

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/24/2025 04:01 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Curators of the University of Missouri Special Trust (S411B250075)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	70
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Returning Educ to States	10	0
Sub Total	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Expanding Educ Choice	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	115	70

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - Midphase - 13: 84.411B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: The Curators of the University of Missouri Special Trust (S411B250075)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project introduces an innovative approach, such as a modification of an evidence-based project component to serve different populations, an extension of an existing evidence-based project component, a unique composition of various project components to explore combined effects, or development of an emerging project component that needs further testing.

Strengths:

Given the information shared in the narrative on page e13, the applicant clearly establishes this proposed project as an extension of the project funded in 2021, 'Talk to Read', which focused on 2nd-grade teachers. The current project will expand to build the capacity of 4th and 5th-grade teachers to improve literacy achievement. The applicant demonstrates the importance of expanding this project; data is shared concerning the need for teacher support in the teaching of reading (e13-14).

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to effectively scale the proposed project for recipients, community members and partners. In determining the applicant's strategy to effectively scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 35

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is unmet demand for broader implementation of the project that is aligned with the proposed level of scale.

Sub

Strengths:

The unmet demand for broader implementation to scale is proven by five barriers that were identified because of the early-phase project. The identified barriers were a frame of reference that informed the project's expansion. The current project plans to address the barriers using five strategies presented on pages e19-21. Examples of these key strategies include professional development for teacher leaders, teacher leader-administrator collaboration, and creation of school-based implementation teams. There is a direct correlation between the identified barriers and the key strategies, which provides solid evidence of the unmet demand.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 10

2. **(2) The feasibility of the management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

Strengths:

There is a very structured plan in place to ensure the project can achieve its objectives and goals. For example, there is a project leadership team that will meet on a consistent basis to oversee the implementation, design, and data collection associated with the project (e21). Over the five years, there are clear timelines for established tasks that need to be completed. The tables on pages e22-23 spell out what will happen with the two cohorts in the rural Missouri schools, as well as who is responsible for the completion of project tasks.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 10

3. **(3) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.**

Strengths:

Project Amplify explains exactly how partners will demonstrate commitment on pages e23-27. Each of the organizations identified on page e9 in the project abstract will have a specific role and responsibility related to the project's implementation. For example, the Kansas City Audio-Visual and Swivl partners will provide a 10% match for each of the project grant years.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 5

4. **(4) The quality of the plan to deliver project services more efficiently at scale and maintain effectiveness.**

Strengths:

The plan to deliver project services more efficiently is outlined in the narrative of the application. For example, to promote cost efficiency, there will be a hybrid Professional Development model that will reduce the need for travel and costs to cover substitute teachers. In terms of effectiveness, there will be a standardized observation rubric and recorded classroom videos to support teacher self-efficacy and engagement for better efficiency. Several key project components provide a scalable and efficient model to help improve literacy instruction. This includes the

Sub

digital infrastructure put in place, the embedded coaching capacity, and a focus on continuous improvement.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 5

5. (5) The quality of the mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information and resources on its project to support further development, adaptation, or replication by other entities to implement project components in additional settings or with other populations.

Strengths:

Information and resources will be broadly disseminated to support further development and replication. Examples of this include the development of websites, social media, and press releases. Additionally, the applicant plans to disseminate via research conferences and publications (pages e28-29) to contribute to the national evidence base on literacy instruction, teacher professional learning, and scalable PD models.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

1. (1) The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes.

Strengths:

The applicant's logic model on page e29 does contain all of the key components, such as inputs, outputs, activities, and outcomes. There is good alignment between the inputs and the outcomes. For example, the inputs include an online PD platform and classroom PD for teachers. This is reflected in the outcomes. The long-term outcomes indicate the overall impact the project can have as a result of the implementation with fidelity.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 15

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and ambitious yet achievable within the project period, and aligned with the purposes of the grant program.

Sub

Strengths:

For each of the four project goals, there are specific, measurable objectives that are ambitious as outlined in Table 4 on page e31. Data related to the project goals and objectives will be collected by the external evaluator. There are more measures and descriptions of how this will be supported in the Appendix area of the application (pages 189-194). Table J1b contains efficacy phase outcome measures related to the project's evaluation. Several key constructs include specific points of measurement with a specified timeline for the collection of data.

Weaknesses:

None identified.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

- 1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the effectiveness of the project on relevant outcomes that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations, as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing and potential implementation in other settings.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 3. (3) The quality of the evaluation plan for measuring fidelity of implementation, including thresholds for acceptable implementation, to inform how implementation is associated with outcomes.**

Sub

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

4. (4) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including valid and reliable information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Returning Education to the States (up to 10 points).

Project or proposals that will be carried out by one or more of the following entities:

- (a) State educational agencies (as defined in 20 U.S.C. 7801(49))
- (b) An Indian Tribe (as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304(e)), Tribal organization (as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304(l)), or Tribal educational agency (as defined in 20 U.S.C. 7452(b)(3))
- (c) Consortia of the entities identified under this priority.

Strengths:

None identified.

Weaknesses:

This CPP1 was not addressed in the application.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Expanding Education Choice (High-Impact Tutoring) (up to 5 points).

Projects or proposals that will expand access to education services that accelerate learning such as high-impact tutoring.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to review the evidence related to education services that accelerate learning, including high-impact tutoring, and to cite the highest-level of evidence supporting their response to the competitive preference priority in their application.

Strengths:

None identified.

Weaknesses:

This CPP2 was not addressed in the application.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Curators of the University of Missouri Special Trust (S411B250075)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	15
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	70
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Returning Educ to States	10	0
Sub Total	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Expanding Educ Choice	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	115	70

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - Midphase - 13: 84.411B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: The Curators of the University of Missouri Special Trust (S411B250075)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project introduces an innovative approach, such as a modification of an evidence-based project component to serve different populations, an extension of an existing evidence-based project component, a unique composition of various project components to explore combined effects, or development of an emerging project component that needs further testing.

Strengths:

The application introduces an innovative approach that is evident through providing a hybrid professional model by the name of Amplify. This model will combine an evidence-based literacy framework with scalable delivery, an AI-enhanced lesson plans, virtual ECHO coaching, video-enabled feedback with Swivl and a teacher-leader micro credential to localized expertise. The components of the innovative program include asynchronous modules and virtual coaching, a teacher-leader coaching structure and an AI supported lesson planning tools. The activities represent a comprehensive and well-aligned approach to improve literacy outcomes. There is a cohesive and methodological design in the inclusion of PD for teachers and administrators, teacher-leader micro-credentialing, classroom implementation with observation and feedback and the RCT with a continuous improvement cycle. (E8). Since the program will be used for students in grades 4th and 5th who attend rural and small group schools with high economic disadvantaged numbers, it will address the critical and well-documented gap in educational equity. Additionally, the application shows an alignment between the identified needs and the proposed plan by targeting the schools that have low access to high-quality PD and demonstrate a below state average in the ELA performance assessment. Students who are English learners and students with disabilities will also participate in the program.

The program is an extension of the early-phase project funded in 2021 by the name of Talk to Read. The project provided professional development to 2nd grade teachers in order to improve literacy learning and achievement of high needs students. The application provided national significance by stating that 69% of 4th graders and 70% of 8th graders are scoring below proficient level in reading nationwide. There is a need to provide instruction in the area of phonological awareness, phonics decoding, oral language, vocabulary, language structure, reading fluency, reading comprehension and writing as part of the evidence-based literacy instruction (EBLI). (E13). Teachers will use Amplify to teach EBLI within the students' vocabulary and background knowledge skills throughout all curriculum areas which will demonstrate coherence, scalability and provide potential for measurable impact. (E13-E15)

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

- 1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to effectively scale the proposed project for recipients, community members and partners. In determining the applicant's strategy to effectively scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 35

Sub

- 1. (1) The extent to which there is unmet demand for broader implementation of the project that is aligned with the proposed level of scale.**

Strengths:

The application clearly demonstrates unmet demand for broader implementation by addressing the five barriers that were identified in the early phase program initiative of Talk to Read. The application provided strategies for each of the areas; PD for teacher leaders, collaborations with school administrators, school-based implementation team, teacher leader micro-credential and hybrid PD sessions, modes and pacing. The strategies provided were relevant and addressed each of the unmet demands. For example, the PD for teacher leaders will provide a total of 9 days of professional development with 6 of those dates under the regular teacher PD given by the school and 3 days to address mentoring skills and adult learning principles. Those teacher leaders will be mentors and provide a variety of activities to their colleagues including day to day coaching, in-class coaching visits per teacher, and guidance to create a clear vision and plan. Under Collaborations with School administrators, the administrators will be required to form an onsite collaborative network with teacher leaders and other administrators, have a deep and clear understanding of Amplify and ensure quality of the implementation of the EBLI strategies. Additionally, the program will have an implementation team per school that will consist of the lead teacher, school administrator and participating 4th and 5th grade teachers. (E19-E21)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 10

- 2. (2) The feasibility of the management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

Strengths:

The application provided a management plan that appears highly feasible, with clearly defined roles, timelines, and milestones that support timely completion of project goals. For example, the application stated that there will be weekly meetings with the project leadership team to oversee the project implementation, iterative design and data collection. The management plan demonstrates a clear and systematic approach to implementation. This is demonstrated by the team conducting meetings with the external evaluation team and with members of the LEA on alternative weeks to ensure that the activities are on time and being implemented with fidelity. During the Pilot phase of implementation, the team will design and create PD materials, a program website a self-paced course and webinars for the purpose of building educator capacity and promoting sustainability. The pilot teachers will provide

Sub

feedback in order to revise and improve the program. The application included a comprehensive and well-organized table with the timeline and cohorts for the program. Each cohort consists of 20 schools, administrators, and Teacher Lead, 80 teachers and 1600 students. Additionally, there will be a waitlist control group with the same number of participants for each of the cohorts. The table provided the timeline of implementation during the duration of the five-year program. Additionally, the application provided a chart with the milestones, dates and responsible party for each area of implementation (planning and management, pilot phase, efficacy phase for cohort 1 and 2 and analysis and dissemination phase). (E21-23)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 10

3. (3) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

The application demonstrates strong partner relevance and commitment through a descriptive narrative for each of the partners involved in the program. Those partners include the University of Missouri, the Missouri Prevention Science Institute, Galena R-II School District, the MU Partnership for Educational Renewal, Kansas City Audio-Visual and Swivl. Additionally, the applicant provided the experiences of other key partners that will assist in the program. These included the primary investigator, co-project director, co-investigators, independent evaluator, and college instructors. The application also stated the corporate partners and institutional partners have joined together to provide a 10% match for the duration of the grant program. (E9) (E23- 27)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 5

4. (4) The quality of the plan to deliver project services more efficiently at scale and maintain effectiveness.

Strengths:

The application presents a high-quality plan to deliver project services efficiently at scale while maintaining effectiveness. The application stated that by the end of the grant period, they will have reached a total of 80 schools, 320 teachers, 80 teacher leaders and approximately 6400 students. Since the Professional development will be provided through a hybrid program model to include asynchronous online learning modules, virtual ECHO coaching and AI supported lesson planning tools, the cost of obtaining travel and substitute costs will be significantly lower than the traditional PD delivery. Sustainability will be obtained through the use of the teacher-leader model. EBLI observation rubrics and Swivl-recorded classroom videos will be used to determine the fidelity of the program. There will be a refinement of the activities based on annual teacher feedback and evaluation findings. (E27)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 5

5. (5) The quality of the mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information and resources on its project to support further development, adaptation, or

Sub

replication by other entities to implement project components in additional settings or with other populations.

Strengths:

The application provides a clear and effective plan for disseminating project findings to support adaptation or replication by other entities. For example, the application stated that they would disseminate information through the project website, the partner's Facebook community, X Feed and LinkedIn account. They will also partner with professional agencies such as KindeaLabs in order to produce and post to YouTube. The PI and Co-PI will engage in other mediums such as radio talk and podcasts. Additionally, they will share results on their website and the Network for Educator Effectiveness website. (E28)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

- 1. (1) The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes.**

Strengths:

The application presents a well-constructed logic model/conceptual framework that clearly links inputs to intended outcomes. The logic model provided included inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. The resources needed for the project were listed under inputs. The activities were divided into phases; development, implementation, and improvement. The outputs were also divided into sections to include school, teacher and student. The outcomes included short, mid and long-term results that tied back to the inputs and the activities under each of the categories. (E29-E31)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 15

- 2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and ambitious yet achievable within the project period, and aligned with the purposes of the grant program.**

Strengths:

The application clearly specifies goals, objectives, and outcomes that are measurable, ambitious, and achievable within the project period. For example, the application provided four goals with their objectives that included implementing Amplify with fidelity, increasing teacher knowledge, efficacy and instructional practice in EBLI, improving student engagement, self-efficacy and literacy achievement and building sustainable district and state capacity for literacy improvement. The objectives listed were sequential in order and built from one to the other.

Sub

(E31-E33)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. **(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the effectiveness of the project on relevant outcomes that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations, as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

2. **(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing and potential implementation in other settings.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

3. **(3) The quality of the evaluation plan for measuring fidelity of implementation, including thresholds for acceptable implementation, to inform how implementation is associated with outcomes.**

Strengths:

Sub

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

4. (4) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including valid and reliable information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Returning Education to the States (up to 10 points).

Project or proposals that will be carried out by one or more of the following entities:

- (a) State educational agencies (as defined in 20 U.S.C. 7801(49))
- (b) An Indian Tribe (as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304(e)), Tribal organization (as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304(I)), or Tribal educational agency (as defined in 20 U.S.C. 7452(b)(3))
- (c) Consortia of the entities identified under this priority.

Strengths:

No strengths identified.

Weaknesses:

Criterion was not addressed

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Expanding Education Choice (High-Impact Tutoring) (up to 5 points).

Projects or proposals that will expand access to education services that accelerate learning such as high-impact tutoring.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to review the evidence related to education services that accelerate learning, including high-impact tutoring, and to cite the highest-level of evidence supporting their response to the competitive preference priority in their application.

Strengths:

No strengths identified

Weaknesses:

Criterion was not addressed

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Curators of the University of Missouri Special Trust (S411B250075)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	35	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	30
Sub Total	100	30
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Returning Educ to States	10	0
Sub Total	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Expanding Educ Choice	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	115	30

Technical Review Form

Panel #11 - Midphase - 13: 84.411B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: The Curators of the University of Missouri Special Trust (S411B250075)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project introduces an innovative approach, such as a modification of an evidence-based project component to serve different populations, an extension of an existing evidence-based project component, a unique composition of various project components to explore combined effects, or development of an emerging project component that needs further testing.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to effectively scale the proposed project for recipients, community members and partners. In determining the applicant's strategy to effectively scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is unmet demand for broader implementation of the project that is aligned with the proposed level of scale.

Strengths:

N/A

Sub

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The feasibility of the management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

4. (4) The quality of the plan to deliver project services more efficiently at scale and maintain effectiveness.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

5. (5) The quality of the mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information and resources on its project to support further development, adaptation, or replication by other entities to implement project components in additional settings or with other populations.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Sub

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and ambitious yet achievable within the project period, and aligned with the purposes of the grant program.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 30

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the effectiveness of the project on relevant outcomes that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations, as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks.

Sub

Strengths:

This proposal outlines a cluster randomized-control trial, with school sites serving as the unit of randomization (e37). Primary analyses will use an intent-to-treat framework (e35), meaning the analysis will include every participant who is randomized according to randomized treatment assignment. ITT preserved the benefits of randomization by including all participants as originally assigned and preserves the integrity of randomization to draw more precise estimates of effect.

A strength of this proposal is the use of a pilot year before the larger impact study (e21). This smaller pilot phase with only 4 school sites will allow for iterative refinements to materials, including teacher and student surveys, fidelity of implementation matrix, and conduct focus groups (186-187).

Finally, this proposal addresses many of the common concerns in a cluster RCT, including appropriate adjustments for baselines differences in impact analyses (e36), a plan to address attrition should it exceed expectations (e36), and an a priori power analysis that supports the prediction of detecting an effect at the proposed sample size (e36, e37, &e197). This rigorous experimental design that uses valid and reliable measures (e189-190), along with an experienced and independent evaluator (e25-26), demonstrates the proposal's potential to provide reliable evidence of the effect of the program in line with WWC standards.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

2. (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing and potential implementation in other settings.

Strengths:

A strength of the proposal is the plan to include two cohorts of schools, with staggered implementation across years (e22), after the initial pilot year. This will allow for multiple opportunities to replicate effects. This staggered cohort model combined with the proposal's commitment to continuous improvement through frequent review of extensive fidelity and implementation data (e27), should provide ample guidance about the suitability of replication.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. (3) The quality of the evaluation plan for measuring fidelity of implementation, including thresholds for acceptable implementation, to inform how implementation is associated with outcomes.

Strengths:

A significant strength of this project's evaluation plan is the commitment to monitoring all aspects of implementation fidelity. The proposal outlines a clear plan to assess multiple aspects of fidelity, including adherence to program design, dosage of program received by students and teachers, and the quality of the program delivery (e40), including monitoring the fidelity of the professional development delivery (e188). A detailed observation rubric will be developed through a validated through expert review and piloted before the larger impact study. Observers will be trained to an acceptable level of interrater reliability with periodic calibration sessions to monitor for drift (e40). This valid and reliable fidelity data will be incorporated into analytic models to monitor implementation quality and as potential moderators of outcomes (e40). This demonstrates the proposal's proactive approach to ensure implementation quality remains consistent, thereby increasing the internal validity of the study.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

4. (4) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including valid and reliable information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

Strengths:

A significant strength of the evaluation plan is the mixed methods data collection, including measures of quantitative and qualitative data (e93), to provide bountiful information about implementation and evaluation of the program. Data will include student achievement data on state outcomes, student writing portfolios (assessed using a validated rubric), student and teacher surveys, teacher professional development knowledge assessments (both pre- and post- PD sessions), EBLI observation rubrics, coaching logs, implementation fidelity rubrics, and teacher interviews (e33, e34, e39). This extensive data collection demonstrates the proposal's commitment to a comprehensive understanding of the program.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Returning Education to the States (up to 10 points).

Project or proposals that will be carried out by one or more of the following entities:

- (a) State educational agencies (as defined in 20 U.S.C. 7801(49))
- (b) An Indian Tribe (as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304(e)), Tribal organization (as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304(I)), or Tribal educational agency (as defined in 20 U.S.C. 7452(b)(3))
- (c) Consortia of the entities identified under this priority.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Expanding Education Choice (High-Impact Tutoring) (up to 5 points).

Projects or proposals that will expand access to education services that accelerate learning such as high-impact tutoring.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to review the evidence related to education services that accelerate learning, including high-impact tutoring, and to cite the highest-level of evidence supporting their response to the competitive preference priority in their application.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
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