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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)
Reader #1:   **********

		Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		15	14
	Sub Total	15	14
Strategy to Scale			
Strategy to Scale			
1. Strategy to Scale		35	30
	Sub Total	35	30
Selection Criteria			
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		15	12
Quality of the Project Evaluation			
1. Project Evaluation		35	0
	Sub Total	50	12
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority 1			
1. Equity		3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 2			
1. COVID-19		3	3
	Sub Total	6	6
	Total	106	62

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - EIR Mid-Phase - 3 - 1: 84.411B

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

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)

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: 14

> **Sub**

1. **(1) The national significance of the proposed project.**

   Strengths:

   The applicant clearly demonstrates the national significance of the proposed project. The model to be used by the project specifically addresses support for ensuring that students in grades six and seven are proficient in math common core standards and are prepared for Algebra I. This effort is appropriately paired with teacher professional learning and coaching to empower teachers to address the challenge of catching students up while continuing to teach grade-level content. These efforts, if replicated, will have significant national impact.

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses were found.

   Reader's Score: 5

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

   Strengths:

   The proposed project, ASSISTments for Algebra Readiness (ASSISTments4AR)) demonstrates promising new strategies that are built on existing strategies. The use of ASSISTments-Teacher has proven effective and will be appropriately expanded by the ASSISTments-Coach. These efforts are supportive of a promising new strategy for the proposed project.

   Weaknesses:

   The applicant includes the development of the integration of High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) as a strategy that will improve student achievement. However, the applicant does not clearly define which components of

HQIM will be used as a basis for the new strategies. It is not clear how this existing strategy will be adapted for this proposed project. Without that clarity it is difficult to determine if the strategy will be effective for this project.

Reader's Score: 4

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

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates that the potential contribution of the proposed project will increase knowledge of the features of Professional Learning and Coaching Models that support the implementation of HQIM to impact high-need students with significant learning loss in math. The results of the proposed project would add to a limited amount of data available for the impact of professional learning and coaching that impact student math achievement in the contest of HQIM.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

Strategy to Scale - Strategy to Scale

1. **The Secretary considers the strategy to scale 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. **(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.**

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates that three key barriers have prevented the applicant from reaching the level of scale that is proposed by this new project. Those barriers include that current professional learning providers lack of real-time data needed to effectively support the implementation of HQIM to support Algebra I readiness. To lessen this barrier, the proposed project will enhance ASSISTments-Coach to provide crucial data to support the implementation of HQIM for Algebra I Readiness, which includes real-time data. Each of the barriers are clearly identified and the proposed project will appropriately attempt to eliminate the barrier from preventing the level of scale desired by the project by providing effective interventions. This is clearly supported by the information in Appendix J.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Sub

Reader's Score: 10

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

    Strengths:

    The management plan provides aligned milestones and responsibilities. The teams responsible for the tasks/milestones are identified. These efforts provide a framework for a management plan.
    The evaluation plan includes clearly defined timelines and milestones for accomplishing the task relating to evaluation. These efforts will ensure that those tasks are completed on time and within budget.

    Weaknesses:

    The milestones and timelines of the project activities other than those relating to evaluation tools are general. Annual timelines are general rather than specific and are aligned to milestones that are not detailed. Also, responsibilities are assigned generally to team or institutions not specifically identified key personnel from the partners. This lack of specificity will make it difficult for the management teams to complete the project on time and within budget.

    Reader's Score: 3

3. **(3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**

    Strengths:

    The applicant clearly demonstrates the capacity of the key personnel and resources to bring the proposed project to scale on at least a regional level. The key personnel and partners are highly qualified and have experience and training in the area of mathematics and/or grant management and leadership.

    Weaknesses:

    No weaknesses were found.

    Reader's Score: 10

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

    Strengths:

    The applicant clearly demonstrates that the proposed project will address objective four of the project, to disseminate findings and support scale, by providing appropriate mechanisms. The established partnerships provide pipelines to schools and districts that could utilize effectively the products resulting from the proposed study.

    Weaknesses:

    The applicant indicates that one of the elements of the dissemination plan will be to sell ASSSITments4AR to at least three school districts. This is not appropriate as part of the broad dissemination of the project and will not provide for dissemination to districts that may want to replicate the interventions defined in the proposed project.

Sub

Reader's Score: 7

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: 12

Sub

1. **(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 demonstrates that a comprehensive conceptual framework provides for a high quality project design. The framework includes three key components that are linked to the goals of the proposed project and are clearly based on research and best practices.

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses found.

   Reader's Score: 5

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

   Strengths:

   Some of the goals, objectives and outcomes to be achieved are specified and measurable. The objectives are clearly aligned with activities, outcomes and evaluation measures. These efforts support a high quality project design. The evaluation tools include both quantitative and qualitative measures such as number of participants and results from feedback surveys.

   Weaknesses:

   The objective relating to the impact of the proposed project on student learning outcomes was not specific as to how those efforts will be measured. Without that information, it is not clear how the student achievement will be measured.

   Reader's Score: 4

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 applicant demonstrates that the proposed project somewhat addresses the needs of the target population. The teacher professional learning and coaching will promote outreach to all student to lead to educational equity.

Sub

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly identify the needs of the potential students and teachers to be served by the proposed project. Without that clarity it is difficult to determine if the perceived needs will be met by the interventions planned.

Reader's Score: 3

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 without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

   Strengths:
   N/A

   Weaknesses:
   N/A

   Reader's Score: 0

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

   Strengths:
   N/A

   Weaknesses:
   N/A

   Reader's Score: 0

3. **(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.**

   Strengths:
   N/A

Sub

> **Weaknesses:**
>
> N/A

> **Reader's Score:** 0

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

> **Strengths:**
>
> N/A

> **Weaknesses:**
>
> N/A

> **Reader's Score:** 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. **Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e. g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:**

   (a)   Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.
   (b)   Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.
   (c)   Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.
   (d)   Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.
   (e)   High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

   Strengths:

   : The applicant clearly meets the competitive preference Priority 1 by promoting equity in students access through the use of technology tailored to individual student needs in real-time. The applicant of the professional learning and coaching through ASSISTments effectively meets student needs including remedial learning without compromising access to grade level work.

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. **Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic, including impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students and the educators who serve them through:**

    (a)   conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families; and

    (b)   using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

    Strengths:

    The applicant clearly demonstrates that the interventions planned meet Competitive Preference Priority 2. To address the impact of COVID-19, the proposed project uses professional learning that builds on improving teachers' ability to analyze student work and adjust instructional strategies to meet individual needs. This will address the gaps caused by the interruptions of COVID-19.

    Weaknesses:

    No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/28/2022 11:24 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)
Reader #4:   **********

		Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		15	13
	Sub Total	15	13
Strategy to Scale			
Strategy to Scale			
1. Strategy to Scale		35	29
	Sub Total	35	29
Selection Criteria			
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		15	13
Quality of the Project Evaluation			
1. Project Evaluation		35	0
	Sub Total	50	13
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority 1			
1. Equity		3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 2			
1. COVID-19		3	3
	Sub Total	6	6
	Total	106	61

Technical Review Form

Reader #4:   **************

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)

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: 13

Sub

1. **(1) The national significance of the proposed project.**

   Strengths:

   Only a third of Black students, Latino Students, and economically disadvantaged students in Texas scored at grade level in Algebra 1 (e24). Students that do not pass Algebra I have only a 20% chance of graduating high school. It is of national importance that we understand the needs of these students so they can be more successful (e15).

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses found.

   Reader's Score: 5

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

   Strengths:

   The applicant is building on previous work that has demonstrated success (HQIM or high quality instructional materials) by providing technology based professional learning and coaching for educators to be able to use Illustrative Math and Engage NY resources (e19).

   Weaknesses:

   The applicant describes the selection of two high quality instructional materials happened because most schools that work with the applicant use these materials. However, the applicant does not make it clear that these two curricula are the best math curricula.

   Reader's Score: 3

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

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant states that there are three times as many professional development interventions with strong evidence for language arts compared to math (e25). This study would add to that body of knowledge. In addition, the study would add to the little known area of interventions that involve professional development specifically supporting the effective use of HQIM.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

Strategy to Scale - Strategy to Scale

1. **The Secretary considers the strategy to scale 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. **(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.**

   Strengths:

   The applicant identifies (e26) three barriers with a strategy aligned to successfully address each barrier: lack of readiness for scalability (the applicant will address this by adding aligned test items to Illustrative Math and Engage NY, improving types of question items, adding capability to sync with LMS), lack of real-time data for coaches (the applicant will address this by designing new views for teachers and coaches), and teachers lacking access to coaching that tightly aligns with Algebra I readiness (the applicant will address this by modifying existing professional learning lab routines).

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses found.

   Reader's Score: 10

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

   Strengths:

   The applicant provides milestones and timelines with clearly defined responsibilities (e30).

   Weaknesses:

   The applicant does not add specific objectives, e.g. "Add Auto Grading answer types" rather than listing the specific numbers.

Sub

Reader's Score: 3

3. **(3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**

    Strengths:

    The applicant has a list of well qualified personnel that currently serve on the team and will continue to do so for the duration of the project . The Executive Director has strong experience in management of financial and non-financial resources (e31).

    Weaknesses:

    The project involves a lot of work in technology (LMS integration page e27) and assessment item creation (e27) but key personnel in that department are not listed in this section.

    Reader's Score: 8

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

    Strengths:

    The applicant describes (e32) partnerships, network of the organization and people as primary ways to disseminate and sustain the program long term. The applicant also identifies ways to disseminate information to the research community (conferences, publications, webinars).

    Weaknesses:

    The applicant does not mention specific conferences and publication journals.

    Reader's Score: 8

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: 13

Sub

1. **(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 documents the use of four conceptual frameworks to demonstrate how aspects of the program are based on high-quality studies. The applicant also presents a high-quality logic model (e33).

    Weaknesses:

    No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

2. **(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 has a list of four objectives and outcomes/measures to be achieved are specified (e35).

   Weaknesses:

   Some measures listed are not measurable, e.g. "Number of presentation at conferences" lacks a specific number.

   Reader's Score: 4

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 applicant lists having teachers create a vision for equitable math classroom and examining their own biases as ways to address the needs of high-need students who often don't experience grade level content/high expectations in the classroom (e36).

   Weaknesses:

   The applicant does not describe specific needs of the target students and how the proposed project will address 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 without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

      Strengths:

      Weaknesses:

      Reader's Score:

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

   Strengths:

   Weaknesses:

   Reader's Score:

3. **(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.**

   Strengths:

   Weaknesses:

   Reader's Score:

4. **(4) 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:

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. **Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e. g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:**

   (a)   Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.
   (b)   Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.
   (c)   Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.
   (d)   Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.
   (e)   High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized

credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

Strengths:

The applicant is proposing a math supplement curriculum to target the needs of 6th and 7th grade high-need students by specifically engaging with grade level content in order to get them ready for high school Algebra I coursework. The applicant's proposed project will also give teachers data to improve student outcomes (e21)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. **Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic, including impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students and the educators who serve them through:**

   (a)   conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families; and
   (b)   using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

Strengths:

The applicant's proposal includes Teaching Lab, which will provide professional development and coaching for educators. This addresses part b of the factor (e23).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/28/2022 11:29 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)
Reader #5: **********

		Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		15	11
	Sub Total	15	11
Strategy to Scale			
Strategy to Scale			
1. Strategy to Scale		35	27
	Sub Total	35	27
Selection Criteria			
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		15	11
Quality of the Project Evaluation			
1. Project Evaluation		35	0
	Sub Total	50	11
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority 1			
1. Equity		3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 2			
1. COVID-19		3	3
	Sub Total	6	6
	Total	106	55

Technical Review Form

Reader #5:   * * * * * * * * * *

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)

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: 11

Sub

1. **(1) The national significance of the proposed project.**

    Strengths:

    The applicants discuss the need to better prepare 6th and 7th grade students for success in Algebra I. They propose to do so through enhancement to their existing evidence-based program ASSISTments (p. E16). Enhancements include developing High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM), professional learning, and real time targeted student support, which will become the newly created ASSISTMents4AR (p. E15-16). This proposed project will reach 456 teachers and 22,800 students.

    Weaknesses:

    Details are missing on the link to the proposed high-needs students and outcomes in Algebra 1. The details were missing surrounding the current state of instruction in preparation for Algebra 1 in order to make the connection to the significance of this project. It is also unclear if all districts in the US offer Algebra 1 in 8th grade. Combined, these missing details create a disconnect to the overall significance of the project and the need to reach 6th and 7th grade students to better prepare them for Grade 8 Algebra 1 success.

    Reader's Score: 4

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

    Strengths:

    The applicants propose to add three new evidence-based components into their existing ASSISTMents tool to increase Algebra 1 readiness for 6th and 7th grade students (pp. E15-16). These include the use of HQIM, added professional learning, and real-time feedback for teachers to support student learning.

    Weaknesses:

    Some details were missing to determine if the proposed project will result in a promising new strategy. Specifically, while ASSISTments has demonstrated significant impacts on student achievement (pp. E126-127) it is unclear to what degree the Teaching Lab has produced positive impacts for student learning. While the application conveys the number of districts that have been reached, empirical findings were minimally addressed.

Sub

Reader's Score: 4

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

Strengths:

The applicants focus on the area of HQIM for which they will contribute to knowledge in understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies (pp. E25-26).Specifically, how access to HQIM will increase teacher and student outcomes.

Weaknesses:

It is difficult to effectively determine the potential the proposed project has to contribute to new knowledge outside of the context of HQIM. The applicants did not provide additional details to understand how they perceive this project promoting new understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies. Therefore, it is challenging to understand what the proposed ASSISTMents4AR will contribute to aspects of new knowledge outside of HQIM.

Reader's Score: 3

Strategy to Scale - Strategy to Scale

1. **The Secretary considers the strategy to scale 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. **(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.**

Strengths:

The applicants convey three primary barriers they have encountered that prevents scaling the existing ASSISTments program (pp. E26-29). These points are presented in context with empirical evidence and why the current model does not reach the intended populations or why teachers may not see success with this approach. Specifically, they identify a lack of features to promote HQIM, inclusion of real-time data, and evidence-based professional learning for Algebra 1.

Weaknesses:

Some of the presented strategies are vague. For example, the applicants convey they will integrate more dynamic and interactive ways for students to show their work, (p. E27) but fall short in describing what this new process will look like. Similarly, the applicants describe how they will build the ASSISTMents4AR program to integrate with all Learning Management Systems (LMS) in schools, but do not describe how this will be accomplished (pp. E27-28) or by whom. Integrating LMS into schools is an extremely challenging task that warrants some additional details to convey the capacity to overcome this barrier. This clarity for integrating the LMS includes identification of an expert individual who will be responsible for this task.

Reader's Score: 6

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

Sub

and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Strengths:

The applicants provide a series of actions that will be completed in each year of the project, along with identifying who will be responsible for ensuring milestones are met (p. E30). Each key project partner is tasked with a certain action under each objective (p. E30) of the project that will be addressed throughout the project in order to work towards completion.

Weaknesses:

While the applicants provide a table (p. E30) of the application, the table is broken into year increments instead of more clearly defined milestones to identify specifically when milestones will be met within that year. The table also does not provide specific details about personnel who will be responsible for ensuring milestones are met. Therefore, it is difficult to determine if the proposed project tasks will be completed on time and within budget.

Reader's Score: 3

3. **(3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**

Strengths:

The applicants have identified a strong team of professionals and partnering agencies to bring the project to scale. As a whole this team has successfully led and managed several federal grants and have a strong record of dissemination through various outlets as noted in the application E 31-32 and in Appendix B (pp. E56-89). The applicants provide evidence which includes existing partnerships and establishing new partnerships with school districts evidenced in the letters of support provided in Appendix C.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

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

Strengths:

The dissemination plan provided by the applicants consists of creating a manual, series of videos, MOUs that could be shared with schools and teachers who will be critical to scaling the ASSISTMents4AR program (pp. E29-30).

Weaknesses:

There are several stakeholder groups that are not reflected in the dissemination plan. Details are missing to determine how this work will reach the scientist and research community or other critical stakeholder groups (e.g., potential funders, district leadership, families of targeted high-needs students, etc.). The provided approach seems more suitable in considering some aspects of replication but falls short in how the team will convey empirical findings from the proposed project and lessons learned.

Reader's Score: 8

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: 11

Sub

1. **(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 applicants provide a comprehensive conceptual framework for all of the components that will be integrated into the ASSISTMents4AR (pp. E33-34). Each component is identified and supported by empirical evidence. They are distinctly selected based on the underlying need to increase student outcomes as presented in the example Logic Model (p. E33) and p.E94.

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses noted.

   Reader's Score: 5

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

   Strengths:

   The applicants provide four primary objectives that will be accomplished during this project along with measures and outcomes (pp.E34-36). The applicants include measures and proposed outcomes for each activity, which will work towards meeting the overarching project objectives.

   Weaknesses:

   Some of the presented outcomes do not have clearly defined measures. For example, in the table on pp. E34-36 the applicants indicate they will have presentations at conferences, webinars, etc., but do not define how many presentations they intend to provide. Details are missing surrounding quantifiable outcomes and aligned measures. The lack of specificity and quantifiable outcomes makes it difficult to determine how goals and objectives will be measured.

   Reader's Score: 4

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 applicants indicate ASSISTMents4AR will help alleviate existing challenges faced by 6th and 7th grades students to be better prepared for Algebra 1.

   Weaknesses:

   Overall, it appears unclear who the proposed high-needs target populations are. The applicants do not provide existing empirical evidence of a current baseline at which these populations are performing within ASSISTments. While they specify, they are targeting students of color (p. E12) there is a general lack of specificity about who these individuals might be and how we might determine for example what is underperforming in Algebra readiness. Moreover, there is limited empirical evidence in the application on the existing ASSISTments program and its

specific impact on student educational outcomes with an existing high needs population. They discuss the majority of data were collected on White students but fall short in conveying any information on the outcomes that were collected for students of color (p . E23). Therefore, it is difficult to determine the extent to which this project will successfully address the needs of the target population. More specifically, how it will address learning losses that have been experience due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Reader's Score: 2

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 without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

   Strengths:

   N/A

   Weaknesses:

   N/A

   Reader's Score: 0

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

   Strengths:

   N/A

   Weaknesses:

   N/A

   Reader's Score: 0

3. **(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.**

   Strengths:

   N/A

Sub

> **Weaknesses:**
>
> N/A

> **Reader's Score:** 0

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

> **Strengths:**
>
> N/A

> **Weaknesses:**
>
> N/A

> **Reader's Score:** 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. **Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e. g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:**

   (a) Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.
   (b) Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.
   (c) Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.
   (d) Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.
   (e) High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

   Strengths:

   At its core, the existing ASSISTments program seeks to prepare students for Algebra 1 readiness through technology and evidence-based practices. This includes professional learning for teachers to identify what students need in real time learning situations and how to best support individualized student learning.

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. **Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic, including**

impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students and the educators who serve them through:

(a) conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families; and
(b) using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

Strengths:

The applicants do propose to incorporate three additional elements to the existing ASSISTments program to better prepare students for Algebra 1 success and provide some level of evidence as to the decline in mathematics as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (p. E23). This includes data specific to students of low-income families in 8th grade.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/28/2022 11:01 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)
Reader #2:   **********

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	15	0
Sub Total	15	0
Strategy to Scale		
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	35	0
Sub Total	35	0
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	15	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	35	28
Sub Total	50	28
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Equity	3	0
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. COVID-19	3	0
Sub Total	6	0
Total	106	28

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - EIR Mid-Phase - 3 - 1: 84.411B

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

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)

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. **(1) The national significance of the proposed project.**

>> **Strengths:**

>> N/A

>> **Weaknesses:**

>> N/A

>> **Reader's Score:**   **0**

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

>> **Strengths:**

>> N/A

>> **Weaknesses:**

>> N/A

>> **Reader's Score:**   **0**

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

>> **Strengths:**

>> N/A

>> **Weaknesses:**

>> N/A

Sub

Reader's Score: 0

Strategy to Scale - Strategy to Scale

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

Reader's Score: 0

   Sub

   1. **(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.**

      Strengths:

      N/A

      Weaknesses:

      N/A

      Reader's Score: 0

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

      Strengths:

      N/A

      Weaknesses:

      N/A

      Reader's Score: 0

   3. **(3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**

      Strengths:

      N/A

      Weaknesses:

      N/A

      Reader's Score: 0

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

Sub

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. **(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. **(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. **(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

Sub

   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: 28

   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 without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

      Strengths:

      The applicant thoroughly discussed mostly all of the elements required to meet WWC without reservations. The applicant plans to use a school-level clustered randomized control trial. The study participants will be randomized using a school-level clustered approach (pg. e38). All of the participants will have an equal non-zero probability of being in either the intervention or control group. The applicant discussed how the RCT would ensure low attrition and mitigate any concerns about compromising the randomization of participants. First, the applicant analysis will utilize intent-to-treat (pg. e39), ensuring all participants maintain their original assignment in either the treatment or control group within the analytic sample. Second, the applicant has an appropriate plan (pg. e143) to address any attrition concerns as an analysis to assess overall, and differential attrition will be conducted. Third, to account for missing data on covariates and outcomes, the applicant will utilize one of the required missing data methodologies approved by WWC (pg. e145). Finally, the applicant provided an acceptable power analysis with appropriate minimal detectable effect sizes for the impact analyses (pg. e143). The sample sizes provided are appropriate to achieve an acceptable level of power of .80, which is the acceptable standard in research.

      Weaknesses:

      There were two concerns worth mentioning related to meeting WWC without reservations. First, the applicant assumes each teacher would have a minimum of 50 students. If this estimate is off, this will impact the power analysis, hence, minimal detectable effect size. Second, the applicant did not provide a discussion on whether or not contamination will be a concern and, if a concern, how it would be handled to ensure unbiased statistical estimates.

      Reader's Score: 17

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

      Strengths:

      The applicant has a plan to provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication in other settings. First, the applicant schools as part of the study will represent diversity on essential characteristics, which should allow for generalization inferences beyond the studied sample. Next, the applicant has a plan to assess and document all aspects of the project's implementation. This documentation can be used for replication purposes. Finally, the applicant's evaluation includes differential impact analyses. The differential impact analyses will allow the applicant to understand how the intervention impacts a heterogeneous mix of all students based on ethnicity, free or reduced lunch eligibility, and different grade levels.

Weaknesses:

The only area of concern is related to a thorough dissemination plan. The applicant has all the components related to collecting the data for reporting and dissemination, but more details should be provided related to the dissemination strategies.

Reader's Score: 4

3. **(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.**

Strengths:

The applicant discussed appropriate key project components in the logic model and in the narrative. The intervention has three key components: a technology component for teachers called ASSISTments, school coaches trained on the technology component, and an evidence-based professional learning component. All of these components were presented in the logic model. The applicant provided sufficient details in the evaluation, where it could be determined that the researched outcomes would have face validity and at least one of the required WWC reliability indices. For example, measuring a student's Algebra 1 readiness, which is a key outcome, will be assessed using an instrument with KR-20 reliability of .87, which is more than reliable. All students across the states will be required to take this Algebra 1 readiness measure as part of the study. The applicant has a plan to gather and assess acceptable implementation (pg. e44). For example, the independent evaluator will use a five-step procedure to determine adherence, exposure, quality of delivery, and participant's responsiveness to the intervention. Furthermore, the applicant provided minimum acceptable implementation thresholds. For example, teachers will be expected to attend and participate in professional learning for at least 71 hours over three cycles of the project (pg. e44).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not discuss mediators as part of the research. If the applicant does not think there will be mediator variables impacting this research study, an argument/statement related to why or why not should have been provided.

Reader's Score: 4

4. **(4) 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 provided a general discussion related to the formative component of the evaluation. The applicant provided formative research questions related to the project's process, such as whether the project enhancements are achieving the desired objectives (pg. e37). As related to the project's progress, are milestones being met as planned. Both of these are good formative evaluation questions.

Weaknesses:

Given the importance of a formative evaluation, a more detailed discussion, plan, and timeline for formative evaluation activities should have been provided. Furthermore, the applicant should have provided more specific details related to clear time points and due dates for specific formative evaluation activities. For example, the applicant mentions the formative feedback timeline taking place in Year 1 and Year 2 without specific months or weeks within the year. Only stating the feedback will be yearly is too general to determine if this feedback will allow for timely periodic assessment of adequate progress towards achieving the intended outcomes.

Reader's Score: 3

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e. g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:

    (a)   Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.
    (b)   Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.
    (c)   Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.
    (d)   Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.
    (e)   High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

    Strengths:

    N/A

    Weaknesses:

    N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic, including impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students and the educators who serve them through:

    (a)   conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families; and
    (b)   using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

    Strengths:

    N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/28/2022 02:55 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)
Reader #3: **********

		Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		15	0
	Sub Total	15	0
Strategy to Scale			
Strategy to Scale			
1. Strategy to Scale		35	0
	Sub Total	35	0
Selection Criteria			
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		15	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation			
1. Project Evaluation		35	29
	Sub Total	50	29
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority 1			
1. Equity		3	0
Competitive Preference Priority 2			
1. COVID-19		3	0
	Sub Total	6	0
	Total	106	29

Technical Review Form

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

Applicant: ASSISTments Foundation, Inc. (S411B220024)

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. **(1) The national significance of the proposed project.**

   Strengths:

   n/a

   Weaknesses:

   n/a

   Reader's Score: 0

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

   Strengths:

   n/a

   Weaknesses:

   n/a

   Reader's Score: 0

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

   Strengths:

   n/a

   Weaknesses:

   n/a

Sub

> **Reader's Score:** 0

Strategy to Scale - Strategy to Scale

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

Reader's Score: 0

> **Sub**
>
> 1. **(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.**
>
>   **Strengths:**
>
>   n/a
>
>   **Weaknesses:**
>
>   n/a
>
>   **Reader's Score:** 0
>
> 2. **(2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
>
>   **Strengths:**
>
>   n/a
>
>   **Weaknesses:**
>
>   n/a
>
>   **Reader's Score:** 0
>
> 3. **(3) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**
>
>   **Strengths:**
>
>   n/a
>
>   **Weaknesses:**
>
>   n/a
>
>   **Reader's Score:** 0
>
> 4. **(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

Sub

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. **(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. **(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. **(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

Sub

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: 29

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 without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

   Strengths:

   The impact study design is a randomized controlled trial (RCT) with school-level assignment in which 6th and 7th grade math teachers in treatment schools will receive the intervention. Control schools will receive the intervention on a delayed basis. There will be two cohorts of randomization and treatment. All of the design decisions are logical and sound. The design can meet WWC standards without reservations. (e38)

   The research objectives of the summative study are clearly articulated. (e37) Exhibit 10 (e38) effectively connects the research questions to appropriate outcomes and clear measures.

   The evaluator identifies attrition and joiners as potential concerns and makes clear an intention to exclude joiners from the evaluation. (e38) Some steps about how to address attrition in analyses are noted. (e143)

   The proposal clearly presents a sample for the RCT with a sufficient power analysis and justification of the MDES. The software, design decisions, and analysis of statistical power are appropriate. (e39, e142-e143)

   The design to assess outcomes on three levels (students, classrooms, and schools) with an intent-to-treat (ITT) approach is appropriate. The evaluator correctly identifies a number of variables to increase statistical precision. (e39)

   The various quantitative and qualitative instruments are comprehensive and well aligned to measure outcomes and implementation. (e146)

   Analytic procedures for quantitative and qualitative data are clear and appropriate. (e143-e145)

   Appropriate steps to address missing data are provided. (e145)

   The logic model features key program components, mediators, and outcomes to be measured and analyzed. (e94)

   Weaknesses:

   The evaluator indicates that treatment will be blocked by district. This is likely a sound strategy—perhaps to minimize contamination—but no rationale for this decision is provided. (e38) The assumption about contamination is, in part, because contamination is not specifically addressed.

   No rationale is provided regarding the decision to exclude joiners. (e38)

The evaluator indicates that overall and differential attrition will be tracked, but do not offer any strategies to reduce the likelihood of attrition.

Reader's Score: 17

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

   Strengths:

   The inclusion of an internal formative component to the research should enable the programmer to make informed decisions about how to strengthen the intervention as well as scale and share lessons learned broadly. (e35, e37)

   The evaluator correctly indicates that a strategic, diverse sample of schools should allow for the documentation of study contexts. (e39-e40)

   The evaluator also provides a robust list of variables with potential moderating effects that warrant analysis. (e40)

   The evaluator offers an impressive array of implementation data with clear analytic paths to connect implementation analysis to teacher and student outcomes. (e40)

   The evaluator also includes a cost effectiveness analysis with an appropriate approach. (e40)

   Plans to disseminate results are noted. (e36)

   Weaknesses:

   Plans to disseminate for various audiences and using WestEd's substantial access and platforms should have been discussed more exhaustively

   Reader's Score: 4

3. **(3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.**

   Strengths:

   Activities, outcomes, and measures are clearly aligned. Programmer expectations about minimal levels of dosage are clearly stated. (e35-e36)

   The evaluator will leverage state test data to measure student achievement outcomes, but also includes a supplemental measure—MDTP—that is valid and reliable. (e41)

   The evaluator also provides other valid and reliable measures of teacher outcomes, as well as appropriate rationale about how data will be collected. (e41-e42)

   Implementation fidelity is discussed at length, with clear thresholds of implementation by fidelity component provided. (e43-e44)

   Project components and instruments are detailed. Instruments are valid and reliable. The amount of data collection will be substantial.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No mediators are explicitly identified.

Reader's Score: 4

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

   Strengths:

   The proposal establishes minimal levels of implementation that, in turn, inform the programmers about how much to change support for teachers and students. The use of internal ASSISTment personnel who are qualified to conduct the formative component of this study is a thoughtful, commendable way to utilize resources to have ongoing internal conversations about how to change the intervention over time. (e35-e37)

   The cost effectiveness analyses can be leveraged to inform programmatic decisions for cohort 2. The analytic procedures are robust. (e148)

   Weaknesses:

   Once the evaluation shifts from formative to summative, there is little discussion about how the external evaluator will (or can) inform programmatic design and adaptation.

   Reader's Score: 4

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. **Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e. g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:**

   (a)   Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.
   (b)   Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.
   (c)   Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.
   (d)   Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.
   (e)   High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

   Strengths:

   n/a

   Weaknesses:

   n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. **Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic, including impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students and the educators who serve them through:**

   (a)   conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families; and
   (b)   using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

   Strengths:

   n/a

   Weaknesses:

   n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/28/2022 03:43 PM