

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

Application Number: S374A120010



Applicant Name: National Institutes for Excellence in Teaching, CA/TX Reviewer Code: 6-A

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	10
<p>Comments: The applicant describes the LEA’s current human capital policies and discusses the fact that these current polices do not utilize data on educator effectiveness. The applicant shows a need to develop a performance-based compensation system and a data management system for evaluating teachers and principals in the LEA that reflects its vision of instructional improvement. The applicant states that to achieve this goal, it must ensure that “all students have access to data driven, rigorous instruction centered on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills” (p. 5) that provide relevant and meaningful learning experiences that integrate the “agricultural, industrial, historical and unique diversity” (p. 5) of the community. This shows that its vision is closely tied to state expectations while still maintaining close ties to the local identity of the community and the citizens the system serves. In addition, the applicant lists five specific, yet reasonable capabilities that teachers must be able to do (p. 6) in order to reach these goals. The applicant states that individual indicators of the rubric reflect the specific instructional goals of the district. Therefore, the applicant clearly described the vision of instructional improvement in its discussion.</p>		
<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)--</p> <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>	35	32

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(iv) The commitment of the LEA's leadership to implementing the described HCMS, including all of its component parts; and

(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.

Comments: It appears likely that the applicant will increase the number of effective educators in the LEA's schools, especially in the high-need schools. [i] The applicant provides a description on how the range of human capital decisions about educator effectiveness will be made based on the educator evaluation system. A table on pgs. 11 & 12 provides evidence of the human capital policy on recruitment, hiring, performance-based compensation for teachers, principals, asst. principals, career advancement, professional development, and retention/dismissal, as well as a description of each policy and how the educator evaluation data for both teachers and principals will be used to make HCMS decisions. [ii] Included in the applicant's description is a discussion, supported by a table (pgs. 13 & 14) on the weight given to educator effectiveness which includes HCMS decisions. [iii]The applicant presents evidence of 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. The applicant describes its prior, yet limited, experience using some elements of the TAP system (p. 16), and has used elements of the TAP system to make HCMS decisions. It describes how NIET has had numerous experiences implementing the TAP system in other districts around the country which have had success. It does not appear that there are any policies that might inhibit modifications needed, whereas the LEA's prior experiences may facilitate any necessary modifications needed to use teacher effectiveness data to make human capital decisions. This demonstrates clear extent that the LEA will implement further TAP elements to maximize the potential for student growth by increasing teacher effectiveness. [iv] The commitment of the LEA's leadership to implementing the described HCMS, including all of its component parts is supported with evidence of letters of commitment and support from various leaders, including the school superintendent, the principals from the four schools, and a representative from the local teachers' association. However, teachers have not yet voted to accept the TAP system. [v] The applicant presents sufficient financial and non-financial strategies and incentives, including the PBCS, for attracting/recruiting effective teachers to work in high-need schools and retaining them in their schools. For example, the applicant is partnering with a local university's teacher preparation program that will integrate the TAP rubric into its teaching practicum experiences (pgs. 18-21). The Texas Tech partnership

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will also create avenues to facilitate teacher professional development and retention in high-need schools.

TOTAL	45	42
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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: The applicant states that the LEA has finalized a high-quality evaluation rubric and that teachers will be evaluated 4 or more times annually based on four overall evaluation performance levels: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, and Unsatisfactory (p. 25). The applicant states that a rubric (TLT observation rubric, p. e173-e174) for evaluating principals/assistant principals will be used to evaluate principals' effectiveness in leading instructional improvement meetings based on student data results, teacher observations, etc. No attention is given in the rubric for evaluating principals in other areas, such as principal-to-teacher, principal-to-student, and principal-to-parent/community interactions, all of which are important aspects of being a school leader.</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: The applicant provides an in-depth description of how it plans to evaluate both teachers and administrators using its TAP System. The applicant provides a rationale for using both classroom and school wide value-added student growth formulas to differentiate performance levels of educators. The applicant will use a 20% figure to calculate a value-added figure to apply to a teacher's evaluation based on school-wide student growth, and 30% to</p>		

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calculate a value-added figure at the classroom level. However, the proposal would be strengthened if the classroom, value-added score would be weighted higher than the school-wide, value-added score for teachers, given that the individual teacher has no control over what happens to the students he/she has taught in subsequent year(s). For principals, the school-wide value added score will be the single largest determiner of their overall evaluation rating, contributing 50% toward their score. A strong rationale is given for this figure. The applicant has set very high expectations for both teacher and principal effectiveness in its plan. The applicant cites research using value-added models in various contexts to explore the impact they have on schools, teachers and academic performance, and conclude that “value added remains a highly predictive measure of future student gains” (p. 29). Rigor and comparability studies were not discussed on teacher effectiveness in relation to courses or grades that were not formally assessed.

(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 applicant has made substantial progress in developing a high-quality educator evaluation plan. Teachers will be observed a minimum of four times a year in announced and unannounced visits. Master and mentor teachers will be selected through a competitive, performance-based process to serve as teacher evaluators after receiving thorough training and certification. This training will ensure that they are well qualified to conduct the observations as well as to ensure that the accuracy of raters in using the observation tools and procedures will hold a high degree of inter-rater reliability. The applicant did not, however, identify the specific events that will be observed. The LEA’s principals will be evaluated by the District Executive Master Teacher (DEMT) and/or other district leaders using the TAP Leadership Team rubric. Although the applicant cites research about what makes an effective principal, it looks at a principal from a narrow lens. The rubric that will be used to conduct principal observations does not address other elements of what makes a strong, effective instructional leader. It presents a strong discussion on how it will ensure inter-rater reliability, as well as who will conduct the observations and their qualifications, how they will be trained, certified, and recertified (pgs. 30-32).

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<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>	4	4
<p>Comments: The applicant has demonstrated its prior experience in measuring student growth at the classroom level through its Response to Intervention program and the use of AIMES Web to monitor student growth (p.36). Data have been used to determine professional development needs and to adjust instruction accordingly. In addition, the applicant’s current system has implemented elements of the TAP System, therefore, the LEA has indicated its eagerness to become fully engaged in using the system.</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>	6	5
<p>Comments: [i] The applicant proposes that it will use the TAP teacher evaluation system based on the developed rubric, the Surveys, and the weighted school-wide value added data to evaluate teachers, and states it will do so in significant part based on student growth. The applicant indicates that 50% of teachers’ evaluations will depend on student growth measures, which seems to be a reasonable figure for determining teacher effectiveness tied to student growth (p. 36). [ii] The research-based rubric contains 19 indicators of effective teaching that are content-neutral and objective (p. 37). At various points in the rubric, language is used that addresses special student populations, including students with disabilities and English learners. More detail about how teachers with ELL populations will be evaluated on the rubric would strengthen the proposal. The applicant cites another school with a diverse population that showed academic progress over time using the TAP system as evidence of its success.</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;</p>	6	5

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<p>(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>Comments: The applicant adequately addresses how the principal will be evaluated using the TLT observation rubric on how he/she collaboratively creates a school plan that is focused on improving student growth and focusing all teachers and the school community on student growth in academic areas of need. The applicant describes connections between student data and cluster meeting discussions to identify areas of need that will support special student populations, and to support teacher effectiveness using research-based strategies, modeling, demonstration lessons, a co-teaching model, etc. (p. 39). An explanation as to how the applicant plans to apply the strategies and implement the demonstration lessons and co-teaching model after the cluster meetings would better clarify this component of the proposal.</p>		
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>35</p>	<p>29</p>

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
<p>(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);</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>Comments: The applicant includes a strong rationale for the goals of the TAP system of educator evaluation and a description on how data will be disaggregated to generate areas of strength and weaknesses for professional development purposes. The applicant includes a</p>		

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<p>clear discussion and sample of its CODE Data System tool to be used to identify areas of refinement for professional development (PD) purposes (p.43). However, the applicant needs to address the proposed evaluation system’s data use and analysis for identifying the professional development needs of principals.</p>		
<p>(2) Provide professional development in a timely way (2 points);</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Comments: A thorough description about how professional development will be organized and tailored in a timely way is given (p. 45). A strong cognitive coaching model is discussed as a means to offer teachers opportunities to develop plans for building on strengths and improving weaknesses through self-evaluation and reflection in a timely way.</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>3</p>
<p>Comments: The applicant provides a strong discussion on how it will provide school-based, job-embedded opportunities for teachers to transfer new knowledge into instructional and leadership practices and provides a strong rationale for doing so (pgs. 46-47). It plans to utilize collaborative learning teams and instructional coaching, both cited in the literature, as effective approaches to improving professional development. However, it does not mention how school-based, job-embedded opportunities will take place for principals to transfer new knowledge into instructional and leadership practices based on their own evaluation results.</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>13</p>
<p>Comments: Based on its given rationale and backed by research, the applicant provides a strong PD plan that is “ongoing, job-embedded, collaborative, driven by analysis of teachers’ specific student achievement data, and led by expert instructors” (p. 48). The applicant lists two elements that will be included in the PD plan, cluster groups and individualized coaching, both that are shown to improve teacher effectiveness. However, the applicant does not include a discussion about how professional development for principals, based on principal evaluations, will improve instruction and leadership practices. The application would have been strengthened with additional information about the nature of principal professional development.</p>		

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TOTAL	35	23
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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: The applicant provides evidence that the educators in the LEA had input in the design of the PBCS and the educator evaluation systems. In addition, the applicant explained its 10-year involvement in the development of the TAP system using input and guidance from teachers and administrators from across the country. With regards to the LEA partner, the applicant provided an initial webinar to introduce the implementation issues, with guidance and structure for designing the TAP system for the school. The faculty had the opportunity to vote to approve or not approve the adaption of the system, showing that the LEA's leadership wanted teacher and principal buy-in for the approach. Members of the TAP Leadership Team were trained in the system, showing evidence again that involvement has been extensive and will continue to be extensive. The applicant describes the procedure for the career path and explains that the LEA's educators will work together to establish specific responsibilities performance standards for master, mentor, and career teachers (p. 53).</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	14
<p>Comment: According to the applicant, educator buy-in for adopting the TAP system appears favorable. Based on prior experience with TAP, it is likely, in theory, that the educators in the LEA will be supportive of the elements of the proposed PBCS. The applicant cites the Slaton Classroom Teacher Association's support for bringing in TAP to enact comprehensive school reform through a letter of support written by the president of the local teachers' association (p. e120). The letter indicates the president's personal support but does not indicate support</p>		

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<p>from other teachers in the district or that she sought support from members of the teachers' association. It is inconclusive whether her letter represents many or most of the teachers in the LEA. The narrative addresses how, in the planning year, presentations by NIET staff, Q&A forums, and site visits for Slaton teachers to observe TAP in action will help promote teacher and principal support. Again, this is assumed, but not guaranteed. Voting for adoption will take place during the planning year, according to the applicant; however, NIET requires 70% approval in order to implement the program (p. 51). Further details/evidence of support are needed, especially from the teachers in the LEA, to demonstrate that it will be likely that the educators will indeed approve the TAP system.</p>		
TOTAL	35	24

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	3
<p>Comments: The applicant clearly identifies NIET as the fiscal agent for the proposed TIF grant. Roles and responsibilities of the LEA partner and key personnel are clearly presented in the TIF Project Timeline (pgs. 55-57).</p>		
(2) Allocates sufficient human resources to complete project tasks (5 points);	5	5
<p>Comments: The NIET organization is experienced in handling a project of this nature, as evidenced in the narrative. Given the experience of its staff, the applicant has clearly demonstrated that it has allocated sufficient human resources to complete the project tasks by the timeline indicated. Key personnel in its organization have been identified, their qualifications, roles and responsibilities outlined, and any additional personnel needed have been listed with roles and qualifications described (p. 58). NIET employees have clearly defined percentages of time they will be allocated for performing their duties.</p>		

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(3) Includes measurable project objectives and performance measures (5 points); and	5	4
<p>Comments: Project objectives and sub-objectives have been identified that are appropriate, measurable, and reflect the goals and needs of the LEA (p. 59). However, objectives 1 and 2 need to include measurable language that indicates the degree of expected increase. For example, an objective stated "Increase the percent of effective teachers by 20%..." will provide a more clear idea about the overall expectations in the project.</p>		
(4) Includes an effective project evaluation plan (5 points);	5	5
<p>Comments: The applicant indicates that a third party professional evaluator, with expertise in both quantitative and qualitative data will be used to evaluate the project in two ways: to provide feedback for continuous improvement in the implementation and operation of TAP in the LEA's schools and to provide an analysis of the evidence that the project is achieving the goals and objectives (p.59-60). Fidelity will also be examined by the external evaluator, as well as attitudes and behaviors among teachers and principals that lead to changes in student growth. The plan for using an outside evaluator demonstrates that the applicant wants to ensure that an unbiased assessment of the effectiveness of the TAP system is conducted. The applicant appears to have thoroughly considered how the project is evaluated.</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).	8	8
<p>Comments: The applicant has provided a detailed HCMS and PBCS (for preparation and district-wide, teacher, and principal) implementation timeline that appears realistic and achievable (p. 63-65). It clearly presents the project tasks, the responsible parties involved in fulfilling the tasks, and the timeline, labeled as milestones, for completing each phase of the project. The phase-in plan appears realistic and achievable.</p>		
(5) Specifies realistic and achievable timelines for: (ii) Successfully completing project tasks and achieving objectives (4 points).	4	4
<p>Comments: Timelines are realistic and achievable for completing project tasks and achieving objectives. The applicant explains in the narrative that it will take one year to fully implement the evaluation system LEA-wide, then over the course of the planning year, NIET will provide the LEA's TAP Leadership Team with eight days of training on how to reliably use the evaluation rubric (p. 62). Separate training will be given to teachers to develop SLOs for evaluating student growth. The applicant clearly explains the timeline process.</p>		

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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
Comments: With regards to financial sustainability, the applicant has developed a project budget that takes into account the full length of the grant (p.66-67). Given the past experiences of the NIET organization that developed the TAP system, it appears that there is a strong probability, both financially and non-financially, that the project will be sustainable over the duration of the grant. It is unclear, however, what will happen beyond year 5 when NIET is no longer involved with the district. It is not clear how sustainable the program will be when grant monies are no longer available. The applicant needs to provide more specific funding sources for years beyond the grant period.		
(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	8
Comments: Based on past experiences, NIET states that it has found that after five years, the cost of implementing TAP decreases. Given the decrease in cost, and the strong potential for educator support and effectiveness coupled with gains in student growth, the applicant indicates that the LEA will be "fully committed to fidelity of implementation at all levels and to sustainability" (pg. 67). The applicant indicates three strategies for involving key stakeholders and building lasting support for TAP: an Advisory Board, School Site Councils, and a Communications Plan. With these three strategies in place that involve inside and outside school resources, the applicant has provided a strong argument for sustainability. The applicant could strengthen the proposal with a plan for training new educators into the TAP system once NIET has left.		

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TOTAL	20	14
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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>	Total Possible	Assigned Score
	20	12
<p>Comments: [a] The applicant has provided a detailed explanation with examples of how it will use the overall evaluation ratings, including the value-added ratings, to determine overall educator salaries and performance-based incentives. [b] It clearly explains how it will use TIF funds (see appendix pgs. e191—e192) to support the salary structure for all teachers, given that all 4 schools in the district are high-need schools. However, very little detail is provided regarding how principals will earn pay for performance awards and how the TIF funds will support salary structures for principals. (pgs. 70-71). The applicant does not provide enough detail that breaks down how principals’ awards and value-added awards will be given. [c] Although the applicant states that a “committee will convene during the first year of implementation (Year 2) and present its recommendation to the local School Board of Education for approval by Year 4” (p. 74), the applicant did not address the feasibility of the proposed implementation project or expected level of stakeholder support as required by this component.</p>		
TOTAL	20	12
GRAND TOTAL	220	173

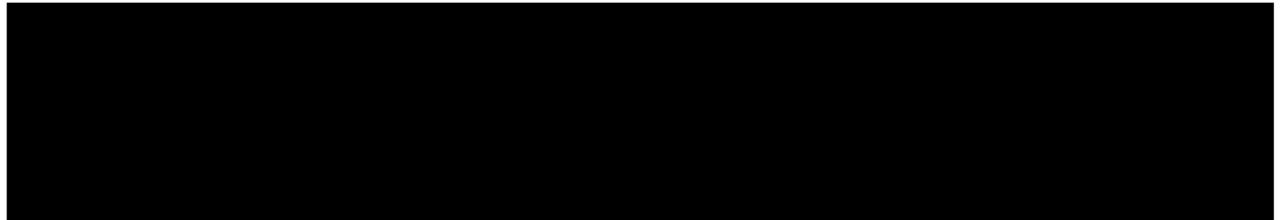
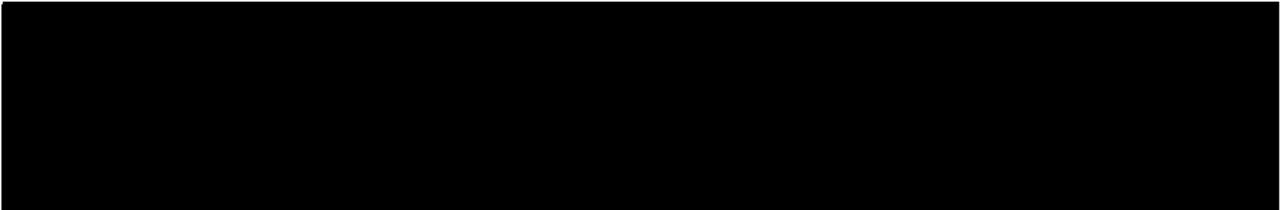
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Applicant Name: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching

Reviewer Code: 6-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--

Factor/Sub-criterion	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 district's human capital principles include respect, responsiveness, ownership, and excellence (p. 4). The current HCMS is aligned with these goals via the integration of the performance-based compensation system and data management system. The application identifies weaknesses in the current protocol and addresses them with alignment of compensation and educator effectiveness. The LEA's vision of instructional improvement includes differentiated instruction, experiences connected to students' lives, data driven instructional decisions, integrating technology, and participating in professional development (PD) via PLC's (p. 6). Central to the application's proposal and alignment is the TAP system which includes a data system, analysis, career advancement, and salary augmentations (p. 6). This system will be integrated into the current HCMS model in the LEA. The TAP CODE system explicitly aligns the HCMS with the goal of data driven instruction and PD via CODE recommendations for immediate PD on the Portal (pp. 6-7). The TAP rubric will be used during observations to ensure instructional improvement (p. 8). A TAP rubric will be used for the evaluation of principals and decisions for PD while ensuring principals are aligned with the vision of the LEA (pp. 9-10).</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	32
<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</p>		

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<p>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>2(i) – The TAP system will be used to determine compensation based on performance, multiple career paths, accountability focused on instruction, and professional growth (p. 2). The TAP data will inform decisions during all stages of employment (p. 10), staffing and placement decisions (p. 11), recruitment, hiring, compensation for teachers and principals, PD, and dismissal. All decisions are explicitly tied to the HCMS via the TAP system and use of the data generated. This explicit connection to multiple facets of the HCMS is likely to increase the number of effective educators.</p> <p>2(ii) – The TAP system will be used to determine educator bonuses that will not exceed 20% of their base salary (p. 13). The emphasis on educator effectiveness will aide in recruiting and retaining teachers from higher paying districts who appreciate the opportunity to have PD explicitly linked to data concerning their instruction. All aspects previously detailed in the application carry strong weight with regard to the importance of educator effectiveness except for recruiting/hiring and retention/dismissal (pp. 13-14). This strong weight is likely to increase educator effectiveness, especially given the potential for a 20% increase in base salary coupled with the multiple opportunities for support.</p> <p>2(iii) – The LEA has limited experience in using the TAP system (p. 16). The LEA is familiar with aspects of TAP and currently utilizes HCMS strategies that align with TAP including evaluations, assessments, and observations. Critical to the successful implementation is the commitment of NIET to support the LEA in the implementation of TAP, especially given NIET’s past experiences supporting multiple schools in similar endeavors. Since NIET is fully committed to this program it is likely their resources will have a positive impact on educator effectiveness.</p> <p>2(iv) – The multiple letters of support and enthusiasm from educators and other stakeholders in the LEA attests to the commitment to integrating TAP. The unanimous vote of staff members to adopt comprehensive school-wide improvement measures shows their acknowledgement and willingness to better their educational endeavors (p. 17). However, this vote is not specifically in relation to TAP</p>		

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approval but an overarching acceptance of some adaptation. The superintendent and unanimous support from the Board of Trustees ensures stakeholders in hierarchical positions of authority will be open to NIET aiding the LEA in the implementation of TAP. Since the collaboration with the LEA and NIET is critical to increase educator effectiveness because of the reliance of the TAP system, the strong relationship between the LEA and NIET will facilitate growth in educator effectiveness.

2(v) – The application acknowledges the need to hire the most effective teachers for the district and realizes one obstacle is the 25% discrepancy in pay with neighboring districts (p. 3). The TIF will allow the district funding to create a competitive pay scale based on student performance. The application has strong plans for integrating TAP into the co-teaching model for the teacher candidates at a local university, thus providing a positive experience and recruitment efforts for teachers new to the profession and increasing educator effectiveness of teachers new to the profession (p. 19). The application also states that in a survey of TAP schools, 33% of teachers moved from more affluent schools to teach at TAP schools. The plan to develop the skills of all teachers will also make the educational environment more enticing to quality educators. Procuring quality educators would further the collaborative endeavors, especially with regard to the PLC endeavors, thus increasing educator effectiveness. The application would be strengthened with further information concerning recruitment efforts of current educators, especially with regard to recruitment of effective principals. Further, retention efforts are limited to a summary of current TAP schools. Descriptions of how this particular LEA will integrate these strategies would strengthen the application.

	TOTAL	45	42
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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
<p>Comments</p> <p>The LEA has a high-quality rubric designed to rate educator performance on four levels in the areas of student achievement growth, four or more classroom observations, and a teacher survey (pp. 21-22). Details concerning the student growth measure would strengthen the application.</p> <p>Teachers will be taught and trained with regard to the TAP observation rubric before being held accountable via the observations (P. 22). Further, the leadership team responsible for the observations will be trained and annually recertified before any observations occur in a given school year. Post-conferences to maximize the positive outcomes of the observation will occur.</p> <p>Performance standards will be assessed via the survey given to teachers. The survey and observation scores are combined for an overall score. The attachments to the application thoroughly explain the rubric for the scoring.</p> <p>Student growth measures at the classroom level will be contingent on state and LEA benchmark assessments. For classes where such assessments do not exist, NIET will support endeavors to create high-quality assessments to measure student growth (p. 23).</p> <p>A comprehensive system for combining the three aspects to rate teachers' overall performance is detailed (p. 24). Of particular note is the TAP implementation committee's commitment to reconvene in year three of the grant to reassess the weights given to each measure that will contribute to the overall rating of teachers.</p> <p>Principals will be evaluated yearly on student achievement growth, an assessment of principal effectiveness, and observation scores (p. 25). Observations are limited to the TLT meetings. Assistant principals will also be evaluated using the same system with different weighting between the three categories (p. 27).</p>		

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<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>3</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>2(i) – The application details the percentages assigned to evaluations with regard to student growth, value-added growth, and value-added score (p. 27). Further, no educator will be eligible for performance-based compensation if low scores on student growth measures occur. This combined with the decision to have every student achieve a year or more of growth each year precipitates the value-added data holding the highest weight for effectiveness of principals. The overarching rationale for weights with teachers and principals is the goal of students being prepared with 21st century skills. Further detail with regard to the link of these skills and the weighting would strengthen the application. The Classroom Value-Added Score is rated at 30% for measurement of effectiveness (p. 24). To more accurately assess individualized skills of teachers, a significantly higher percentage should be contingent on their immediate actions in their classrooms.</p> <p>2(ii) – Support for the value added model is evident in the US Department of Education’s promotion of the strategy. Further, the model allows tracking student change in performance while controlling for SES and family variables (p. 28). The rigor and comparability of assessments for levels which do not have state or LEA benchmark exams is needed. The application states that rigor and comparability can be enhanced and evaluated before approval of this proposal (pp. 29-30). However, it is unclear if this will occur at the LEA prior to implementation.</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>10</p>
<p>Comments</p>		

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Teachers will be observed at least four times a year in announced and unannounced visits by highly trained, certified, and recertified observers using the TAP rubric (p. 30). Principals will be evaluated using the TLT rubric. The evaluators will also be certified and recertified. The certification and recertification will help in addressing accuracy and inter-rater reliability.

The eight day training coupled with recertification tests will be used to promote and perpetuate inter-rater reliability and accuracy of raters (p. 31). Details concerning the TAP rubric, post-conference meetings, assessments immediately following the training, and ongoing monthly meetings discussing observation protocol will ensure continued reliability and accuracy. Steps are in place to handle discrepancies in ratings and mentor observations are tracked via histograms on the TAP portal (p. 32).

Principal evaluators will be certified via a one day training and recertified yearly. Inter-rater reliability will be ensured through meetings where videos will be watched, scored, and discussed so the scores are aligned properly between raters. The TAP CODE system can store information but lacks the ability to analyze data as well as it does with teacher observations. No indication of how this will be addressed is provided in the application.

The TAP tool used for observations has a five point scale with content neutral means of evaluating teacher effectiveness. The observation protocol has been implemented in multiple TAP schools and is aligned with research focused on learning and instruction, has gone through extensive peer reviews and publications, and has researched based backing of its effectiveness (p. 34). The principal evaluation tool aligns with the action research approach (p. 36).

The application would be strengthened with specific identification of the position and qualifications of the specific persons conducting the observations and also by identifying the specific events in the principals' meetings and teachers' classes to be observed.

(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 LEA's current system of measurement offers PD based on teacher data, incorporates components of the TAP evaluation system, and has already implemented aspects of the TAP evaluation system including the job expectations, assessment instruments, and personal observations (p. 36). The learning objectives and accountability process also mirrors the proposed changes. These systems have been

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used at the LEA to measure student growth at the classroom level.		
<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>	6	5
<p>Comments</p> <p>5(i) – Given that 50% of the teacher and principal evaluations depends on student growth measures, the weight is significant (p. 36). Further, protocol is in place to prohibit and performance-based pay if students do not experience measurable growth. Further, the overall evaluation rating for teachers is based on student growth in multiple levels including classroom and school wide growth. This will enhance individualized motivation on behalf of the teacher to excel as well as foster collaborative efforts in PLC’s since a portion of the student growth measure is contingent on overall school wide performance.</p> <p>5(ii) – The TAP evaluation system provides indicators that address individual student needs, opportunities for different learners, learning difficulties, and ensuring rigor for every student (p. 37). Further, PD opportunities integrate times for teachers to analyze student work and requires teachers to bring work from sub-categories including students with special needs and EL’s (p. 38). If students from specific sub-groups do not perform well, strategies for adaptation to improve specific students’ outcomes will be implemented. The special education community also endorses the TAP system for involving teachers in discussions with specialists with the result of incorporating strategies for specific student populations in their classroom. Further detail regarding English Learners would strengthen the application, specifically as it relates to teacher evaluations.</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>	6	5
<p>Comments</p>		

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6(i) – The majority of the principals’ evaluation will be contingent on student growth via the value-added score since this comprises the majority of the evaluation rating (pp. 38-39). The degree of significance is not detailed in the application other than the statement that it will be the single largest contributor to the overall rating of the principals (p. 38).

6(ii)(A) – Through the use of the TLT observation rubric, principals will be evaluated based on their effectiveness to facilitate data driven analysis, PD, monitoring of student growth, and establishing goals in the school plan (p. 39). Meetings will be run by the principal to facilitate discussions with teachers about student growth including the analysis of cluster goals. The use of cluster goals aligned with the overarching school plan designed by the leadership team will serve as guiding factors in focusing on student growth.

6(ii)(B) – The TLT observation rubric and 360° survey incorporates measures to check if principals are monitoring student data with the leadership team, thus providing an avenue of continued collaboration (pp. 39-40). Further, every teacher is given areas of strength and areas of need to improve upon. Further detail concerning the collaborative nature of the feedback and meetings would strengthen the application. Another aspect that would strengthen the application in this subsection is addressing if and how the use of PLC’s as a collaborative measure will be linked to principal effectiveness.

6(ii)(c) – During meetings, data are analyzed and disaggregated based on sub-populations (p. 41). Strategies such as co-teaching, demonstration lessons, modeling, and observations are discussed as possible interventions to increase sub-population scores. Further detail as to how and when these resources are provided to the teachers would strengthen the application.

	TOTAL	35	29
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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	5
<p>Comments</p> <p>The LEA will utilize the TAP data system to provide teachers with strengths and weaknesses. The weaknesses will be used to access online PD via the TAP system and support will also be offered via post-conference meetings, cluster group meetings, and individualized coaching (p. 44). Further data with regard to which types of PD may be used as well as information regarding PD for principals is needed. School-wide needs as they pertain to PD needs further clarification.</p>		
(2) Provide professional development in a timely way (2 points);	2	1
<p>Comments</p> <p>Teachers will have access to online training via the TAP CODE, post-conferences, modeling by mentors in the classroom, self-reflection, and cluster group PD during the school day (p. 45). This will provide timely PD since courses can be accessed online immediately and PD can occur any day during the school day. Therefore, if a teacher needs assistance with an occurrence in a classroom on a Monday, she/he could be obtaining assistance that Monday immediately after school on any computer or mobile device with internet access. Further information regarding PD in a timely manner for principals is needed.</p>		
(3) Provide school-based, job-embedded opportunities for educators to transfer new knowledge into instructional and leadership practices (5 points); and	5	3

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Comments

The PD model at the LEA is 100% on-site and job-embedded (p. 47). The model incorporates collaborative teams, instructional coaching, cluster group meetings, and development of classroom strategies. These offer the opportunity for teachers to be present and active in PD discussions while also seeing the models incorporated via modeling in their own classroom. Further information of embedded opportunities for principals is needed. The exceptionality of teacher PD is extensively discussed. Addressing the principal PD would greatly increase the strength of this application.

(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

13

Comments

Teachers are provided PD opportunities based on the TAP data in their particular classroom via experts embedded in their school (p. 48). This ensures PD trainers know the teachers' context and are available to follow-up with the teachers to ensure the PD is improving instructional practices. The PD received in cluster groups is followed-up by pre- and post-test data from formative assessments and student work to determine the effectiveness of the PD. For coaching, questions asked, follow-up conversations, feedback, and regular classroom visits affords the coach time to see if instructional strategies are being effectively implemented, thus providing verification before assessments and other traditional PD models. Central to the impact of PD is the follow-up that will take place onsite. The application would be greatly improved by addressing follow-up for PD with regard to principals.

35

22

TOTAL

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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>Although TAP is a pre-packaged system, there are many endeavors educators have been and will be involved with before and during the grant period. A workshop was conducted which promoted initial involvement (p. 51). Educators had input toward restructuring the school day for PD, rubrics indicators that will be modeled, PD content, educator responsibilities, career paths, weights for evaluation ratings, and classroom measurements in non-tested grades and subjects (pp. 52-54). Given the nature of the TAP program, the input and involvement is exceptional and integrated wherever possible.</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	13
<p>Comments</p> <p>Educator buy in for TAP to be successful is theoretically discussed in the application (p. 54). Outside letters of support strengthen the application, particularly the strong letters from the university and members of the educational system at the district level. Informal support from faculty was mentioned. Further detail as to the support is needed. The teacher association support is evident via the letter of support. A vote will be conducted to determine faculty support on adopting TAP. Further indicators of evidence that educators in this LEA support the PBCS and evaluation system would strengthen the application, especially with regard to formal measures based on teacher and principal support.</p>		
TOTAL	35	23

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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	3
<p>Comments</p> <p>The qualifications of key personnel are evident in the narrative (pp. 55-58). The key personnel who are identified and assigned positions have extensive experience in policy, grant protocol, and TAP endeavors as is evident by their resumes (pp. e144-e153). For the positions not currently filled, ample details regarding the requirements of the responsibilities is evident in the narrative and in the supplemental materials (pp. e154-e159). This is crucial in the initial contracting and hiring process if the grant proposal is funded.</p>		
(2) Allocates sufficient human resources to complete project tasks (5 points);	5	5
<p>Comments</p> <p>The experience of key personnel with multiple TIF grants in the past while implementing TAP's system will ensure sufficient success toward completion. Clearly defined percentages of time allotment for NIET employees will ensure attention is given to this particular project (p. 58). The partnership between the LEA and NIET significantly strengthens the application with regard to allocation of human resources, especially since the LEA will be continually supported by an agency that has shown significant improvements in education while helping other educational LEA's with similar TAP projects.</p>		
(3) Includes measurable project objectives and performance measures (5 points); and	5	4
<p>Comments</p> <p>Measureable objectives include increasing the percentage of effective teachers, effective principals, and improving student achievement (p. 59). Subcategories of objectives provide measurable outcomes. Further detail as to the performance measures is needed, specifically as it relates to teacher and principal effectiveness.</p>		
(4) Includes an effective project evaluation plan (5 points);	5	4
<p>Comments</p>		

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<p>Evaluation will take place by a third party evaluator, thus controlling for bias (p. 59). Both qualitative and quantitative data will be collected and analyzed with the purpose of feedback and evidence that goals and objectives are being realized (pp. 59-60). Triangulation of data and grounded theory methods will be ensured. Multiple points of data for qualitative and quantitative analysis are planned to be gathered (pp. 60-61). Further explanation as to the nature of the evaluator and/or evaluation institution would strengthen the application.</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>	<p>8</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>Overarching goals and subgoals for implementation are detailed in an extensive matrix (pp. 62-65). Year by year milestones detailing project tasks and parties responsible for the implementation according to the timeline are provided. Details include HCMS implementation, PBCS preparation, and PBCS implementation for teachers, district-wide, and principals are provided. This template makes certain key personnel know their duties and timeline and also provides a source of reference for others in the LEA to ascertain who is in charge on a particular aspect of implementation at any given time. Aspects of the timeline applied to the particular milieu, culture, and context of the LEA would further strengthen the application.</p>		
<p>(5) Specifies realistic and achievable timelines for: (ii) Successfully completing project tasks and achieving objectives (4 points).</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>Overarching goals and subgoals for implementation are detailed in an extensive matrix (pp. 62-65). The detail concerning the timeline, milestones, HCMS implementation, PBCS preparation, and educator implementation are provided. This template makes certain key personnel know their duties and timeline and also provides a source of reference for others in the LEA to ascertain who is in charge on a particular aspect of implementation at any given time.</p>		
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>27</p>

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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>The LEA plans to phase in incremental funding to support the most costly aspect of the grant – the performance-based compensation (p. 66). By the end of the grant, 40% of the funds will come from sources other than the TIF grant. It is unclear if the structure of teacher incentive pay would be decreased at the end of the grant to address the remaining 60% or if the remaining 60% will be funded (or if there are plans to secure funding by the end of the grant). Additionally, the LEA will fund one FTE master position, reallocate title I funds for PD, and support the sustainability with endorsements and efforts from the Board of Trustees. It is unclear what will happen to these positions once the grant has concluded. With regard to the nonfinancial aspect, it is unclear how the transition will occur when the NIET personnel are no longer associated with the district via the grant opportunity.</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	8
<p>Comments</p> <p>NIET has planned, through prior experiences, for the sustainable cost to decrease with regard to the TAP system by year five (p. 67). Reductions in costs come from a reduction in master and mentor teachers, training capacity being established, and less PD necessary given the infrastructure. Further, NIES has a protocol to increase buy-in and, hence, sustainability via an advisory board, school site councils, and communication plans that address hierarchical stakeholders, parents, educators, and the community in general. Further information with regard to oversight of the evaluation system once NIET is no longer affiliated with the program would strengthen the application. Plans associated with training new educators to the TAP system once the grant has concluded would strengthen the application.</p>		
TOTAL	20	14

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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	10
<p>Comments</p> <p>CPP (a) – Educator salaries will keep their base pay schedule with augmentations up to \$6,000 for performance-based pay, \$7,000 for mentor teachers, and \$14,000 for master teachers (p. 70). Principals will also have funding for similar structures building on their base pay. No details as to how this will affect the principals’ salary is provided. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the extent to which principals’ pay can be affected by the enhanced salary schedule. Further, the extent to which the evaluation rating will be linked, proportionally or otherwise, to the pay structure is needed.</p> <p>CPP (b) – The incentive pay for teachers based on educator effectiveness will be initially funded 100% by the TIF grant. By year five, 60% of employee compensations based on performance will come from TIF funding (p. 73). This will be a decreasing amount to ensure greater sustainability at the end of the grant.</p> <p>CPP (c) – The implementation is feasible given the support from external agencies and stakeholders including the mayor and other institutions outside the educational community, as are evident by the letters of support. However, the support of local stakeholders, especially with regard to principal and teacher support would greatly strengthen the application.</p>		
TOTAL	20	10
GRAND TOTAL	220	167

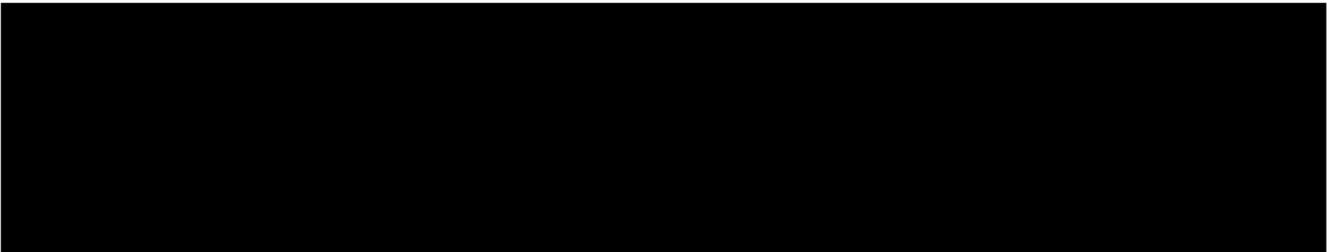
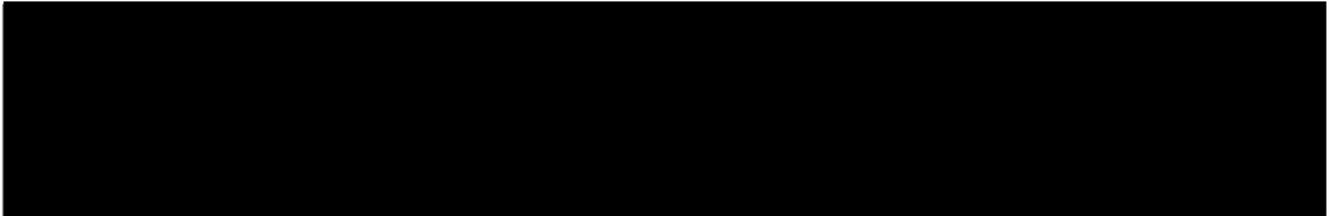
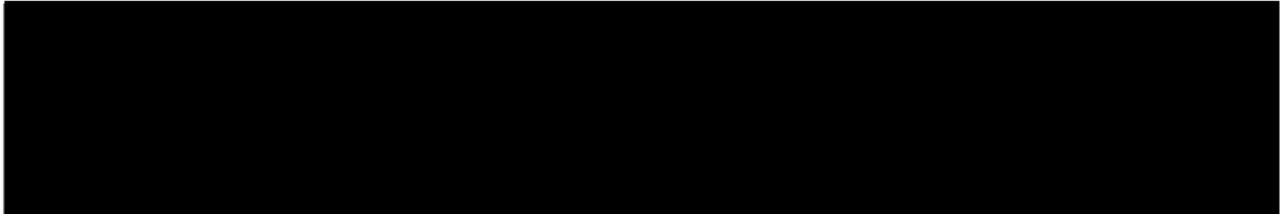
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SELECTION CRITERION (a) Coherent and Comprehensive Human Capital Management System

(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	10
<p>Comments: The applicant describes the district's mission and the five ways in which teachers meet the district's goals (p. 6). The applicant also describes how the HCMS will align with the district's vision that "instructional leaders enable and support teacher and student growth" (p. 9). The applicant also provides details about how the PCBS focuses on the district's instructional goals (p. 8). Specifically, the TAP CODE system will allow for the analysis of teacher observation and effectiveness data, and therefore, contribute to professional development, salary augmentations, an evaluation system, and performance-based compensation (p. 6). The grant proposal describes how the proposed framework will align with the district's vision.</p>		
<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)--</p> <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 the proposed PBCS, for attracting effective educators to work in high-need schools</p>	35	28

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and retaining them in those schools.		
<p>Comments:</p> <p>(i and ii) The applicant proposes to use educator effectiveness data for a range of human capital decisions, particularly for compensation, career advancement, and professional development. Educator effectiveness data will be included in the updated human capital decision policies. However, the weight of these data for recruitment and retention decisions is “moderate” (p. 14), limited only to a recruitment bonus tied to retention (p. 12).</p> <p>(iii) The applicant describes NIET’s experience implementing the TAP system in “new schools across the country” (p. 16). NIET’s prior experience in supporting district implementation of TAP, which will contribute to the HCMS (p. 16) is a strength of the proposal. The district currently uses elements of TAP (p. 16), but the success of those efforts within the district was not fully described in the proposal.</p> <p>(iv) The application includes letters of support from the superintendent, board of trustees, and principals for the TAP system. Although teachers have voted to support comprehensive school-wide improvement, they have not yet voted to accept TAP.</p> <p>(v) The applicant refers to the results of a survey that indicated that 33% of TAP teachers moved to a TAP school from a more affluent school (p. 18). This suggests a potential for attracting effective educators to high needs schools. However, additional information about this survey would have been helpful to understand the impact of TAP on teacher decisions, including more information about the size of this teacher sample, the schools from which the sample was drawn, and an indication of whether TAP attracted teachers to the school or whether teachers came to a less-affluent school for another reason. It is unclear how TAP would impact teacher movement within the district to higher-need schools.</p> <p>The project connects with Texas Tech university’s teacher preparation program. However, the extent to which the work with Texas Tech will be institutionalized at the university is unclear. The Dean, in his letter of support, did not mention the connection with the university as one of the program elements.</p>		
	TOTAL	45 38

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--

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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
<p>Comments: NIET has an existing three-level classroom observation rubric. The applicant stated that Slaton ISD educators will be trained in and evaluated with this rubric. This rubric rating, combined with the value-added data will provide an overall four-level evaluation rating.</p>		
(2) Each participating LEA has presented (4 points)-- (i) A clear rationale to support its consideration of the level of student growth achieved in differentiating performance levels; and (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;	4	2
<p>Comments: The overall use of value-added growth scores is appropriately described. The applicant provides evidence of research and best practices to support the use of value-added scores in assessing student growth over time.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that 50% of the weight to measure educator effectiveness would be based on the SKR score, 30% on classroom value-added data, and 20% on school wide value-added data (p. 24). The application would have been strengthened if the applicant had explained why the classroom value-added data contributed only 30% to the overall weight of educator effectiveness. Also, an explanation for why the school-wide value added score comprised a higher percentage of effectiveness for teachers who teach grades or subjects not assessed with state or benchmark tests was not included in the proposal.</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);	13	10
<p>Comments: The applicant addresses almost all of the relevant elements in this criterion. The applicant describes a process for multiple teacher and principal observations, the training for observers, the observation tool, and attempts to ensure inter-rater reliability. The applicant does not describe the qualifications of the persons who will be conducting the observations or the events that will be</p>		

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observed.		
(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 applicant indicates that the district uses data collected through RTI and AIMS Web to monitor student growth (p. 36). The applicant also indicates that the district has used elements of the proposed system in measuring student growth (see Table 1, p. 4). However, implementation of the system has only begun and does not yet drive decisions.		
(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;	6	4
Comments: The applicant indicates that 50% of the weight to measure educator effectiveness will be based on the SKR score, 30% on classroom value-added data, and 20% on school wide value-added data (p. 24). The application would have been strengthened if classroom value-added data had a greater weight in teacher evaluations. The applicant states that the TAP rubric includes indicators that apply to teachers' work with special student populations (p. 37). However, additional details regarding the specific strategies and practices that would be offered to teachers working with special education students and English language learners would have strengthened the application.		
(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.	6	5

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Comments: The 360-degree survey was described as being a useful tool to evaluate principals' effectiveness at focusing teachers and the school community on student growth, and on measuring the extent to which the school has a collaborative culture focused on continuous improvement (p. 40). However, the applicant's description of the principal's role in focusing teacher support on achievement of all students was not specific enough. The application would have been strengthened with additional evidence of the systems and strategies that principals would apply to support the needs of special student populations.

TOTAL	35	27
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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	5
<p>Comments: The applicant clearly describes the way in which the TAP Leadership Team will use TAP data, including the CODE tools to evaluate school wide and individual teacher professional development needs (p 43). The CODE reports are described as allowing for quick access to useable data to make decisions about professional development.</p> <p>The application clearly describes the way in which data will support teachers' professional development but not how these data will support principals' professional development needs. The application would have been strengthened with specific information about how data would be used to inform principals' training.</p>		
(2) Provide professional development in a timely way (2 points);	2	2
<p>Comments: The applicant describes embedded professional development offered to cluster groups of</p>		

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<p>teachers by master and mentor teachers and also opportunities for professional development through post-conference meetings (p. 45). These strategies will provide timely professional development. The applicant fully addressed the criteria for this category.</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>3</p>
<p>Comments: The applicant describes a clear and focused system by which teachers will receive professional development and support to transfer new skills and strategies into classroom practice (p. 46). The in-class teacher models, who will observe teacher implementation of the instructional practices, will be in a position to provide support for transfer of learning. However, the applicant does not address job-embedded opportunities for principals to improve their leadership practices. The application would have been strengthened with as clear and precise a description of job-embedded opportunities for principals as the description of the teacher support systems.</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: The described professional development system clearly focuses on individual teacher needs: TAP data identify needs, expert instructors provide job-embedded training, cluster groups allow teachers to analyze data and learn together, individualized coaching supports instructional change, and master and mentor teacher visit classrooms. The system will support teachers in improving their instructional practices. However, the applicant does not provide details about the professional development for principals that would improve their leadership practices, knowledge to support teachers' instructional practices, and their ability to influence the school culture. The application would have been strengthened if the applicant had described the system for principals in as great detail as they had described with regards to the system for teachers.</p>		
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>35</p>	<p>25</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: The applicant describes the early implementation efforts to engage teachers and principals in the district for project planning. The applicant indicates that educators and principals were involved in the planning and that educators were provided information about the project (e.g., webinar and samples of materials). The applicant also describes the expected continued engagement of educators in the district through CODE training, and district planning for restructuring the school day, determining the configuration of cluster teams, and the overall structure of the professional development (PD) system (p. 52). The TAP Implementation Committee will also allow district and educator engagement and leadership in the project (p. 53).</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	12
<p>Comments: The applicant includes letters of support and describes informal widespread support of TAP. The applicant states on p. 51 that the faculty “voted to approve the proposed implementation of TAP” but on p. 55 states that “in the planning year, Staton will also conduct the faculty vote on adopting TAP”. This inconsistency makes it unclear as to whether faculty has voted to approve TAP or not. The application would have been strengthened with more specific information about the extent to which teachers and principals understand the proposed system and are willing to change their practice to implement the elements of the system.</p>		
TOTAL	35	22

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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	3
Comments: The application identifies NIET capacity and the roles and responsibilities of NIET employees for managing and overseeing the project. The applicant also describes the roles and responsibilities of staff who will work in the school district (p. 57-58). The roles and responsibilities are appropriately described.		
(2) Allocates sufficient human resources to complete project tasks (5 points);	5	5
Comments: The project appears to have sufficient human resources to complete the project. A District Executive Master Teacher will devote 100% of time, a project director 50% time, and NIET staff 20% additional time (p. 58). In addition to these paid positions, the project will include a district-based advisory board, which will provide oversight and help to guide the work of the project (p. 58).		
(3) Includes measurable project objectives and performance measures (5 points); and	5	4
Comments: The applicant describes three project objectives that are tied to the goals of the project and include clear performance measures (p. 59). However, the applicant does not state the specific expected levels of change with regards to expected changes in educator effectiveness and retention. This additional level of specificity would have strengthened the proposal.		
(4) Includes an effective project evaluation plan (5 points);	5	4
Comments: The evaluation plan focuses on both project implementation and outcomes, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data to inform project staff. The applicant identifies the types of data that will be available for the evaluator: outcome data, survey data, COPA data, interviews and focus group data, and student work. These data will allow the evaluator to draw conclusions about the project. The evaluation could have been strengthened by indicating the process for selecting the evaluator.		
(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	6
Comments: The applicant provides a timeline for the overall project and the timeline for phasing in the educator evaluation system (p. 62- 65). The timeline identifies tasks but does not clearly delineate the steps for those tasks. For example, stating that “teachers in non-tested grades will have developed SLO’s” but not the process		

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for doing so. Additional description of the milestones and process for meeting the timelines would have strengthened the application.		
(5) Specifies realistic and achievable timelines for: (ii) Successfully completing project tasks and achieving objectives (4 points).	4	3
Comments: The applicant provides a timeline for the overall project (p. 62- 65). Additional information to describe the elements of the timeline would have strengthened the proposal. For example, according to the timeline, the DA is responsible for implementing a salary structure. This is a complex task, which will require a number of steps and levels of approval. A description of the project management process by which this would happen would have enhanced the project.		
TOTAL	30	25

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	4
Comments: A strength of the proposal is the capacity and experience that NIET brings to the project. However, the applicant does not clearly describe how the systems will be sustained after the support of NIET is not available at the end of the grant. The plan for increasing the district's share of performance-based compensation yearly during the grant period is another strength of the proposal. The applicant states the amount of funds that the district will contribute to the performance based compensation (p. 66) but does not state the source of these funds. The applicant also does not state how in five years the district will have funds to support increased teacher compensation.		
(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	7
Comments: The applicant states that the cost of implementing TAP decreases (p. 67) after initial implementation, and that other schools have continued to use TAP after the completion of a TIF grant. However, the applicant does not provide evidence of long-term implementation with fidelity to the model of TAP in these other schools. Although the application describes three strategies for		

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sustaining the project, the primary focus on sustainability appears to be on a communication plan. The application would have been strengthened with additional descriptions of how the professional development and support systems would continue and the staff who would be responsible for continuing these systems after the completion of the grant.		
TOTAL	20	11

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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	12
Comments: The applicant indicates that the school district will convene a committee to examine the reformed salary schedule and will present a recommendation to the school board of education by year 4 of the grant. However, this does not address the potential feasibility or expected level of stakeholder support and likelihood that the structure will be adopted. The applicant did not provide sufficient details about the enhanced salary schedule for principals. The application would have been strengthened with additional information about the percentage of salary that the principals could earn through this initiative.		
TOTAL	20	12
GRAND TOTAL	220	160

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