evaluation system (6 points) (i) Bases the overall evaluation rating on, in significant part, student growth; and (ii) Evaluates, among other factors, a principal’s practice in-- (A) Focusing every teacher, and the school community generally, on student growth; (B) Establishing a collaborative school culture focused on continuous improvement; and (C) Supporting the academic needs of special student populations, including students with disabilities and English learners, for example, by creating systems to support successful co-teaching practices, providing resources for research-based intervention services, or similar activities.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>6i [Bases the overall evaluation rating on, in significant part, student growth]</p> <p>Principal evaluation is based significantly on student growth, including school wide student growth percentiles (5%), API targets (5%), AYP (5%), culmination/graduation rate (5%), ELL re-designation rate (5%), college readiness (20%). The combination of factors appears to be comprehensive and resolves for principals some of the measurement/fairness issues of sole use of student growth percentiles for teachers.</p> <p>6ii Evaluates principals on-- (A) Focusing on student growth; (B) Establishing a collaborative school culture focused on continuous improvement</p> <p>The applicant lists the following competencies for principal evaluation: instructional leadership, people management, resource management, community leadership, and problem solving. The significant emphasis on student growth is an indication of focus on student achievement. One of the rubric components concerns school culture. The level of specificity concerning continuous improvement was low.</p> <p> (C) [Supporting the academic needs of special student populations] The applicant assigns highly effective teachers to support the needs of highest-need students, however, the applicant says that students with special needs may only have <i>one</i> highly effective teacher. The applicant also notes the existence of a “special education governing group” that has designed an RTI model to serve the needs</p>		

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of students with special needs. The model is not described, nor is the governing group.		
	35	21
TOTAL		

SELECTION CRITERION (c) Professional development Systems to Support the Needs of Teachers and Principals Identified Through the Evaluation Process. (35 points) We will consider the extent to which each participating LEA has a high-quality plan for professional development to help all educators located in high-need schools, listed in response to Requirement 3(a), to improve their effectiveness. In determining the quality of each plan for professional development, we will consider the extent to which the plan describes how the participating LEA will--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Use the disaggregated information generated by the proposed educator evaluation systems to identify the professional development needs of individual educators and schools (8 points);	8	7
Comments		
The applicant has developed an online platform that “analyzes the evaluation data and		

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<p>delivers professional development supports targeted for that individual educator’s individual area of growth.” It is not completely clear how the system works. The platform delivers teacher evaluation data, and then a plan is created in collaboration with coaches. The Purple Planet resource provides resources that provide targeted support. “Vendors” support the professional development by providing ongoing training. Although the plan appears to use data to develop individual professional development plans for teachers, greater specificity would help to clarify the process.</p>		
<p>(2) Provide professional development in a timely way (2 points);</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>Teacher evaluation results will be made available to teachers quickly. Data will be used to identify professional development needs. It is not clear how timely the professional development will be delivered. Coaches and principals, however, would be available to teachers as a resource. The Purple Planet delivers resource access immediately.</p>		
<p>(3) Provide school-based, job-embedded opportunities for educators to transfer new knowledge into instructional and leadership practices (5 points); and</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>The applicant lists a number of positions designed to facilitate teacher growth and leadership, including resident teacher, induction candidate, induction coaches, lead teacher, training positions, and lead, model and master teacher positions. Activities and responsibilities for each of these positions are described.</p>		
<p>(4) Provide professional development that is likely to improve instructional and leadership practices, and is guided by the professional development needs of individual educators as identified in paragraph (c)(1) of this criterion (20 points).</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>The applicant appears to have a working platform to provide teachers with their personal evaluation data. Educators are responsible for developing a plan to focus professional development on needed areas for growth. It is not entirely clear how the applicant will link</p>		

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each individual teacher’s plan to proposed professional development. There is not a description of accountability for development or implementation of professional development plans. Coaching will of course provide individualized support. How the applicant will disaggregate teacher needs to provide appropriate professional development is not clear. The applicant proposes development of a video library which would give them a “bank” of exemplars; this resource would help them individualize as well.

The residency program for both teachers and principals is a promising idea that would provide principals and teachers with a resource when they are new. The applicant lists the availability of ongoing coaching and training for current principals; details are not described.

TOTAL	35	29
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SELECTION CRITERION (d) Involvement of Educators. (35 points)

We will consider the quality of educator involvement in the development and implementation of the proposed PBCS and educator evaluation systems described in the application. In determining the quality of such involvement, we will consider the extent to which—

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) The application contains evidence that educator involvement in the design of the PBCS and the educator evaluation systems has been extensive and will continue to be extensive during the grant period (10 points); and	10	10
<p>Comments Teachers used the Danielson model to develop and pilot test a teacher evaluation rubric (p.e43). The applicant has conducted pilots, focus groups, surveys, and discussion panels to include teachers in the development of the PBCS. Teacher feedback was used to develop the scoring system for the rubric. The applicant sought teacher feedback when developing the compensation system using PBCS, and selected from a choice of 3 models (p.e63-4). Their plan for including educators is described in detail and is extensive (p.e65).</p>		
(2) The application contains evidence that educators support the elements of the proposed PBCS and the educator evaluation systems described in the application (25 points).	25	25
<p>Comments</p> <p>The applicant has surveyed teachers regarding their support of the PBCS. Although detailed results are not reported, a high level of teacher support was indicated regarding the helpfulness of feedback, and that the formal observation was a collaborative process. 65% of teachers agreed with the plan to develop compensation plans; considering that this would be a major change in the compensation system, this percentage seems high (p.e64). The MOUs provided indicate administrative support at each LEA.</p>		
TOTAL	35	35

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SELECTION CRITERION (e) Project Management. (30 points)

We will consider the quality of the management plan of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan, we will consider the extent to which the management plan--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Clearly identifies and defines the roles and responsibilities of key personnel (3 points);	3	2
<p>Comments An very brief role description of the COO/CFO, the chief academic officer, the vice president of education, the area superintendents, and the director of instructional effectiveness is included. Background information of personnel was described well.</p>		
(2) Allocates sufficient human resources to complete project tasks (5 points);	5	5
<p>Comments</p> <p>Allocation of human resources appears to be adequate; the resources of non-TIF funds are substantial. These funds include 1,317K for personnel costs, including funds for: teacher compensation and personnel leadership positions. The addition of TIF4 funds would allow the applicant to enhance and scale up their project.</p>		
(3) Includes measurable project objectives and performance measures (5 points); and	5	5
<p>Comments</p> <p>The project objectives for student outcomes are clear and measurable (p.e70), and include AP results, Passage of math EAP and the ELA EAP.</p> <p>The second project objective to “Improve principal effectiveness to compel measurable results in student achievement, graduation rates, and college readiness” is detailed in the evaluation plan (p.e70, 74-75). The objectives listed are clear and measurable.</p>		
(4) Includes an effective project evaluation plan (5 points);	5	5

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Comments		
The evaluation plan appears to be comprehensive and includes both process and outcome components. The evaluation would be supported by both TIF and non-TIF funding. The evaluators will use both qualitative and quantitative data and a variety of analyses to conduct both formative and final project evaluation (p. 71-76). The evaluators have previously conducted evaluation of the pilot project so are already familiar with project parameters.		
(5) Specifies realistic and achievable timelines for: (i) Implementing the components of the HCMS, PBCS, and educator evaluation systems, including any proposal to phase in schools or educators (8 points).	8	8
Comments,		
The completion of a pilot program for key HCMS and PBCS systems will enhance the likelihood of timely completion of grant tasks. Timelines for the teacher evaluation system, the teacher career path, the teacher residency program, teacher professional development, the principal residency program, principal professional development, and the principal evaluation system and career path systems are all included. Full scale-up implementation is expected in Year 3. Timelines appear to fulfill TIF4 guidelines, and also appear to be feasible, given the "head start" of the applicant's pilot program progress.		
(5) Specifies realistic and achievable timelines for: (ii) Successfully completing project tasks and achieving objectives (4 points).	4	4
Comments		
Achievement of student outcome objectives will be dependent on successful achievement of other project objectives, specifically the key HCMS and PBCS systems proposed. Given the level of resources the applicant plans to commit to the project, successful completion of project tasks and achievement of objectives appears to be feasible.		
TOTAL	30	29

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SELECTION CRITERION (f) Sustainability. (20 points)

We will consider the quality of the plan to sustain the proposed project. In determining the quality of the sustainability plan, we will consider the extent to which the sustainability plan--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Identifies and commits sufficient non-TIF resources, financial and nonfinancial, to support the PBCS and educator evaluation systems during and after the grant period (10 points);	10	6
<p>Comments</p> <p>Non-TIF funds include a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant which is funded through FY 2015/16 and funds administered by the College Ready Promise from TIF2 (the latter shared with 3 other CMOs). Non-TIF funds are considerable, and have allowed the applicant to concentrate on design and implementation of the PBCS. However, when TIF4 funds are gone, the applicant does not have concrete plans for additional funding. The applicant did not identify nonfinancial resources.</p>		
(2) Is likely to be implemented and, if implemented, will result in a sustained PBCS and educator evaluation systems after the grant period ends (10 points).	10	6
<p>Comments</p> <p>Because of the initial and proposed continuation of educator participation in the development, implementation, and modification of the proposed PBCS, the likelihood of sustained use of the system after the grant period ends is high. However, the applicant would have to contribute considerable resources to data management to continue the system. The applicant will have built an online support platform to support professional development. The applicant pledges commitment to its educator evaluation system system-wide. The applicant did not address continuation of the compensation system without TIF4 support. It is unclear whether ASPIRE would have the funds to continue the compensation supports. It is additionally unclear whether the evaluation and professional development system will continue without the added</p>		

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"carrot" of the added compensation support supplied by the grant (p. e82).		
TOTAL	20	12

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Competitive Preference Priority – An Educator Salary Structure Based on Effectiveness (Up to 20 points)

<p>To meet this priority, an applicant must propose, as part of its PBCS, a timeline for implementing no later than in the fifth year of the grant’s project period a salary structure based on effectiveness for both teachers and principals. As part of this proposal, an applicant must describe--</p> <p>(a) The extent to which and how each LEA will use overall evaluation ratings to determine educator salaries;</p> <p>(b) How each LEA will use TIF funds to support the salary structure based on effectiveness in the high-need schools listed in response to Requirement 3(a); and</p> <p>(c) The extent to which the proposed implementation is feasible, given that implementation will depend upon stakeholder support and applicable LEA-level policies.</p>	<p>Total Possible</p>	<p>Assigned Score</p>
	<p>20</p>	<p>20</p>

Comments

a) [Extent to which evaluation ratings will be used to determine educator salaries] The applicant proposes an “effectiveness floors” system of compensation. The applicant has conducted a study of its current compensation system, and pledges support to greatly increase the teacher effectiveness component of their teacher compensation system. Their proposed system would “result in a significant difference in the amount of bonus pay teachers received based on their effectiveness levels.” This system is still under development; the applicant plans to finish the system by Year 2 (p.e27). Teacher effectiveness will also drive educators up their career ladders, which will also have commensurate pay increases.

b) [How will TIF funds support the salary structure?] The budget includes \$1,000K during Year 1, \$1700K during Year 2, and \$2250K during Years 3-5 for teacher compensation. The funds will be allocated across eligible teachers based on the teacher effectiveness score “floors.” The “floors” are not described in detail as the system is still under development.

\$300K is allocated across all grant years for principal compensation and will also be allocated by principal effectiveness ratings. Again the system for allocating bonuses appears to be under development. (Budget and budget narrative, (p.e64)

c) [Feasibility given stakeholder support] The applicant has committed considerable

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resources to developing their PBCS and has included educators in the planning effort to change their compensation system based on educator effectiveness. They do not have to negotiate with a union. The management of all participating LEAs has expressed support in MOUs. The feasibility based on stakeholder support appears to be quite high.

TOTAL	20	20
GRAND TOTAL	220	186

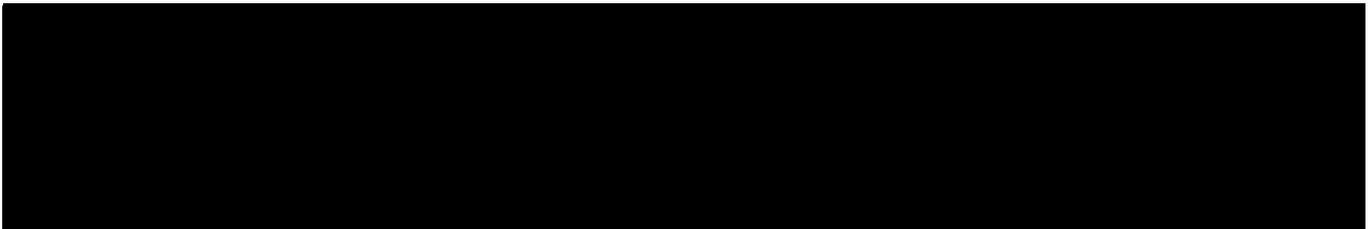
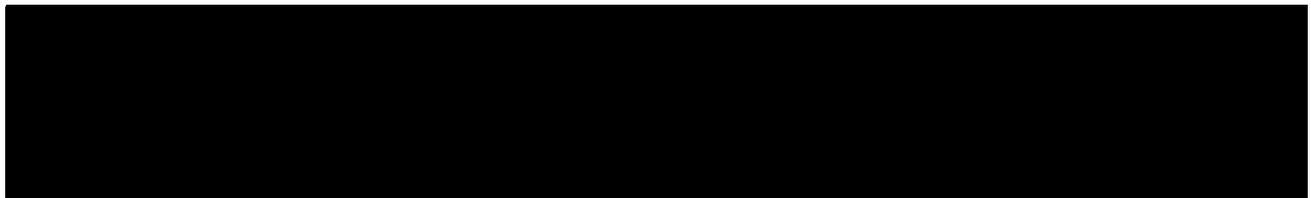
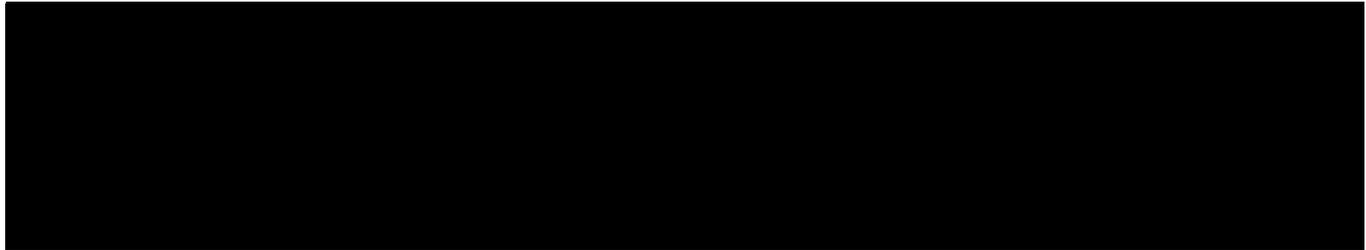
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Applicant Name: ASPIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Reviewer Code: 14-B

SELECTION CRITERION (a) Coherent and Comprehensive Human Capital Management System

(HCMS). (45 points) We will consider the quality and comprehensiveness of each participating LEA’s HCMS as described in the application. In determining the quality of the HCMS, as it currently exists and as the applicant proposes to modify it during the grant period, we will consider the extent to which the HCMS described in the application is--

<i>Factor/Sub-criterion</i>	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Aligned with each participating LEA’s clearly described vision of instructional improvement (10 points); and	10	7
<p>Comments - Aspire has adequately committed to building a team of educators, who feel supported, satisfied in their work and are constantly increasing their effectiveness with students with the development of the Educator Effectiveness framework which rewards teachers based on their ability to improve student outcomes. (pg 11). The table provides convincing evidence of the key components of the Aspire Educator Effectiveness Plan (pgs 11-12). Evidence of four elements designed and implemented to recruit, train, evaluate and compensate highly effective teachers and principals is provided on Pages 12 & 13. The Educator Effectiveness framework offers promotion for teachers within a teaching career pathway as well as enhanced opportunities for administrators. Details are provided throughout the application explaining the transparent evaluation system that is based on multiple measures (pg.13). Application does not provide evidence of what happens when teachers are placed on a support plan and after two years of coaching support and additional observations these teachers have not improved instruction on a career path. Another concern with application is a lack of evidence regarding principals’ vision of instructional improvement. Lengthy information is provided for teachers’ career paths; however principals are not discussed (pgs. 14-15).</p>		
(2) Likely to increase the number of effective educators in the LEA’s schools, especially in high-need schools, as demonstrated by (35 points)-- (i) The range of human capital decisions for which the applicant proposes to consider educator effectiveness – based on the educator evaluation systems described in the application. (ii) The weight given to educator effectiveness--based on the educator evaluation systems described in the application--when human capital decisions are made; (iii) The feasibility of the HCMS described in the application, including the extent to which the LEA has prior experience using information from the educator evaluation systems described in the application to inform human capital decisions, and applicable LEA-level policies that might inhibit or facilitate modifications needed to use educator	35	28

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<p>effectiveness as a factor in human capital decisions;</p> <p>(iv) The commitment of the LEA’s leadership to implementing the described HCMS, including all of its component parts; and</p> <p>(v) The adequacy of the financial and nonfinancial strategies and incentives, including the proposed PBCS, for attracting effective educators to work in high-need schools and retaining them in those schools.</p>		
<p>Comments – Application states there are NO Aspire policies that will inhibit or delay implementation of proposed project (pg. 18). Application provides positive information for increasing the number of effective educators in the high-need schools. Application provides evidence of addressing four common gaps in the school system human resource systems. Gaps are continued to be addressed with the development and implementation of a data-driven evaluation system for teachers and principals in two piloted schools through the Gates Foundation and the previous TIF grant (pg.18). Application presents evidence for the need to hire, retain and better deployment of more effective educators. Application lacks evidence of how Aspire plans to recruit, hire and retain effective educators with the overhauled human resources system. (pg. 17). Leadership commitment to implementing the described HCMS is sparsely stated (pg. 18). A positive for this commitment is that Aspire has set an organization “Must Achieve” that sets the expectation that every educator will receive both formal and informal observations. The Educator Effectiveness Model provides incentives for teachers to change habits and improve skill levels. Coupled with the model is the creation of a protocol for placing experienced teachers at an appropriate tier on the career path. Application lacks evidence of how an ineffective educator (teacher and/or principal) will be terminated after all exhaustive support has been provided.</p>		
TOTAL	45	35

SELECTION CRITERION (b) - Rigorous, Valid, and Reliable Educator Evaluation Systems. (35 points) We will consider, for each participating LEA, the quality of the educator evaluation systems described in the application. In determining the quality of each evaluation system, we will consider the extent to which--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Each participating LEA has finalized a high-quality evaluation rubric, with at least three performance levels (e.g., highly effective, effective, developing, unsatisfactory), under which educators will be evaluated (2 points);	2	2

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<p>Comments – Aspire’s application has an extensive Teacher Effectiveness evaluation rubric demonstration high-quality with four levels of effective teaching composed of five broad domains; each with indicators per each level (attachment pgs e244-e257).</p>		
<p>(2) Each participating LEA has presented (4 points)--</p> <p>(i) A clear rationale to support its consideration of the level of student growth achieved in differentiating performance levels; and</p> <p>(ii) Evidence, such as current research and best practices, supporting the LEA’s choice of student growth models and demonstrating the rigor and comparability of assessments;</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Comments – Application provides evidence of using multiple measures to determine a teacher’s rating for each of the five domains (pg 22). Teachers receive an evaluation from two adequate formal observations by trained personnel. A growth percentile for a teacher is the median growth percentile for all the students in his/her particular class. A growth percentile for a school is the median growth percentile for all the students in the school (pg. 22). During the pilot year Aspire reported Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) for ELA and mathematics in grades 3 through 11. The next year reported growth for other subjects, such as science and social studies in the middle and high schools will be used. The SGP model is coordinated with the creation of a new student/teacher data system funded through other sources and developed by Aspire. Implementation Coaches who work with groups of principals and teachers to explore key concepts and provide input into the design make this process workable (pg 23). Teacher and administrator evaluations build upon and parallel student evaluations. Application suggests this professional evaluation is sort of a ‘response to intervention’ for staff, schools and the entire Aspire system. No evidence of current research and best practices supporting model that demonstrates the rigor and comparability of assessments was provided.</p>		
<p>(3) Each participating LEA has made substantial progress in developing a high-quality plan for multiple teacher and principal observations, including identification of the persons, by position and qualifications, who will be conducting the observations, the observation tool, the events to be observed, the accuracy of raters in using observation tools and the procedures for ensuring a high degree of inter-rater reliability (13 points);</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>Comments – Page 25 of application provides sample five day schedule of an extensive Formal</p>		

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<p>Teacher Observation Process. The table outlines types of teacher observations, the number of observations, and observers and tool(s) used in conducting the observations. Principals will be evaluated using the Principal Leadership Evaluation Summary which measures six types of leadership skills using a well-developed rubric and training (pg. 25). Observations of principals will be conducted by the Aspire Area Superintendents a minimum of 2 times annually. Reviewer did not find evidence of procedures to address an inter-rater reliability in application. Application lacked specificity to the events to be observed.</p>		
<p>(4) The participating LEA has experience measuring student growth at the classroom level, and has already implemented components of the proposed educator evaluation systems (4 points);</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Comments – A growth model has been adopted for examining growth on the CA Standards Test (CST) and uses it along with a statistical approach called Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) to report yearly academic progress of schools, teachers, and students, which is broken down by individuals, classes, grades and schools. The rate change is reported as a percentile from 1 to 99 with the higher percentiles indicating more growth; lower percentiles less progress. Growth percentiles are calculated for students and teachers in grades 3 to 11 that have CST scores for ELA, Mathematics, Science and History. Access of their SGPs by administrators and teachers is via an interactive data portal. A table on pages 27 & 28 is provided for purposes of teacher and principal evaluations.</p>		
<p>(5) In the case of teacher evaluations, the proposed evaluation system (6 points) -- (i) Bases the overall evaluation rating for teachers, in significant part, on student growth; (ii) Evaluates the practice of teachers, including general education teachers and teachers of special student populations, in meeting the needs of special student populations, including students with disabilities and English learners;</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Comments – A teacher evaluation table on page 29 adequately explains that the overall evaluation for teachers is based on student growth (40% student achievement; 30-40% instructional; 10% student/family and 20-20% attitudes/beliefs). Application on p. 30 states that Aspire has developed a Response to Intervention (Rti) model and several classrooms serve students with severe needs. No evidence of what this model includes was provided. Application states that highly effective teachers are strategically assigned to maximize their involvement with the highest-need students who are</p>		

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<p>classified as learning, emotionally, and/or physically disabled as well as English Language Learners. Application states that the best teachers spend a significant portion of their day with the highest-need students on average, but that all highest-need students have access to at least one highly effective teacher (pg 30).</p>		
<p>(6) In the case of principal evaluations, the proposed evaluation system (6 points) (i) Bases the overall evaluation rating on, in significant part, student growth; and (ii) Evaluates, among other factors, a principal’s practice in-- (A) Focusing every teacher, and the school community generally, on student growth; (B) Establishing a collaborative school culture focused on continuous improvement; and (C) Supporting the academic needs of special student populations, including students with disabilities and English learners, for example, by creating systems to support successful co-teaching practices, providing resources for research-based intervention services, or similar activities.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Comments – The Educator Effectiveness system has a specific menu of resources to help train principals to be more effective coaches, mentors and evaluators of teachers. The Aspire Principal Residency provides training for new principals in needed areas and how to use the new tools and systems. Application states that a rubric for principals and an evaluation system based significantly on student growth metrics and on a principal’s ability to move teachers along the career path and retain highly effective teachers is in place. Principals have three years to prove they can develop and consistently apply leadership abilities. Principals with strong performance ratings are retained and compensated. Aspire uses metrics comparable to those used for teacher evaluations when evaluating principals. Examples are provided on pgs 32 & 33. Application did not provide evidence of how principals support the academic needs of special student populations nor were resources for research-based intervention services provided.</p>		
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>35</p>	<p>27</p>

SELECTION CRITERION (c) Professional Development Systems to Support the Needs of Teachers and Principals Identified Through the Evaluation Process. (35 points) We will

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consider the extent to which each participating LEA has a high-quality plan for professional development to help all educators located in high-need schools, listed in response to Requirement 3(a), to improve their effectiveness. In determining the quality of each plan for professional development, we will consider the extent to which the plan describes how the participating LEA will--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Use the disaggregated information generated by the proposed educator evaluation systems to identify the professional development needs of individual educators and schools (8 points);	8	8
<p>Comments – Teacher evaluation data determines professional development through the Teacher Effective system. Aspire has implemented a system titled “Purple Planet” which ensures that teachers receive support to co-create an annual, customized personal learning plan that focuses professional development on specific areas where the teacher needs to improve to raise student achievement. Purple Planet provides resources including teacher videos, coursework, mentor and master teachers, summer sessions and targeted workshops to support teachers. TIF funds are used for vendors which support the professional development component by providing ongoing training to principals and implementation coaches. Training is determined by needs from the evaluation results and by facilitating summer differentiated professional development (pgs. 33 & 34).</p>		
(2) Provide professional development in a timely way (2 points);	2	2
<p>Comments –Once the teacher’s growth areas are identified the Purple Planet provides differentiated professional development resources. Teachers and principals are strongly encouraged to take ownership of their professional development (pg. 34). Principals’ professional development is aligned to the Principal Evaluation Framework. Principals will develop individual growth plans during the year.</p>		
(3) Provide school-based, job-embedded opportunities for educators to transfer new knowledge into instructional and leadership practices (5 points); and	5	5
<p>Comments – Aspire’s goal as stated on page 35 is to encourage all types of leadership positions, but make it more and more compelling for teacher leaders to stay in the classroom</p>		

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as their primary role. An extensive table on pages 35 -39 outlines career path titles with criteria, responsibilities and benefits per path title.		
(4) Provide professional development that is likely to improve instructional and leadership practices, and is guided by the professional development needs of individual educators as identified in paragraph (c)(1) of this criterion (20 points).	20	15
<p>Comments – It is noted that throughout Aspire’s application there is a distinctive link between professional development and evaluation which identifies both strengths and weaknesses of each educator. Aspire puts great value in The Purple Planet online professional development tool which has four key parts to help teachers 1) know where you are; 2) set the right goal; 3) work on your goals; and 4) track your progress toward mastery (pg. 40). Teacher feedback assists with continually refining The Purple Planet. Educators are compensated for work developing professional development videos and identifying research of other resources to be added to the online system. As earlier stated in the application, the year-long Principal Residency program is proactive in providing professional development for the principals. Application lacks evidence of any accountability by whomever within Aspire to monitor usage of The Purple Planet and make sure educators are accessing the needed professional development according to the needs as indicated by data (pg. 40).</p>		
TOTAL	35	30

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SELECTION CRITERION (d) Involvement of Educators. (35 points)

We will consider the quality of educator involvement in the development and implementation of the proposed PBCS and educator evaluation systems described in the application. In determining the quality of such involvement, we will consider the extent to which--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) The application contains evidence that educator involvement in the design of the PBCS and the educator evaluation systems has been extensive and will continue to be extensive during the grant period (10 points); and	10	10
<p>Comments – Throughout the application Aspire states that teachers have been instrumental in the development and testing of Aspire’s PBCS (pages 8 & 42) with extensive feedback provided in the spring of 2012. An example for improving the formal observation process is the suggestion that Aspire offer additional resources to help teachers prepare for this process. This suggestion is currently being incorporated for the coming year. Teachers shared their insights via surveys, interactive webinars and during on-site school visits.</p>		
(2) The application contains evidence that educators support the elements of the proposed PBCS and the educator evaluation systems described in the application (25 points).	25	20
<p>Comments – Percentages of teachers’ feedback was provided on page 42; however reviewer did not see the total number of teachers who provided feedback. Page 8 of the application introduces the concept of the plan for Aspire to pay teachers commensurate with their effectiveness “floors” and Aspire chose to adopt this system based on teachers’ positive feedback. 65% of an unknown number of educators approved the plan for Aspire to pay teachers commensurate with their “effectiveness” floors (page 42). Page 8 of the application states that teachers were asked to choose among three models for fund distribution, coined “share the wealth,” “meet in the middle,” and “big results, big rewards.” 59% of an unstated number of teachers chose the “meet in the middle” model, which would results in a significant difference in the amount of bonus pay teachers received based on their effectiveness levels. Aspire based its decision to adopt this model on this teacher feedback (pages 8 & 42). Reviewer notes this does not indicate a wide majority of consensus for such a momentous decision by Aspire. Aspire’s communication plan and feedback strategy with all stakeholders is outlined on pages 43-44.</p>		

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TOTAL	35	30
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SELECTION CRITERION (e) Project Management. (30 points)

We will consider the quality of the management plan of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan, we will consider the extent to which the management plan--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Clearly identifies and defines the roles and responsibilities of key personnel (3 points);	3	2
Comments – Application clearly identifies eight key leadership personnel. Roles of these eight key personnel are adequately defined; however application lacked discussion of responsibilities of the key personnel (pgs 43-47).		
(2) Allocates sufficient human resources to complete project tasks (5 points);	5	3
Comments – Aspire’s application will address the initiatives which are dependent on several variables stated on page 47. The needs will be addressed through two human capital management practices stated on page 48. Reviewer noted that coaches and master teachers will be carefully selected and trained to ensure their effectiveness. No mention of selection of principals was stated. Therefore, with the lack of evidence for how principals are selected, reviewer did not see a complete allocation of human resources to complete the project tasks (pg 48).		
(3) Includes measurable project objectives and performance measures (5 points); and	5	5
Comments – Application states two objectives to achieve the overarching goal of Aspire’s expanded Educator Effectiveness system which is to effectively enhance student achievement so that high-need students graduate from high school fully prepared for college success . (Page 48). Six activities on page 49 of application have been developed for implementation of the strategies which are aligned to support student achievement. An example is activity #6 which states “Recruit and retain effective teachers and principals”. Details were provided outlining the three-phase plan for implementation of Aspire’s TIF. Phase I has nearly been completed which involves planning for the HCMS, Educator Evaluation System and PBCS. All teachers will be added to complete Year I. The application states that during the five years of the TIF grant the project will focus on bringing the HCMS, Educator Evaluation System and PBCS to scale at all Aspire schools.		
(4) Includes an effective project evaluation plan (5 points);	5	5
Comments – An effective project evaluation plan is in place by the RAND Corporation and the American Institutes for Research (AIR). Both are non-profit research organizations. Rand/AIR is conducting an Impact Evaluation consisting of a mixed methods study to determine answers to three research		

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<p>questions on page 50 of application. The evaluation began in 2010 and will conclude in 2017. Three components are outlined beginning on page 50 and 51 of application. Many of the data are assembled into a data warehouse by Wireless Generation. Rand/AIR will report to TCRP and the Gates Foundation annually. The application thoroughly outlines the Student Impact Evaluation on pages 52 & 53. Rand/AIR evaluator provides continuous feedback on nine research questions that guide the implementation study (pages 53-54).</p>		
<p>(5) Specifies realistic and achievable timelines for: (i) Implementing the components of the HCMS, PBCS, and educator evaluation systems, including any proposal to phase in schools or educators (8 points).</p>	8	8
<p>Comments – Beginning on page 55 with the Educator Effectiveness Project Implementation Plan and continuing through page 58 with a complete timeline, the reviewer is provided with definite details. The Implementation Plan has eight categories with the status of each category provided. The comprehensive Three-Phased Implementation Timeline is quite impressive and projects thorough planning on the part of the key personnel of Aspire.</p>		
<p>(5) Specifies realistic and achievable timelines for: (ii) Successfully completing project tasks and achieving objectives (4 points).</p>	4	4
<p>Comments – In reviewing the Aspire Project Task Timeline it is noted that many tasks have been completed in program year 1 and planning has been put in place for completion of many project tasks in years 2 and 3. (pages 57 & 58).</p>		
TOTAL	30	27

SELECTION CRITERION (f) Sustainability. (20 points)

We will consider the quality of the plan to sustain the proposed project. In determining the quality of the sustainability plan, we will consider the extent to which the sustainability plan--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score

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(1) Identifies and commits sufficient non-TIF resources, financial and nonfinancial, to support the PBCS and educator evaluation systems during and after the grant period (10 points);	10	5
<p>Comments – Sustainability will be primarily achieved through integrating the PBCS into each school’s ongoing financial structure with financing coming from the standard per-pupil local, state, and federal sources. Grants, fund raising and efficacy of design will enhance Aspire’s internal financial levers. A recently hired VP of Advancement will lead a team with specific fundraising goals. Additional proposed sustainability revenue would come from recently submitted charter applications to open schools in Memphis, TN. Advocacy at the state level for more funding per-pupil for charter schools will be another goal. Reviewer does not see the above possibilities of funds to be concrete for future sustainability after the grant period (pg.59).</p>		
(2) Is likely to be implemented and, if implemented, will result in a sustained PBCS and educator evaluation systems after the grant period ends (10 points).	10	4
<p>Comments – Reviewer commends Aspire on having begun development and implementation of a successful teacher evaluation system. The building of The Purple Planet online support platform aligned to the teaching rubric used in the evaluation process is evidence of planning for after the grant period ends. Reviewer did not see evidence of any monitoring of the use of The Purple Planet online support; therefore a lack of monitoring could present difficulties for implementation in the future. Also, Reviewer finds statement on Page 60 that “it is currently receiving feedback from teammates regarding the possible adoption of “effective floors” to be a possible roadblock for sustainability after grant funds end.</p>		
TOTAL	20	9

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Competitive Preference Priority – An Educator Salary Structure Based on Effectiveness (Up to 20 points)

To meet this priority, an applicant must propose, as part of its PBCS, a timeline for implementing no later than in the fifth year of the grant’s project period a salary structure based on effectiveness for both teachers and principals. As part of this proposal, an applicant must describe--	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(a) The extent to which and how each LEA will use overall evaluation ratings to determine educator salaries; (b) How each LEA will use TIF funds to support the salary structure based on effectiveness in the high-need schools listed in response to Requirement 3(a); and (c) The extent to which the proposed implementation is feasible, given that implementation will depend upon stakeholder support and applicable LEA-level policies.	20	20
Comments – Aspire plans to use data from teacher evaluation ratings to determine salaries for teachers and principals (pg.5). Reviewer compliments Aspire’s goal to implement the new compensation structure by the second year of the grant. The first year of the grant teachers will earn awards based on their demonstrated effectiveness. The following years’ of the grant, awards will be replaced with a compensation scale based on effectiveness measured through the evaluation system. Reviewer finds how Aspire took into account certain thresholds of effectiveness in the six measures of the “pie” structure to be sufficient (pg. 6). Considering stakeholder buy in by working through the process of creating the components of the evaluation system is a positive.		
TOTAL	20	20
GRAND TOTAL	220	178

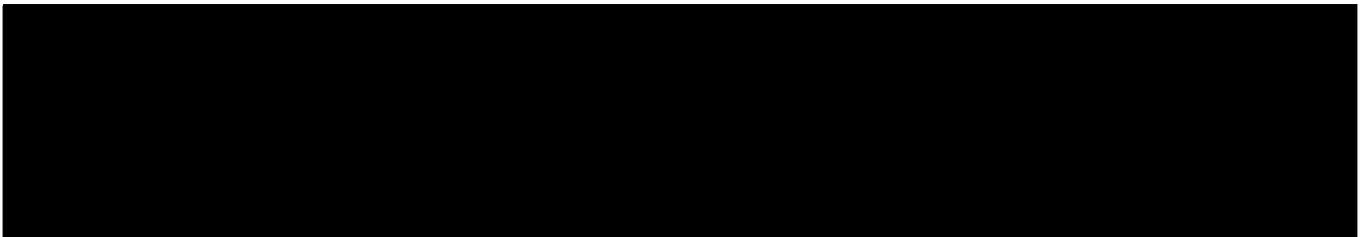
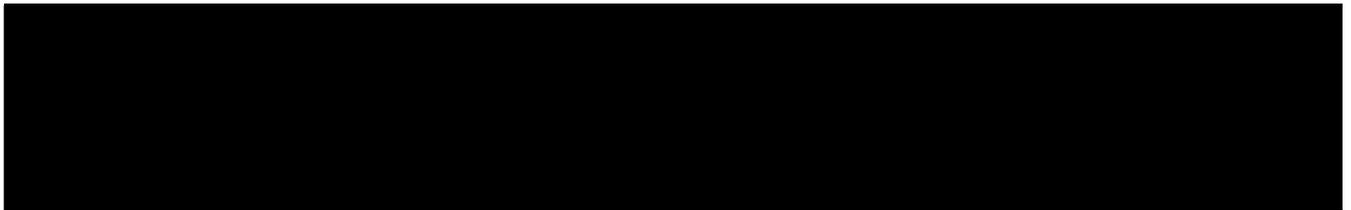
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Applicant Name: Aspire Charter Schools

Reviewer Code: 14C

SELECTION CRITERION (a) Coherent and Comprehensive Human Capital Management System

(HCMS). (45 points) We will consider the quality and comprehensiveness of each participating LEA’s HCMS as described in the application. In determining the quality of the HCMS, as it currently exists and as the applicant proposes to modify it during the grant period, we will consider the extent to which the HCMS described in the application is--

<i>Factor/Sub-criterion</i>	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Aligned with each participating LEA’s clearly described vision of instructional improvement (10 points); and	10	10
<p>Comments</p> <p>The application indicates the alignment of the HCMS with each participation LEA’s vision on Page e33 in a framework, that was developed by the district and all LEAs are familiar. It is evident that this vision has been communicated and adopted to offer improvement in student achievement as well as teacher satisfaction. The Educators Framework suggests a hierarchy which addresses the essence of instructional improvement which is: great teachers, support, satisfaction and effectiveness.</p>		
(2) Likely to increase the number of effective educators in the LEA’s schools, especially in high-need schools, as demonstrated by (35 points)--	35	30
<p>(i) The range of human capital decisions for which the applicant proposes to consider educator effectiveness – based on the educator evaluation systems described in the application.</p> <p>(ii) The weight given to educator effectiveness--based on the educator evaluation systems described in the application--when human capital decisions are made;</p> <p>(iii) The feasibility of the HCMS described in the application, including the extent to which the LEA has prior experience using information from the educator evaluation systems described in the application to inform human capital decisions, and applicable LEA-level policies that might inhibit or facilitate modifications needed to use educator effectiveness as a factor in human capital decisions;</p> <p>(iv) The commitment of the LEA’s leadership to implementing the described HCMS, including all of its component parts; and</p> <p>(v) The adequacy of the financial and nonfinancial strategies and incentives, including</p>		

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the proposed PBCS, for attracting effective educators to work in high-need schools and retaining them in those schools.

Comments

The application proposes a well-developed plan for increasing and retaining effective educators. The use of evaluations, providing incentives, and continuous assessment of performance (Page e37) indicates that there are systems in place that have considered input-output results. The time that is vested in developing and supporting good teachers will eventually make them great teachers that will be loyal.

The application suggests that data has been collected prior to the Educator Effectiveness System which revealed a very low percentage of highly effective teachers (Page e38). However, since the incorporation of this system there has been increase in student achievement and growth, improvement in the effectiveness of teaching and it has exposed proven leaders. The plan indicates that the combination of targeted professional development and better recruitment strategies, this district will be a magnet for and maintain exceptional educators (Page e39).

The plan reiterates the strengths of the HCMSSs' model for identifying and training educators for success. In addition, a system has been piloted that will provide data on evaluations for teachers and principals (Page e40). This indicates that that the professionals in place are devoted to promptly identifying gaps and finding solutions. It is clear that there is an unremitting exploration for and development of frameworks (Must Achieve) that enhance teacher effectiveness and the commitment to producing and preserving quality leaders.

Recurrently, the application makes reference to the Educator Effectiveness System and how it provides essential information which allows easy identification of strengths as well weaknesses of educators (Page e41). This system appears fair and consistent and also offers several incentives such as: compensation based on skill (bonuses), individualized professional development, and career paths offering opportunities for leadership and promotion. As there are increases in performance and achievement, there are increases in bonus amounts. This plan has considered motivational dynamics for new and experienced educators. Certainly, this approach encourages retention and progression.

However, the application lacks evidence that supports a plan for dismissal of ineffective educators (teachers and/or principal).

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TOTAL	45	40
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SELECTION CRITERION (b) - Rigorous, Valid, and Reliable Educator Evaluation Systems. (35 points) We will consider, for each participating LEA, the quality of the educator evaluation systems described in the application. In determining the quality of each evaluation system, we will consider the extent to which--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Each participating LEA has finalized a high-quality evaluation rubric, with at least three performance levels (e.g., highly effective, effective, developing, unsatisfactory), under which educators will be evaluated (2 points);	2	1
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan has established a well-expressed framework for evaluating teacher performance. The plan refers to a rubric (Page e43) that has four levels for teacher performance. Perhaps the inclusion of the instrument would have further strengthened the plan.</p>		
(2) Each participating LEA has presented (4 points)--	4	3
<p>(i) A clear rationale to support its consideration of the level of student growth achieved in differentiating performance levels; and</p> <p>(ii) Evidence, such as current research and best practices, supporting the LEA's choice of student growth models and demonstrating the rigor and comparability of assessments;</p>		
<p>Comments</p> <p>The applicant provides a clear rationale to support the consideration of the level of student growth on Page e44 as it states that the district will measure growth for each individual student by making a comparison of the students' scores in their district with scores other participants of the The College-Ready Promise (TCRP). The plan states that the change will be reported as a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) from 1 to 99. The plan states that the higher the student percentiles the more growth.</p> <p>The plan suggests that there was a collaborative effort in designing a model to measure teacher impact on student learning (Page e45). They employed Implementation Coaches to address individual school needs, which demonstrates the urgency of assuring productivity. The plan states that there are continuous evaluations and data collection to determine which best</p>		

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practice will result in continuous improvement for them (Page e46). The mention of “response to intervention” (Page e46) for staff indicates that they are constantly seeking efforts to increase teacher preparedness and efficiency. However, there was no clear evidence of rigor and comparability of assessments.

(3) Each participating LEA has made substantial progress in developing a high-quality plan for multiple teacher and principal observations, including identification of the persons, by position and qualifications, who will be conducting the observations, the observation tool, the events to be observed, the accuracy of raters in using observation tools and the procedures for ensuring a high degree of inter-rater reliability (13 points);

13

11

Comments

The plan clearly outlines the process by which teacher and principals will be observed (Page e46). There is also a table provided to illustrate the types of observations, the number of observations and who will perform the observation of teachers (Page e47). Additionally, the application provides an explanation about the observations of the principals as well as what the rubric will measure (Pages e46-e47). The Evaluation Summary measures several aspects of leadership which the applicant states will ensure a high degree of inter-rater reliability. However, there is no evidence of support for inter-rater reliability statements.

(4) The participating LEA has experience measuring student growth at the classroom level, and has already implemented components of the proposed educator evaluation systems (4 points);

4

4

Comments

The plan states that there is a model in place that examines student growth and provides a detailed report of other essential data (Page e48). The report will supply information regarding individual and collective progress. The plan suggests that data is currently being used to for evaluation of teachers, determine growth of teachers, students, and schools, etc. Hence, there is a model in place that is substantial for measuring student growth and offers other data of importance.

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<p>(5) In the case of teacher evaluations, the proposed evaluation system (6 points) —</p> <p>(i) Bases the overall evaluation rating for teachers, in significant part, on student growth;</p> <p>(ii) Evaluates the practice of teachers, including general education teachers and teachers of special student populations, in meeting the needs of special student populations, including students with disabilities and English learners;</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>The Teacher Evaluation table (Page e51) provides a very comprehensive illustration of how student growth & achievement and teacher practice & behavior are apportioned. The plan acknowledges the difficulty of securing teachers for special needs. However, they have partnered with an establishment to develop a Response To Intervention model that will serve special need students. The plan suggests that teachers have been strategically placed in order to ensure maximum student achievement takes place.</p>		
<p>(6) In the case of principal evaluations, the proposed evaluation system (6 points)</p> <p>(i) Bases the overall evaluation rating on, in significant part, student growth; and</p> <p>(ii) Evaluates, among other factors, a principal’s practice in--</p> <p>(A) Focusing every teacher, and the school community generally, on student growth;</p> <p>(B) Establishing a collaborative school culture focused on continuous improvement; and</p> <p>(C) Supporting the academic needs of special student populations, including students with disabilities and English learners, for example, by creating systems to support successful co-teaching practices, providing resources for research-based intervention services, or similar activities.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan holds firm that principals are critical to teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The Educator Effectiveness system that is in place has a component that will train principals (Page e53). The plan stresses the importance of principals having goals and options as well as relevant support for overcoming challenges. The Principal Residency design has afforded opportunities for new principals to receive training, tools and resources (Page</p>		

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e53). Providing these opportunities for new principles and continued support for experienced principles allows them to be effective instructional leaders.		
TOTAL	35	31

SELECTION CRITERION (c) Professional Development Systems to Support the Needs of Teachers and Principals Identified Through the Evaluation Process. (35 points) We will consider the extent to which each participating LEA has a high-quality plan for professional development to help all educators located in high-need schools, listed in response to Requirement 3(a), to improve their effectiveness. In determining the quality of each plan for professional development, we will consider the extent to which the plan describes how the participating LEA will--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Use the disaggregated information generated by the proposed educator evaluation systems to identify the professional development needs of individual educators and schools (8 points);	8	8
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan revealed that the district partnered with an entity to create an online platform that will analyze educator evaluation data and deliver professional development. The platform will address targeted areas for individual teacher growth (Page e55). The program (Purple Planet), along with Coaches, will aid teachers in data analysis and planning. Purple Planet also provides resources, videos, summer sessions and many others that provide targeted support in teachers' area of need (Pages e55-e57).</p>		
(2) Provide professional development in a timely way (2 points);	2	2
<p>Comments</p>		

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<p>The plan contends that the Purple Planet program can provide professional development as soon as the areas are identified (Page e56). The plan also states that the Purple Planet increases teacher effectiveness through differentiated professional development. The applicants states that the teachers, coaches, and principals will work together to develop individual growth plans that are aligned with teacher evaluations results (Page e56).</p>		
<p>(3) Provide school-based, job-embedded opportunities for educators to transfer new knowledge into instructional and leadership practices (5 points); and</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan allows teacher to be placed on a career path that promises promotion for continuous improvement (Page e57). The district has developed a table that explains how the career path is implemented. The plan suggests that the Teacher Effectiveness Program will provide learning and growth opportunities for teacher and staff to apply in classrooms and share with others.</p>		
<p>(4) Provide professional development that is likely to improve instructional and leadership practices, and is guided by the professional development needs of individual educators as identified in paragraph (c)(1) of this criterion (20 points).</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>The scheme of creating a personal learning plan which focuses on professional development essential to improving areas of weakness is invaluable. The Purple Planet program (Pages e61-e62), mentioned before, assists those in knowing where they are, setting and working on goals, and allows tracking of progress. The plan explains how this program will aid in prompt feedback and address the needs of teachers and principals, in a timely manner.</p>		
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>35</p>	<p>35</p>

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SELECTION CRITERION (d) Involvement of Educators. (35 points)

We will consider the quality of educator involvement in the development and implementation of the proposed PBCS and educator evaluation systems described in the application. In determining the quality of such involvement, we will consider the extent to which--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) The application contains evidence that educator involvement in the design of the PBCS and the educator evaluation systems has been extensive and will continue to be extensive during the grant period (10 points); and	10	10
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan expresses that through the collective efforts of schools in the district, an evaluation system has been created which will provide data significant for improvement and has established that all involved will participate in making it be successful. The plan states (Page e63) that during the development of the plan there were several opportunities for participants to provide feedback. Critical insight and ideas were expressed that help shape the design of the tool. Additionally, surveys and webinars were conducted.</p>		
(2) The application contains evidence that educators support the elements of the proposed PBCS and the educator evaluation systems described in the application (25 points).	25	25
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan states that over 70% of the teachers were pleased with the feedback and the feedback was helpful (Page e64). It is evident on the table (Page e65) that input from the teachers and other stakeholders was highly encouraged and considered. The plan revealed that careful consideration was taken to include all stakeholders.</p>		
TOTAL	35	35

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SELECTION CRITERION (e) Project Management. (30 points)

We will consider the quality of the management plan of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan, we will consider the extent to which the management plan--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Clearly identifies and defines the roles and responsibilities of key personnel (3 points);	3	2
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan clearly identifies key personnel and provides a background description on them (Page e 67). However, some of the descriptions are lacking the responsibility component. Several of the key personnel have impressive backgrounds; however, the responsibilities are not clearly defined.</p>		
(2) Allocates sufficient human resources to complete project tasks (5 points);	5	5
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan mentioned that professionals are being secured in order to implement initiatives with fidelity (Page e 69). Additionally, the roles, responsibilities, and rewards are aligned. The plan states that the professionals will be selected carefully to ensure effectiveness (Page e70).</p>		
(3) Includes measurable project objectives and performance measures (5 points); and	5	5
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan has identified 2 objectives and reasonable performance measures to achieve their goal (Page e 71). The plan has also listed strategies that will assist in completion of the goal (Page e71).</p>		
(4) Includes an effective project evaluation plan (5 points);	5	5
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan names two non-profit research organizations that are conducting evaluations in support of their counterparts. The plan states that the focus of these organizations will be to measure the use of and the impact of effectiveness, professional development, hiring and dismissal practices (Page e72) and provides a timeline of the evaluation.</p>		
(5) Specifies realistic and achievable timelines for: (i) Implementing the components of the HCMS, PBCS, and educator evaluation	8	8

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systems, including any proposal to phase in schools or educators (8 points).		
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan includes a table (Page e77) that illustrates the implementation of the components. The plan clearly presents a proposal that displays teacher evaluation systems, career paths, residency, and professional development and the phases in which these components will be implementation. The timeline also includes principal residency, professional development, evaluation systems and the proposal reflects when these phases will be implemented as well. The applicants have included an implementation timeline with expectation outlined for each year.</p>		
(5) Specifies realistic and achievable timelines for: (ii) Successfully completing project tasks and achieving objectives (4 points).	4	4
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan has created a table (pages e79-e80) that depicts the ongoing and upcoming projects and tasks. The table clearly identifies category, the plan, and expected year of implementation.</p>		
TOTAL	30	29

SELECTION CRITERION (f) Sustainability. (20 points)

We will consider the quality of the plan to sustain the proposed project. In determining the quality of the sustainability plan, we will consider the extent to which the sustainability plan--

Factor/Sub-criterion	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(1) Identifies and commits sufficient non-TIF resources, financial and nonfinancial, to support the PBCS and educator evaluation systems during and after the grant period (10 points);	10	7
<p>Comments</p> <p>The plan has a budget narrative for fund allocations for non-TIF resources. Additionally, the plan offers</p>		

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<p>long term intent for the TIF project (Page e61). The application provides information concerning how TIF Funds will be used and supplemented with other funds. However, it is unclear how the PBCS will be supported after the grant has expired.</p>		
<p>(2) Is likely to be implemented and, if implemented, will result in a sustained PBCS and educator evaluation systems after the grant period ends (10 points).</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>Throughout the plan, this district has moved toward developing and sustaining systems linked to the PBCS (Page e62). The plan suggests that time has been placed in making the system rigorous and effective. The collaboration with others resulted in systems and resources that are indispensable and will make way for increased performance beyond the life of the grant (Page e 62). However, a concern would be funding for incentives beyond the grant.</p>		
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>15</p>

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Competitive Preference Priority – An Educator Salary Structure Based on Effectiveness (Up to 20 points)

To meet this priority, an applicant must propose, as part of its PBCS, a timeline for implementing no later than in the fifth year of the grant’s project period a salary structure based on effectiveness for both teachers and principals. As part of this proposal, an applicant must describe--	Total Possible	Assigned Score
(a) The extent to which and how each LEA will use overall evaluation ratings to determine educator salaries; (b) How each LEA will use TIF funds to support the salary structure based on effectiveness in the high-need schools listed in response to Requirement 3(a); and (c) The extent to which the proposed implementation is feasible, given that implementation will depend upon stakeholder support and applicable LEA-level policies.	20	20
<p>Comments</p> <p>According to the application, there is a plan in place to implement a new compensation structure which includes all teachers by year 2 of the grant (Page e27). The plan states that in the upcoming school year, teachers will be compensated for effectiveness as measured by the evaluation system previously mentioned in the plan. The plan states that it remains focused on developing and retaining highly effective teachers. The creation of Teacher Effectiveness rubric has been and will continue to be essential in identifying areas of strength and weakness.</p>		
TOTAL	20	20
GRAND TOTAL	220	205

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