

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/08/2021 09:38 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Children First PA fka Public Citizens for Children and Youth (S411C210133)

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	14
Sub Total	25	14
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	14

Technical Review Form

Panel #15 - EIR Early Phase - 15: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Children First PA fka Public Citizens for Children and Youth (S411C210133)

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:

1. The proposal identifies an independent evaluator, Research for Action, led by Dr. Turner and Dr. Pierce, which is a requirement of this grant. The evaluators are experienced and have the appropriate expertise for conducting educational field evaluations (e40-41, e79, e85).
2. At least one relevant student outcome is being measured, meeting a WWC standard (e.g., academic achievement, Social-emotional learning skills, on track to graduate) and aligned with the logic model (e29, e34, e97, e141-143). Measures demonstrate reliability and validity (e122-124). The evaluation plan includes plans for years 1 and 2, and years 3 and 4 separately, which is appropriate to their project design plan to estimate impacts at different points in time (e44-e50).
3. The evaluation plan includes teacher level outcomes aligned to the intervention and logic model (e29, e34, e97) and includes plans for years 1 and 2, and years 3 and 4 separately, which is appropriate to their project design plan to estimate impacts at different points in time (e44-e50).
4. The evaluation is guided by project goals and objectives related to relevant outcomes comparing treatment and comparison groups (e34).
5. The proposal includes an evaluation plan designed to meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards with reservations- a quasi-experimental design with assignment of schools to condition, with comparison schools being given the option to implement the intervention in year 5 (e36, e44).
6. Data analytic plan includes plans for for statistical adjustments (per WWC requirements)(e46, e60, e126).
7. The sample of teachers (120 in each group), and assuming 10% attrition, is adequate to detect a minimal effect size of 0.24. There is a plan to mitigate teacher attrition by providing teacher study participants with a stipend.

Weaknesses:

1. The sampling strategy for schools and teachers is not well specified. The treatment schools have been selected in collaboration with the school district, but there is no explanation of how comparison schools will be selected, other than a vague statement of "non-equivalent comparison schools serving grades 7-8 with similar school characteristics will be identified and recruited" e44. Selection bias is a threat. It also is not mentioned how teachers will be selected or if teachers will also be matched on relevant and important characteristics, which given that the intervention is professional development (PD) provided to teachers and student outcomes are indirectly resulting from teachers, the selection of teachers is very important to mitigate bias in estimates of teacher and student outcomes.
2. The sample of students includes 3,150 students in 16 schools. The estimate of minimal detectable effects, assuming a 10% attrition for years 1 and 2 estimates is 0.34-0.48; however, there is no rationale for estimating a 10% attrition. The large effect on academic achievement outcomes from teacher PD may not be reasonable.
3. Given the logic model and narrative explanation of how this intervention works, student outcomes are impacted by the teacher PD and implementation, therefore student outcomes are mediated by teacher uptake and implementation of the intervention; however, the likely variability in teacher level outcomes (and teacher characteristics) is not considered in the analysis of student level outcomes.

Reader's Score: 7

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:

1. The application includes a clear description of the feedback and quality improvement and monitoring plan, with quarterly meetings between project partners, teacher and principal reps, teacher feedback, beta testing of all new training material with feedback by participants, and quarterly internal monitoring of progress towards goals. e43
2. The application includes a plan for assessing implementation readiness and monitoring of fidelity. This includes periodic checks of teacher completion of modules, etc., and collection of quantitative and qualitative data with focus groups and interviews with teachers and students. Feedback about contextual factors and implementation factors that affect teacher access and application of the intervention will also be gathered (e47-48). Data collected will be used to refine the PD (e47)
3. The plan includes an integrated monitoring system, within the learning management system, designed to assess teacher progress through training and implementation of indicators connected to project goals and objectives (e48).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

This project has potential to increase knowledge related to impacts of makeSPACE for Agency Readiness, a project aimed to deliver a blended online and face-to-face PD program for teachers to integrate drama-based strategies across core content areas in 7th and 8th grades. The project will provide knowledge on the impacts on both teachers and students.

Weaknesses:

There is some concern about the selection of schools and teachers for the comparison condition that could introduce bias and limit the validity of the results related to impact of the intervention on student outcomes. Teacher effects do not seem to be adequately considered in the analysis of student level outcomes. There is also concern that the evaluation design is not adequately powered to detect a more reasonable minimal detectable effect size on student outcomes.

Reader's Score: 2

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:

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/08/2021 09:38 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/08/2021 08:56 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Children First PA fka Public Citizens for Children and Youth (S411C210133)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Sub Total	50	50
Resources & Management Plan		
Resources & Management Plan		
1. Resources & Manag. Plan	25	22
Sub Total	25	22
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	81

Technical Review Form

Panel #15 - EIR Early Phase - 15: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Children First PA fka Public Citizens for Children and Youth (S411C210133)

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 proposes a well-designed project, MakeSPACE for Agency, and Readiness, that involves the development of new strategies to serve 3,505 students, 120 teachers in grade levels 7-8. The project targets high-needs student populations and will address the needs of students in poverty or experiencing other systemic social factors. The project also targets students with limited English proficiency, learning disabilities, or other special needs.

The innovative program is significant in the approach to implement a blended online and face-to-face professional development program for teachers integrating evidence-based research with drama-based strategies across the content areas in 7th and 8th grades. The program will address positive academic gains to prepare students to transition to high school.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

The applicant describes a clear plan for dissemination of results of the proposed project to enable others to use the information and replicate strategies. For example, the project will produce new research and evidence that will be disseminated to the academic community for appropriate practices. Schools that are marginalized, socioeconomic factors, cultural and linguistic diversity, special needs, will be able to replicate and expand on the program accessible online. Other venues for dissemination include research and journal articles, reports, blog posts, podcasts, social media, and presentations.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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: 30

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 provides narrative indicating the main goal of the project is to serve 240 teachers in high-needs schools with sustained, high quality, professional development in drama-based arts integration strategies to reach more than 3,500 Grade 7 and 8 students with evidence-based strategies. Art integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. The applicant wants to produce a cost-effective, efficient, and nationally accessible online system of self-directed professional learning that can be implemented schoolwide.

The applicant provides a flow chart indicating the components necessary to create learning experiences that build students' creative, social-emotional, and academic knowledge and attitude. Teachers will receive professional development related to the goals of the project using a design-based approach to action research (Pine, 2008). The applicant identifies studies consulted for the structuring of the program. The integration of art into the academic content curricula provides a logical approach to address the variety of students' intelligence that are reflected in their different learning styles. Snyder et al. "Transforming Teaching through Arts Integration."

The project will test the theory of change framework to evaluate how well students initiate actions of their own that drive their learning, academic, and creative development and prepares them for the high school transition.

The applicant states action research is a teacher-led process of disciplined inquiry to learn in-depth about the student experience and gauge the effectiveness of classroom innovations for intended outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 applicant provides evidence showing the goals and measurable objectives detailed on the application target Education Innovation and Research EIR program priorities and align with the underlying conceptual framework. Section D describes the approach to tracking progress toward these objectives. The applicant provides a table

Sub

showing the project implementation timeline of makeSPACE for Agency and Readiness. The objectives and goals are clearly provided and measurable.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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's main goal is to process at least 3,505 high-needs Grade 7 and 8 students with a high-quality theater and drama-based arts program that combines learning and shows a positive impact on academic and creative outcomes after two years. The project is supported by evidence-based research and effective practices and provides a solid case for the strategies, services and approaches to be used in the process and implementation. The program will implement action research which is a teacher-led process of disciplined inquiry to discover the student experience and measure the effectiveness of classroom innovations for intended outcomes. This process identifies the individual needs of each student. The project is supported by evidence-based research and effective practices, and provides a solid case for the strategies, services, and approaches to be used to meet the needs of the target population. According to research, on-line training can be a very useful tool for teachers in high, stressful settings.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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: 22

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 logic model and charts provided by the applicant clearly show a well-researched management plan. The timeline is appropriate and reasonable for the scope of the project. The applicant identifies the activities, schedule, personnel responsible for delivery and expected outcomes; and provides a clear alignment of objectives and budget to timely project delivery on time and within budget. Table 2 details a phased-in approach to collaborative design, development, implementation, and evaluation of the program. For example, a calendar is included with information of activities, personnel required to accomplish the activity, the date and milestones of the component, and

Sub

resources required to conduct the activities.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly identify the crucial milestones of the program to assure they will finish on time. More details are required to make an assessment.

Reader's Score: 8

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides details on the training and experience of key personnel and others. The information provided shows relevant experience, training, and educational background required to deliver the proposed project. Resumes are included in the appendix. The information provided includes references and relevant experiences working with target communities. All key personnel are identified and the level of involvement with the project is also included.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 provides evidence the costs are reasonable. The goal to reach 3,500 high need students, will result in a total cost of the project, of \$1,000 per student. The budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and adequate to support the project. The applicant provides a well-documented budget narrative. The budget is well organized and adequate to support planned services and activities. Costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives and scope of the project. Expenditures and personnel responsible for the budget are clearly identified.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

The applicant indicates data collected in Year 4 and Year 5 will provide the necessary feedback the program requires. Teacher feedback will be collected via the Internet and in-person surveys. The applicant indicates new training material developed will include a testing pilot version with extensive feedback gathered by participants to inform revisions before final versions are placed in play.

Weaknesses:

More details are needed as to how the applicant plans to collect, analyze, and provide timely feedback to effectively manage program strategies and services; and who will address the changes if needed.

Sub

Reader's Score: 4

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 provides details on this Competitive Preference Priority by proposing a project that addresses trauma, mental health and well-being through artistic mindfulness practices that are integrated in the teaching methods and personal lives. Recent studies are mentioned that replicated the proposed project and illustrate enhancement of teacher well-being.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address the impact of COVID 19 on the target population.

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:

The applicant meets this Competitive Preference Priority by proposing a project that is designed to promote equity. The project will serve 3,505 students, 120 teachers in grade levels 7-8. The target high-needs student population will address students in poverty or other systemic social factors; limited English proficiency; and learning disabilities, or other special needs that require special education services.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Children First PA fka Public Citizens for Children and Youth (S411C210133)

Reader #3: *****

	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	14
Sub Total	25	14
Priority Questions		
CPP1		
CPP1		
1. CPP1	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
CPP2		
CPP2		
1. CPP2	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
CPP3		
CPP3		
1. CPP3	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	115	14

Technical Review Form

Panel #15 - EIR Early Phase - 15: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Children First PA fka Public Citizens for Children and Youth (S411C210133)

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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

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

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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

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

Reader's Score: 14

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 stated that a quasi-experimental design would be implemented for the proposed project where the assignment to the treatment group would be a non-random selection process performed in collaboration with the school district personnel. The control group would be selected based on similar characteristics of the schools in the treatment group (p.e44). The applicant assumed a 10% teacher attrition with a Minimum Detectable Effect Size (MDES) of 0.24 standard deviations as well as 10% student attrition with an MDES ranging from 0.34 to 0.48 standard deviations (p.e45-e46). Regarding student attrition, it is assumed a 10% for all students and a 20% attrition for grade 7 (p.e45-e46). For example, 10% teacher attrition is assumed for years 3-4, was presented the attrition for years 2 and year 5.

Weaknesses:

It was unclear the conditions of the control group (e.g., curriculum). The applicant did not address the internal validity threat of selection that may impact the results of the proposed project. The applicant did not clearly indicate the process and the criteria of the assignment to control and treatment groups. The applicant did not address baseline equivalence of outcomes to avoid selection bias. It was unclear the different levels (e.g., overall attrition or differential attrition) of assumed attrition for teachers and students. It is unclear if the calculation of standard deviation would be needed due to the assumed attrition. The student outcomes are based on teachers' professional development activities; however, teachers' variables were not included as part of the analysis (p.e29, e34, e97). The applicant did not provide enough information to ensure that the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards would be met with reservations.

Reader's Score: 7

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 indicated that ongoing feedback for iterative improvement would be implemented through quarterly meetings including all project partners to review documentation and data available. Data collected such as teacher feedback, participants' feedback of training materials, and principals' information about the implementation process would be reviewed by the evaluator quarterly to monitor the progress of the proposed project (p.e43). The applicant also indicated that the iterative process of monitoring the proposed activities would result in teachers' adaptations, choices, designs, and changes impacting teachers' outcomes (p.e48).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

The applicant indicated that measurement tools have evidence of reliability and validity (pe.49 and p.e119-e125). For example, teacher outcome scales include four constructs with two multidimensional measures with a Cronbach's alpha ranging between .72 - .95 across all the constructs (p.e122-e123) and student outcomes scale with four

Sub

constructs with a Cronbach's alpha ranging between .77 - .95 (p.e124-e125). The applicant also indicated that the professional development each year would allow teachers to take ownership of the knowledge learned and use it to adjust teachers' lesson plans so students could experience arts-integrated instruction. Since the applicant is expanding previous work (Assistance in Arts Education in 2018 (makeSpace) and the 2014 Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination project (ArtCore)) (p.e24), the project would increase knowledge regarding the proposed strategy.

Weaknesses:

Since the proposed project builds upon prior work, it is unclear the effect sizes obtained by the previous work compared to the desired MDES provided. Moreover, it was unclear prior work lessons learned that would strengthen the proposed project to increase knowledge of the proposed strategy.

Reader's Score: 2

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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

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:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/08/2021 09:24 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/08/2021 08:56 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Children First PA fka Public Citizens for Children and Youth (S411C210133)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Sub Total	50	50
Resources & Management Plan		
Resources & Management Plan		
1. Resources & Manag. Plan	25	22
Sub Total	25	22
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	3
Sub Total	5	3
CPP3		
CPP3		
1. CPP3	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	115	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #15 - EIR Early Phase - 15: 84.411C

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Children First PA fka Public Citizens for Children and Youth (S411C210133)

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 provides a detailed description of the proposed project makeSpace for Agency Readiness on page e21 and e22. The promising new strategy will provide professional development for teachers who are teaching 7th and 8th grade students who have trouble transitioning from middle school to high school. The project is an arts integration professional development model that blends online and in person training. Teachers will integrate theater and drama-based techniques into content learning area learning.

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:

The applicant provides a detailed description of the strategies that will be used to disseminate information about the project. The information will be shared through articles, reports, blogposts, podcasts, social media the presentations. Schools across the country will be able to implement, replicate or expand on the online professional development system. The goal of the proposed project is to reach 3,505 socioeconomically marginalized youth making the transition to high school. The makeSPACE for Agency and Readiness project adapts and tests the existing makeSPACE professional development for broad implementation in a large school district. The existing makeSPACE teacher network will expand and provide sixteen new school sites in Philadelphia and 240 middle school teachers

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: 30

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 provides a comprehensive description of the conceptual framework on page e28. The framework includes teachers' professional learning, teacher-level outcomes and student-level outcomes in middle school and high-school. Teachers receive job-embedded collaborative arts integration professional development, resources, and the ability to design and adapt what they learn. New Train the Trainer materials will be created to support the makeSpace School Teams (MST) of 3 teacher leaders and their principal in each supporting school.

Teachers will have the opportunity to share what they design and learn with their peers. The applicant also provides a description of a complimentary framework called theater arts integration for universal design. Universal design for learning encourages teachers to offer multiple modalities as means for students to engage in content and learning and express and communicate their thinking.

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 applicant provides a detailed description of the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project on page e34 and e35. The goals include providing high-quality and sustained blended arts integration professional development for more than 240 teachers, providing high-quality theater and drama-based arts integrated learning for at least 3,505 high-needs 7th and 8th grade students resulting in a positive impact on academic, social emotional learning, agentic, and creative outcomes; and disseminating information and research about the project. The applicant demonstrates the objectives are measurable.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

- 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 provides a description of how the proposed project will meet the needs of the target population on pages e33 and e34. A table listing the characteristics of the schools in the School District of Philadelphia that will be participating in the project was provided. The table lists the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch and the percentage of students who are not proficient in reading and math. The School District of Philadelphia and Children First PA is seeking to scale the existing makeSPACE program across more schools. There is a high need for support and resources for students in the school district. The project will address student and teacher needs by providing arts integrated professional development for teachers and improving student academic, social emotional, and agentic performance.

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: 22

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 provides a detailed description of the management plan on pages e39 to e43. Children First PA will provide fiscal oversight and project leadership. Creative Engagement Lab will provide project leadership. Research for Action will be responsible for research design, organizing data collection, analysis, and evaluation of change. The School District of Philadelphia and district partners will be responsible for disseminating opportunities to schools and teacher participants, and Research for Action will serve as the independent evaluator.

Milestones were outlined on pages e36 to e38. Milestones prior to year 1 and in year 1 include; completion of the Foundation Course by the makeSPACE School Teams (MST) and teachers and completion of the Theater Arts Integration Strategy Course and developing an initial plan for integration. Milestones for year 2 were also outlined.

Sub

Weaknesses:

Milestones for years 3-5 were not outlined

Reader's Score: 8

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed description of the qualifications, relevant training, and experience of key project personnel. Resumes are included on pages e59 to e89. Key personnel have experience in school leadership, grant funded research and development, blended professional learning models, arts integration, and evaluation of teacher professional development programs.

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 provided a detailed description of the cost of the project on pages e43 and e44. The cost for reaching 3,500 high needs students will be \$1,000 per student excluding the cost for the external evaluation. The per teacher estimate for training implementation is \$2,230.

The budget on pages e30 to e140 provides costs that are reasonable for personnel, stipends, travel, supplies, contractual fees,

In-kind support after the first year of the project will be organized by Children First PA. Additional support will be sought from the School District of Philadelphia

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed description of the procedure for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement of page e43. The procedures include quarterly meetings with project partners, and teacher and principal representatives. The Project Manager and Project Director will organize the meetings. Teacher feedback will be collected through the online platform and in-person surveys after training. Feedback from participants to inform revisions in training materials and quarterly internal monitoring on progress by Research for Action will also take

Sub

Weaknesses:

The applicant states on page e43 that MSTs and principals will be consulted regularly on the progress of school support and buy-in. However, it is not clear what “regularly” means and who will be consulting with them

Reader's Score: 4

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:

Sub

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 provides a description of the strategies in the project design that will address the needs of underserved students and educators impacted by COVID-19 on page e26. The project will engage teachers and school leaders in collaborative code signing an effective, culturally responsive program for the School District of Philadelphia middle school teachers, and students. The strategies will support teachers' well-being and mental health as well.

Weaknesses:

The applicant fails to provide statistics regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the well-being of students and teachers.

Reader's Score: 3

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 states that the project will provide an art integrated, job-embedded, and collaborative makeSPACE experience for more than 200 teachers in schools serving high-need, socioeconomically marginalized students. Students in middle school will have access to a well-rounded and culturally responsive education.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 10/08/2021 08:56 AM