

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/11/2017 11:50 AM

## Technical Review

**Applicant:** Austin Independent School District (U411C170017)

**Reader #1:** \*\*\*\*\*

	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Scored</b>
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	30	30
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan</b>		
1. Project Design/Management	50	50
<b>Sub Total</b>	80	80
<b>Total</b>	80	80

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - EIR - Early Phase - Content - 2: 84.411C

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Austin Independent School District (U411C170017)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The national significance of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

#### Strengths:

(1) The applicant proposes to develop a program to implement restorative practices and an inclusionary school-wide approach to addressing discipline disparities within a feeder pattern of elementary and middle schools with the highest percentage of at risk students within the district. Suspensions and Expulsions are stated to have short and long term negative consequences such as academic disengagement, poor academic performance, school dropout and an increase in the involvement in the juvenile justice system (Page1). The focus of the program will be on the transition points between high-need elementary and middle school students. The applicant noted that the school district faces a lot of challenges with serving their students equitably in disciplinary matters (Page 2). Further, it was noted that students have difficulty transitioning from elementary school to middle school due to the changes that occur emotionally, physically and interpersonally (Page 3). By implementing the restorative practices from the proposed program, the applicant intends to foster positive school climate and address the disparities in exclusionary discipline practices (Page 1).

(2) The applicant would like to build on their existing framework around Social Emotional Learning, multi-tiered systems of support and they also plan to continue partnering with the Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI) which is the nation's leading Social Emotional Learning organization. Through the organization's partnership and assistance, the applicant has been able to provide implementation of direct Social Emotional Learning instruction across the district. Researchers have found that effective school-based Social Emotional Learning positively impacts academic, social and behavioral outcomes for students (Page 4).

(3) The applicant addresses Absolute Priority 1 – Supports High Needs Students by reaching over 6500 students and staff to provide restorative practices and imbedding Social Emotional Learning content into the school curriculum district wide. Absolute Priority 2 – Improve School Climate will be addressed by providing behavioral supports and correctional education with a focus on the transition points from middle to high schools to foster school climate and reduce exclusionary discipline (Page 1).

#### Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses noted in this section.

Reader's Score: 30

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.
- (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.
- (3) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.
- (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

#### Strengths:

- (1) The goals and objectives of the project were clearly specified and measurable in the proposal. The overarching goal was to reduce disparities in exclusionary practices by implementing restorative practices within a social emotional learning framework. There were several objectives noted to assist students, guide teachers and create a school-wide culture of restorative practice and activities listed in order to achieve the desired outcomes that were listed (Page 9-10).
- (2) The management plan included the objectives, clearly defined responsibilities for key staff and personnel responsible for the monitoring and progress of the project, timelines and milestones based on educator professional development, student academic progress and the improvement of school climate (Page 14-15).
- (3) The applicant noted that there will be comprehensive measures to collect and evaluate data to assess the progress of the program at various intervals. The measures include interviews, focus groups, observations and student perceptions. Data from these methods will be used to inform and monitor progress against the targets established where the evaluator and the stakeholders can make decisions, adjustments or modifications to the program delivery (Page 16-17).
- (4) The applicant noted that they will draw on a wide range of dissemination mechanisms to share the impact of the project; publications in journals, consultative training sessions with school districts, presentations, newsletters, federal and state agencies and human service agencies. They will share lessons and learning opportunities with professional learning communities with superintendents and staff and meet regularly with educational stakeholders to exchange best practice strategies (Page 17-18)

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted in this section.

Reader's Score: 50

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Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review

**Applicant:** Austin Independent School District (U411C170017)

**Reader #2:** \*\*\*\*\*

	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Scored</b>
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	30	26
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan</b>		
1. Project Design/Management	50	47
<b>Sub Total</b>	80	73
<b>Total</b>	80	73

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - EIR - Early Phase - Content - 2: 84.411C

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Austin Independent School District (U411C170017)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The national significance of the proposed project.
- (2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.
- (3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

#### Strengths:

- 1) The national significance of the project is reflected in the fact that the project is advocating for the implementation of restorative practices as an alternative tool to prevent disciplinary problems. Existence of exclusionary disciplinary policies across the nation have led to disproportionate disciplinary treatment of students with disabilities and students of color. The project focuses on the impact of Restorative Practices in changing behavior at “points of transition” from Elementary School to Middle School where young adolescents experience rapid change in their behavior due to physiological and interpersonal development. This proposed intervention is of national significance as suspensions and expulsions occurring mainly at the “point of transition” are derailing the progress of young people, mostly students of color, across the nation’s schools. P1-3.
- 2) The project is building upon the Austin Independent School District’s (AISD) framework around social and emotional learning (SEL) as well as multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). The project fits and compliments the district’s multi-tiered systems of support which include rebuilding relationships, building community and reintegrating students. P2-3.
- 3) The project is exceptional as it is supported by a plethora of evidence based theories. As presented by the Applicant, scholarly work by Summer, Silverman and Frampton 2010 credits Restorative Practices as providing methods and frameworks for teachers and administrators to work with young people to build respectful relationships. Another scholarly work by Durlack, et al, 2011 supports Restorative Practices in that they help students improve their academic tasks and social behaviors resulting in higher academic achievement. The Applicant further refers to various theories from Heckman and Kautz, Gregory, Skiba and Noguera, Gay etc all pointing out to the fact that Restorative Practices creates a climate that promotes healthy relationships and develops social- emotional understanding that enhances teaching and learning. P6-7.

#### Weaknesses:

- 1.No weaknesses noted
- 2.The Applicant did not provide much detail and data with regards to the success of the implementation of systemic SEL that the project is building on. P4-5
- 3.No weaknesses noted

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan**

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

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.**
- (2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
- (3) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.**
- (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

**Strengths:**

- 1) The project is centered around four goals that are clearly defined, and they provide an overall context of what the project is trying to achieve. The goals involve building capacity of high need students in Austin to implement Restorative Practices, improving student academic outcomes, teacher attitudes and campus level outcomes. The corresponding objectives are also specific, and measurable. P10.
- 2) The Management plan is structured in such a way that key personnel positions are allocated duties and responsibilities which are to be accomplished within specified times. The Applicant provides for checks and balances where District Coordinator of Cultural Proficiency, Inclusiveness and Restorative Practices oversees the project coordinator. P14.
- 3) The Applicant has a comprehensive mechanism for feedback and continuous improvement. The mechanism provides for separate monthly meetings of the Project Team and Campus based LRT members. In these meetings, the former will review project progress toward milestones and goals at each campus and identify problems and work on solutions; the latter will discuss action plans, accomplishments and coordinating of onsite observations. Expert consultation to troubleshoot obstacles is conducted weekly and there is also an ongoing implementation feedback. The mechanisms are crucial and they provide authentic feedback and information with regards to the implementation of the project. P16.
- 4) The Applicant has put in place a range of information dissemination mechanisms. The effectiveness of the mechanisms is enhanced through the Applicant's use of professional platforms in the dissemination process. The project will be published in social work journals, newsletters, academic publications and presented at professional conferences. The Applicant will involve the largest education and social science research organization to carry independent evaluation of the project and produce reports that will be disseminated nationally. P18.

**Weaknesses:**

- 1)No weaknesses noted
- 2)The Applicant did not provide detail with regards to the "existing organizational and operational structures" that the project management will utilize.
- 3)No weaknesses noted
- 4)No weaknesses noted



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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 07/11/2017 05:16 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/11/2017 07:19 PM

## Technical Review

**Applicant:** Austin Independent School District (U411C170017)

**Reader #3:** \*\*\*\*\*

	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Scored</b>
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	30	30
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan</b>		
1. Project Design/Management	50	50
<b>Sub Total</b>	80	80
<b>Total</b>	80	80

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - EIR - Early Phase - Content - 2: 84.411C

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Austin Independent School District (U411C170017)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The national significance of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

(3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

#### Strengths:

1. The proposal by Austin Independent School District (AISD) is very well written and addresses the areas of significance well. The national significance is demonstrated by the research cited (pp. 1-4) and highlights the student population being targeted and the fact these students and Texas, as a whole, represent a microcosm of what is happening in many communities around the country (p. 2).

2. Austin ISD has been working with efforts to improve school climate and has been nationally recognized for these efforts. This proposal will build upon these efforts (p. 4 and 12), specifically the social and emotional learning (SEL) and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) currently being implemented in the district for which the district has received national recognition (pp. 4-5).

3. The proposed project, while planning to build upon the existing SEL model, will add to existing practices by incorporating Restorative Practices (RP) as a whole-school approach, involving the community in working to solve issues facing under-represented students (p. 7).

#### Weaknesses:

1. No weaknesses noted.

2. No weaknesses noted.

3. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 30

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.

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

(3) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

**(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

**Strengths:**

1. The strengths of this application for quality are numerous. The applicants included how many aspects of this application would be part of a longitudinal study. The goals and objectives (p. 9-10) are measurable and feasible. The outcomes listed for each of the overall goals state realistic numbers that can be achieved if the plan comes to fruition.
2. The management plan, outlined on page 15, shows a detailed plan to implement the proposed project. The plan outlines four areas, that if achieved, will fulfill the goals of the project. In addition, there is an adequate number of personnel used in the plan to achieve the goals (pp. 12-13).
3. The feedback will be continuous throughout the implementation and will allow for emergent trends to develop and adjustments to be made as the feedback results are monitored (p. 16). The strategies and responsibilities listed within the feedback section (Table 3) indicate how often information will be gathered and from whom.
4. Finally, the applicants have instilled a method to disseminate the results of the project, but the plan explains dissemination to a large, scholarly audience and tangentially discusses students and parents. The data teams will be working with local stakeholders throughout the project and progress will be communicated through this structure (p. 16).

**Weaknesses:**

1. No weaknesses noted.
2. No weaknesses noted.
3. No weaknesses noted.
4. No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 50**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 07/11/2017 07:19 PM