

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/13/2021 07:25 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Uplift Education (S411C210122)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	0
Sub Total	50	0
Resources & Management Plan		
Resources & Management Plan		
1. Resources & Manag. Plan	25	0
Sub Total	25	0
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	19
Sub Total	25	19
Priority Questions		
CPP1		
CPP1		
1. CPP1	5	
Sub Total	5	
CPP2		
CPP2		
1. CPP2	5	
Sub Total	5	
CPP3		
CPP3		
1. CPP3	5	
Sub Total	5	
Total	115	19

Technical Review Form

Panel #14 - EIR Early Phase - 14: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Uplift Education (S411C210122)

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 the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. 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.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

2. The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

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. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

2. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

3. The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Resources & Management Plan - Resources & Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. 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.

Sub

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 3. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 4. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a Randomized Control Trial (RCT) to evaluate the impact of the proposed Path to Purpose program. Specifically, the applicant proposes a RCT where students will be randomly assigned within blocks (schools) to either treatment or control group (page e38). The proposed evaluation design (pages e37-e39), if well implemented, should produce reliable evidence about the program's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations.

In line with WWC guidelines, the applicant demonstrates that the power analysis is adequate and the sample size is sufficient for eliciting the minimum detectable effect size (pages e38 and e121). In addition, the application demonstrates thoughtful consideration of potential threats to the internal validity of the study (in particular, attrition, spillover, and contamination from treatment to control) and proffers practical strategies for mitigation (pages e39 and e121-e122). Moreover, the planned analytical approaches for the impact study align with the program conceptual model and best practices in educational research (pages e37-e38 and e42). For example, the planned multilevel mediation analysis is appropriate for the nested structure of the data and for estimating student outcomes and assessing the mechanisms (e.g., teacher satisfaction) that may influence the impact of the program on student outcomes (page e42).

The applicant clearly demonstrates that the evaluation team is external to the project implementation team (and school district)—this will enhance objectivity in the proposed impact and fidelity studies (page e121-e122).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly demonstrate that the measures and surveys listed on page e41 have acceptable reliability and validity indices. The applicant merely refers readers to a website for reliability and validity reports (page e41) and does not include actual reliability indices for the measures. Given that reviewers are not at liberty to consider information beyond what is in the application, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the outcome evaluation tools and measures are actually reliable and/or valid.

The applicant does not clearly describe eligibility criteria for students in the treatment and control schools. Specifically, on page e38, the applicant states that "students will be randomly assigned within blocks (schools) to either the treatment or control group;" but does not indicate if any eligibility criteria will be used to identify students for the impact study before randomization. In addition, the applicant states that "students in the treatment group will receive a high dose of Second Step SEL instruction" and students in the control group will receive "the business-as-usual curriculum" (page e38); however, the applicant does not clearly delineate how the implementation of the high dose of instruction differs from the implementation of the business-as-usual curriculum. Hence, it is difficult to assess how the implementation of Second Step in the proposed project will be different from current implementation of the curriculum in the target schools.

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a feasible and appropriate plan for providing performance feedback and periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes (pages e35-e40). The planned implementation study will focus on program adherence, duration, quality of delivery, participant responsiveness, and program differentiation (page e40). Assessment of these five implementation elements is logical and should provide useful data for assessing the extent to which the intervention activities were implemented as intended, which will in turn contribute to continuous program improvement.

The proposed interviews with organizational, project, and school leaders and focus group with teachers should provide meaningful feedback regarding perceptions of the program interventions, effectiveness, and potential barriers to success and implementation fidelity (page e39). Likewise, the proposed weekly executive meetings and regular periodic meetings of the project management team, including monthly meeting between the project management team and the evaluation team (page e36) should offer opportunities for timely feedback.

Weaknesses:

The applicant mentioned that coaching observation will be conducted (pages e26 and e115), but does not discuss how data from the observation protocols will be used to inform program performance or enhance continuous quality improvement. In addition, the applicant does not provide information about sampling for the student and teacher focus groups and satisfaction surveys (pages e39-40).

Reader's Score: 3

3. (3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increase knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

Strengths:

The study, if implemented as described, has the potential to enhance understanding of the impact of high dosage socioemotional interventions on student outcomes. The results of the planned multilevel mediator models (page e42) should contribute to literature on how teacher and context variables (e.g., teacher satisfaction) influence the relationship between participation in high dosage socioemotional interventions and student outcomes, especially among limited-resource, high need students.

The applicant proposes a feasible and logical plan for disseminating lessons learned from the proposed program. Specifically, the applicant plans to leverage existing partnerships and educational networks such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Ensemble Learning cohort; conduct site visits; give presentations and professional and practitioner conferences; and conduct dissemination to local stakeholders (e.g., directors, parents, and teachers) via social media outlets, in-person meetings, and newsletters (pages e23 and e24).

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

CPP1 - CPP1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Computer Science (up to 5 points).

Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in this notice). These projects must address the following priority area:

Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in this notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in this notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

CPP2 - CPP2

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Innovative Approaches to Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Underserved Students and Educators (up to 5 points).**

Projects designed to address the needs of underserved students and educators most impacted by COVID-19 through...[refer to the NIA for the full list of potential projects]

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

CPP3 - CPP3

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Equity and Adequacy in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 5 points).**

Projects designed to promote equity in access to critical resources for underserved students in prekindergarten through grade 12 through one or more of the following...[refer to the NIA for the full set of potential projects]

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Uplift Education (S411C210122)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	27
Sub Total	50	47
Resources & Management Plan		
Resources & Management Plan		
1. Resources & Manag. Plan	25	24
Sub Total	25	24
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	0
Sub Total	25	0
Priority Questions		
CPP1		
CPP1		
1. CPP1	5	
Sub Total	5	
CPP2		
CPP2		
1. CPP2	5	4
Sub Total	5	4
CPP3		
CPP3		
1. CPP3	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	115	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #14 - EIR Early Phase - 14: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Uplift Education (S411C210122)

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 the following factors:

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

1. 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.

Strengths:

Uplift Education is a large charter school network in Texas strategically and intentionally located in high need, urban communities. It emphasizes scholarly achievement in schools that promote well-being (p. 24). It's current well-being program has differentiated curriculum by grade level (e.g., Second Step for K-8th graders) and is headed by a district level "Chief Well-Being and SEL Officer" (pp. e18-e24). Under the proposed Path to Purpose project, Uplift Education will innovate and grow its existing efforts to promote student, faculty, family, and community well-being (p. e24-e26).

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 15

2. The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

The dissemination plan is thorough and well-detailed, targeted to many meaningful audiences including other charter school districts and schools, prominent funding and philanthropic organizations, and regional and national conferences (pp. e21-e23). Plans to disseminate findings to local audiences including teachers, parents, and students via website, newsletters, and social media are a noted strength (p. e23).

Weaknesses:

None.

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: 27

Sub

1. **The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.**

Strengths:

The conceptual framework is based on the school's existing philosophical emphasis on 'eudaimonia' – the highest Aristotelian virtue of living well. This ethic permeates the schools' existing well-being emphasis and is a major driver of the proposed Path the Purpose project milestones and activities. It serves as philosophical underpinning for the CASEL framework its enactment (phronesis, or practical wisdom). Additionally, all Uplift schools adopt the International Baccalaureate (IB) program and, as such, the IB Learner Profile also serves as a conceptual frame. The applicants bring these conceptual elements together with intention and practical planned actions (e.g., the Social Emotional Learning Team will work with teachers to integrate the IB Learner Profile and social emotional learning (SEL) in their classrooms) (pp. e23-e27).

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 15

2. **The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

Strengths:

The goals, objectives, and outcomes for the project are clear and well-aligned (p. e28). For example, one goal is to increase the overall well-being of students and teachers (p. e28). Student well-being will be measured using the Panorama Survey and teacher satisfaction will be measured using the Gallup 12 engagement survey (p. e41). Most of the measures used in assessing progress to meeting goals and for evaluation are already in place and regularly used by Uplift Education (p. e41).

Weaknesses:

Increasing staff retention is identified as a project goal but does not have an associated measure (p. e28). Given the randomized controlled trial design with block assignment (p. e29, p. e37), it is unclear how the project will be delivered in the 3 elementary and 3 middle schools to students assigned to just the treatment group. As such, it is unclear whether the measures are just of treatment students or all students. For example, the objective of "increasing the % of students who feel they belong" does not specify whether this increase is just for treatment students or all students regardless of their assignment to treatment or control.

Reader's Score: 3

3. **The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.**

Strengths:

The project design is well-targeted to meet the needs of identified underserved students. It will be conducted in 6 schools that serve high proportions of students who are from low-income households and whose student

Sub

disciplinary incidents and crime rates in the surrounding communities are higher than other Uplift schools (p. e19, p. e29).

Weaknesses:

It is unclear from the description of the randomized block design that students most in need of intervention will be targeted (p. e29, p. e37).

Reader's Score: 9

Resources & Management Plan - Resources & Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 24

Sub

- 1. 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.**

Strengths:

The management plan includes clear timelines, milestones, and actionable goals. For example, during Quarter 1 (Jan-March), the CEO will announce receipt of the EIR award, appoint the Project Director, and meet with stakeholders and evaluators to review goals and objectives (p. e31). The Project Management Team has a clear plan for coordination and reporting including daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, and annually delineated activities (p. e36).

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 10

- 2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

Strengths:

The project personnel have extensive professional training and experience to carry out the interventions: increased SEL instruction, ongoing observation and feedback, social-behavioral counseling, family therapy, enhanced health services, and contact with restorative specialists (p. e26). The evaluation firm, Copia Consulting, is similarly well-qualified with experience conducting evaluations for other major federal and foundation grants (p. e37; p. e121 Appendix J-6).

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 5

Sub

- 3. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

Project costs are reasonable and well-prioritized. Most of the budget is dedicated to supporting the personnel, SEL Coaches, required to carry out intervention activities (p. e125).

Weaknesses:

The applicants did not include a cost analysis. They also did not include a separate budget for the evaluation contract. The total amounts are reasonable given the activities described (block randomization, implementation evaluation including interviews and surveys, development of an implementation evaluation framework tool, data analysis, and reporting) (pp. e37-e42).

Reader's Score: 4

- 4. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

The project has clear strategies to ensure ongoing feedback and reflection at different intervals (e.g., daily, weekly). For example, the Project Director will conduct monthly site visits to observe development and ensure data collection and analysis processes are in place. The Project Management Team will meet quarterly to reflect on progress toward goals and advise future project activities accordingly (p. e36).

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, 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 project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Sub

Reader's Score:

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

3. (3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increase knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

CPP1 - CPP1

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 1: Computer Science (up to 5 points).**
Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in this notice). These projects must address the following priority area: Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in this notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in this notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

CPP2 - CPP2

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 2: Innovative Approaches to Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Underserved Students and Educators (up to 5 points).**
Projects designed to address the needs of underserved students and educators most impacted by COVID-19 through...[refer to the NIA for the full list of potential projects]

Strengths:

The applicants explain how Uplift Education responded to the distance and online learning challenges of COVID-19 (pp. e69-e70).

Weaknesses:

The applicants do not describe or provide data to show how COVID-19 impacted the students they serve. The extent to which Uplift scholars (students) most impacted by COVID-19 will be targeted by this project is unclear.

Reader's Score: 4

CPP3 - CPP3

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Equity and Adequacy in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 5 points).

Projects designed to promote equity in access to critical resources for underserved students in prekindergarten through grade 12 through one or more of the following...[refer to the NIA for the full set of potential projects]

Strengths:

Uplift schools serve students who largely come from low-income households and 80% qualify for free- and reduced-lunch meal plans. Currently 55% percent of Uplift students earn a college degree within 6 years, which the applicants report is higher than their peers, nationally (p. e19). The Path to Purpose project will promote equity by directly targeting high need students and offering them important social emotional learning, mental health, and disciplinary supports (p. e26). Importantly, in their reflection on the impact of COVID-19, Uplift Education notes they: "...learned that well-being is interpreted and viewed differently based on diversity and race. Therefore, our programing will reflect offerings that feel inviting for all" (p. e70). This statement evidences Uplift's commitment to developing a culturally responsive program.

Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/15/2021 05:48 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Uplift Education (S411C210122)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	29
Sub Total	50	49
Resources & Management Plan		
Resources & Management Plan		
1. Resources & Manag. Plan	25	23
Sub Total	25	23
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	0
Sub Total	25	0
Priority Questions		
CPP1		
CPP1		
1. CPP1	5	
Sub Total	5	
CPP2		
CPP2		
1. CPP2	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
CPP3		
CPP3		
1. CPP3	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	115	82

Technical Review Form

Panel #14 - EIR Early Phase - 14: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Uplift Education (S411C210122)

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 the following factors:

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

1. 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.

Strengths:

The applicant identified that Uplift will build on its current foundation (e 20). They plan to deepen the work realm of scholar well-being while developing and implementing new approaches to support teachers (e 20). They noted providing campus and network-based supports to include well-being assemblies, marketing campaigns, and collateral materials to support and reinforce well-being as a learnable skill, also known as Path to Purpose (e 20). They propose to focus on high-dosage delivery of Second Step Curriculum in grades K-8 (e 21).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 15

2. The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

Various strategies for dissemination were presented. For example, the applicant noted that Uplift Education will use its connections to similarly supportive channels of national and regional educational networks for broad dissemination (e 22). Uplift proposes sharing information with traditional public-school districts, colleges, and university partners (e 22). The applicant addressed hosting site visits and participating in conferences hosted by the Texas Conference for School Administrators, Texas Charter School Association, and Emotional Learning (e 23). It was also noted that Uplift would disseminate information on project implementation and interim and final results to stakeholders using its website, newsletters, social media sites, and in-person meetings (e 23).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

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: 29

Sub

- 1. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.**

Strengths:

The applicant provided extensive research accumulated from student achievement, neuroscience, health, employment, psychology, classroom management, learning theory, economics, and the prevention of youth problem behaviors (e 26). The research presented and emphasized education promoting social-emotional learning (e 26). The applicant also noted that the Path to Purpose design features six interventions for the treatment schools (e 26). It was noted that interventions included explicit socio-emotional learning instruction, increased ongoing observation, and feedback cycles, increased social-behavioral counseling sessions, family therapy, enhanced health services, and telemedicine, and increased contact time with restorative specialists (e 26).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 15

- 2. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

Strengths:

The project's goal of Path to Purpose is to create, test, and refine Socio-Emotional Learning interventions through the deployment of new strategies that increase social and emotional skills, decrease disciplinary incidents, increase attendance, and increase academic achievement for students, improve school climate, increase staff retention, and increase overall well-being for students and teachers (e 27). For example, the applicant proposed to reduce disciplinary referrals in Tier 1 by 10% using the first year as a baseline and seeing a 7% reduction by year 4 (e 28). The applicant also proposed improving student academic growth and achievement in year 2 by 72% with at least 80% of Uplift schools rating as A or B, with no F schools (e 28).

Sub

Weaknesses:

More specific details are needed to determine the categories noted on the project design chart (e 29). For example, more descriptive details are needed to explain the fundamental procedures of grant activities, onboarding, and what entails project planning (e 29). More information is needed to explain implementation evaluation and what is involved in the "business as usual" concept of the proposal (e 29).

Reader's Score: 4

- 3. The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.**

Strengths:

The applicant created a design that will successfully address the needs of the targeted population (e 29). The applicant chose the targeted population because the schools have the highest student disciplinary incidents and the crime rates in the surrounding neighborhoods are higher than in other Uplift communities (e 29). The applicant proposes conducting a two-year student-level randomized control trial within 3 elementary schools and 3 middle schools to measure the causal impact of the program (e 29).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Resources & Management Plan - Resources & Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 23

Sub

- 1. 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.**

Strengths:

The applicant presented a detailed management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget (e 31). It has clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing tasks (e 31). For example, it is the Chief Well-Being Officer's responsibility to meet with stakeholders and independent evaluators during the first quarter and ongoing as needed (e 31). The Chief Well-Being Officer will also hire staff during the first two quarters and consult with school teams and community and project partners/supporters to implement and actualize the project during the first four quarters each year (e 31).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The applicant's key personnel have extensive experience and qualifications for overseeing the proposed project (e 32-35). For example, it was noted that the Chief Executive Officer of Uplift Education previously worked for nine years in a global management consulting firm and has been with Uplift Education since 2009 (e 32). The president of Uplift Education has eight years of experience and oversees Uplift's teaching and learning and school leadership teams (e 32). The Director of Counseling and Prevention Services has 3 years of experience and oversees PK-12 school-based mental health, family services, and prevention (e 34).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses: No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant identified that Path to Purpose is a \$4.4 million EIR project that by year 5 will have impacted 3,612 students and 22 school leaders, teachers, and staff participants (e 35).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not identify conducting cost analysis for the proposed project to provide more details about the proposed expenditures and provide greater linkage to the grant programs, strategies, and activities (e 35).

Reader's Score: 3

4. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant provided detailed procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement for the proposed project (e 36). It was noted that Uplift's Executive Team will meet weekly to systematically assess Uplift's needs, set organizational goals, and measure progress toward meeting goals (e 36). The Project Management Team consists of the Project Director overseeing all EIR daily activities, budgets, and timelines (e 36). The Project Director will also meet weekly with the project staff to communicate project implementation updates and address any challenges (e 36).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, 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 project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

2. **(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

3. **(3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increase knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Priority Questions

CPP1 - CPP1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Computer Science (up to 5 points).

Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in this notice). These projects must address the following priority area: Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in this notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in this notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

CPP2 - CPP2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Innovative Approaches to Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Underserved Students and Educators (up to 5 points).

Projects designed to address the needs of underserved students and educators most impacted by COVID-19 through...[refer to the NIA for the full list of potential projects]

Strengths:

The applicant provided strategies to address the needs of underserved students (e 66). It was noted that the applicant anticipates serving 3,612 high needs at-risk students in grades K-8 (e 14). The applicant seeks to provide educators with professional development and resources to use trauma-informed practices (e 66). It was also noted that the applicant plans to ensure students have access to additional specialized instructional support personnel during their school day at their school site (e 66). The project's design included providing additional supports to educators to address their mental health and wellbeing and instructional practice needs (e 66).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

CPP3 - CPP3

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Equity and Adequacy in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 5 points).

Projects designed to promote equity in access to critical resources for underserved students in prekindergarten through grade 12 through one or more of the following...[refer to the NIA for the full set of potential projects]

Strengths:

The applicant proposes that the project's design will address inequities in access to fully certified, experienced, and effective teachers through various activities to improve the preparation, recruitment, early career support, and development of teachers in high-need or hard-to-staff schools (e 67). The applicant proposes including strategies that improve teacher diversity (e 67). The applicant identified addressing issues of equity in access to and the use of innovative tools, rigorous content, and effective teaching and learning practices, including by providing job-embedded professional development to educators on strategies for equitably integrating educational technology (e 67).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: **5**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 10/15/2021 05:48 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/14/2021 10:53 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Uplift Education (S411C210122)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	0
Sub Total	50	0
Resources & Management Plan		
Resources & Management Plan		
1. Resources & Manag. Plan	25	0
Sub Total	25	0
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	25	20
Sub Total	25	20
Priority Questions		
CPP1		
CPP1		
1. CPP1	5	
Sub Total	5	
CPP2		
CPP2		
1. CPP2	5	
Sub Total	5	
CPP3		
CPP3		
1. CPP3	5	
Sub Total	5	
Total	115	20

Technical Review Form

Panel #14 - EIR Early Phase - 14: 84.411C

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Uplift Education (S411C210122)

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 the following factors:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. 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.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

2. The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

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. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 2. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 3. The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Resources & Management Plan - Resources & Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

- 1. 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.**

Sub

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 3. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

- 4. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

- 1. (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).**

Strengths:

The applicant clearly identifies a mixed-methods evaluation design that meets the What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards without reservations. The study design includes a randomized clinical trial with three treatment schools and three control schools in a charter school network with an established history of focusing on social emotional learning and the International Baccalaureate learner profiles (page e37).

The applicant provides a thorough explanation of the data analysis parameters of the fixed-effects regression model, including primary outcomes and covariates (pages e37, e38).

The applicant provides a detailed discussion of how the project will track baseline conditions and monitor attrition, spillovers, and crossover subjects throughout the study period (pages e39, e121, e122).

Weaknesses:

There is a discrepancy in the grades to be included in cohort 1. In one part of the application cohort 1 consists of 4th and 5th graders, but in the high-level summary of evaluation parameters, the focus is on 3rd and 4th graders (pages e40-e42).

The project narrative and logic model describe several mental health and counseling interventions, such as social-behavioral counseling, family therapy, telehealth, and restorative counseling, but none of these services were accounted for in the evaluation design and analysis (pages e26, e57).

Reader's Score: 12

- 2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**

Strengths:

The applicant clearly describes the intent to dedicate two years to piloting the project and collecting feedback from interviews and focus groups in order to evaluate perceptions, effectiveness, and barriers to implementation (page e39).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not adequately describe how teacher, student, and parent feedback will be incorporated into the continuous improvement process, particularly measuring and evaluating the implementation impact of increasing the number of Social Emotional Learning instruction days (page e39).

Reader's Score: 3

- 3. (3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increase knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.**

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant clearly describes their intentional selection of 4th, 5th, 7th, and 8th graders in order to understand how age and maturation interacts with the treatment among students transitioning from elementary to middle school or middle school to high school (page e40).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

CPP1 - CPP1

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Computer Science (up to 5 points).**
Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in this notice). These projects must address the following priority area: Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in this notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in this notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

CPP2 - CPP2

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Innovative Approaches to Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Underserved Students and Educators (up to 5 points).**
Projects designed to address the needs of underserved students and educators most impacted by COVID-19 through...[refer to the NIA for the full list of potential projects]

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

CPP3 - CPP3

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Equity and Adequacy in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 5 points).

Projects designed to promote equity in access to critical resources for underserved students in prekindergarten through grade 12 through one or more of the following...[refer to the NIA for the full set of potential projects]

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

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