

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/02/2022 02:29 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	30
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	3
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	10
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	63
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. COVID-19	3	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	6	5
<b>Total</b>	106	68

# Technical Review Form

Panel #18 - EIR Early Phase - 18: 84.411C

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

Applicant: President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 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. (20 points)

#### Strengths:

The applicant proposes to enact a promising new strategy that builds on previous Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) research. The program will be launched during after-school settings because they are ideal for promoting SEL as they provide opportunities for students to develop positive relationships with adult mentors, try new things in a supportive environment, and develop a sense of confidence and competence (e23).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

### 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. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework. (10 points)

#### Strengths:

The proposal displays a thorough conceptual framework that is research based. The applicant uses research that SEL programs are tied to improvements in behavioral and mental health outcomes, as well as improved standardized test scores. The framework requires teachers to participate in initial professional development and

**Sub**

there will be follow-up support through coaching. A mid-year training will be conducted face to face. There will also be monitoring of implementation and targeted supports provided (e.g., weekly SMS messages and reminders) (e26-e27).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)**

**Strengths:**

The proposal's logic model shows clear alignment between inputs, objectives, and outcomes. Each attainable outcome is clearly specified and measurable. For example the outcomes will be measured by staff surveys, staff interviews, and teachers' electronic engagement with the website and texts (e29).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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. (15 points)**

**Strengths:**

The proposal has key design features that make it appropriate for the student population of Nebraska. The program is uniquely designed to be flexible and delivered in a variety of settings, including Out of School Time programs. There are one hundred and fifty 21st Century Community Learning Centers in Nebraska that are co-located and operated by public schools. SEL Kernels will be piloted in these centers. It will be able to address the need for quality SEL programming by delivering key social, emotional, and academic support to Nebraska's students (e28).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

**1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:**

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Sub**

**1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race,**

**Sub**

**color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)**

**Strengths:**

The personnel who have been hired have experience and backgrounds that will aid in reaching the outcomes of the project. The key members of the team have the experience, education and expertise needed to support this multi-site project (e36).

**Weaknesses:**

There was nothing included in the proposal that speaks of encouraging applications from underrepresented groups. There was no mention of hiring practices for the open positions on the team.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan, the Secretary considers:**

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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. (10 points)**

**Strengths:**

The management plan in the proposal is clear and detailed making it adequate to meet the objectives and outcomes specified. The applicant clearly outlines all details of the project timeline, key milestones, and teams responsible for accomplishing all tasks. The plan includes 4 key goals that must be accomplished in order to ensure success. The project structure includes a Project Management Team consisting of a full-time Project Director and 5 other team members. Each has evidence of educational background and experience in supporting multiyear and multi-site programs (e36-e37).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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). (20 points)

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. (5 points)

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. (5 points)

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

### Priority Questions

#### Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

##### 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

**Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 3 points).**

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:**

a.) The proposal is designed to promote equitable outcomes and opportunity for students. The proposal states that SEL Kernals can be taught and used quickly with an emphasis on those that promote equity. SEL Kernals can be used with diverse age groups and across a wide array of settings (such as home, school, or after school), and enable adults to select the strategies that best fit the needs and goals of their students which fosters equitable access and delivery (e25).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:**

**Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty (up to 3 points).**

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:**

a) This proposal has clear research explaining the particular needs of Nebraska's students. A recent RCT of Brain Games in 36 PreK-4th grade classrooms across six low-income schools found that students exposed to Brain Games showed improvements in attention, prosocial behavior, and global executive functions, as well as a decrease in impulsivity. SEL Kernals will provide key social, emotional, and academic support to Nebraska's students (e26).

b) The proposal plans to deliver high quality professional development to staff of the CCLCs in Nebraska at the beginning of the year and middle of the year. The after-school programs will use the engaging materials from SEL Kernals to teach the lessons that are necessary for each class. There will be ongoing support from SEL Kernals via email, text, and online supports (e33).

**Weaknesses:**

a) The applicant has not included information regarding any needs assessments or asset mapping that were conducted for the target area school children.

b)no weaknesses noted

**Reader's Score: 2**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/02/2022 02:29 PM



Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/02/2022 02:06 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	30
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	4
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	10
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	64
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. COVID-19	3	3
<b>Sub Total</b>	6	6
<b>Total</b>	106	70

# Technical Review Form

Panel #18 - EIR Early Phase - 18: 84.411C

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

Applicant: President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 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. (20 points)

#### Strengths:

The applicant adequately addresses this criterion by describing how the project will provide an alternative to existing strategies. For instance, the State of Nebraska has prohibited the instruction of social emotional learning in the state's public schools (e20). The project offers an opportunity for students to receive social emotional learning instruction outside of the school day, during afterschool activities (e23).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

### 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. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework. (10 points)

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides a well-thought-out conceptual framework underlying the proposed research and activities, based on research showing that in addition to improving student outcomes, social emotional learning interventions can lead to setting-level changes tied to a range of important learning experiences, including safer and better-

**Sub**

functioning learning environments characterized by supportive culture and climate, positive relationships, effective classroom management, and reduced behavioral problems (e27). For instance, the logic model illustrates the proposed project's inputs, activities, and outputs and then identifies outcomes for the afterschool staff, as well as short-term and long-term outcomes for the students (e69).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant adequately describes strategies to be engaged by describing four phases of activity to accomplish four goals. The goals to be accomplished by this project are to: develop, pilot, and refine the project for out-of-school time settings, design systems and supports for continuous improvement among out-of-school time staff. To reach those goals, the proposed project staff will use monitoring data, communication strategies, and other resources to improve social, emotional, developmental and achievement-related outcomes for K-2 students; and finalize project materials and lessons learned to ensure that project materials and study results can be accessed and used beyond the project period (e29, e114).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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. (15 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant sufficiently describes a project design that is intended to address the needs of the target population. In particular, because access to schools for social emotional learning is restricted legislatively, the applicant has focused on the delivery of services in the afterschool setting so as to reach the intended target population (e28-e29).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

**1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:**

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Sub**

- 1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant partially address a portion of this criterion. For instance, the applicant presents the information on the Principal Investigator's background, which is identified as a key project personnel position (e36, e105).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not address the extent to which it will encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. Other than providing information on the already identified part-time principal investigator, the applicant does not explain the qualifications (for example type of education and the years of experience) for other key personnel positions, such as the Project Director, that have yet to be filled (e105). Furthermore, the applicant does not detail a hiring plan for filling the positions needed to implement the proposed program.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan, the Secretary considers:**

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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. (10 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant proposes an adequate plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The various activities are assigned to both the evaluation steps and exploratory steps along the way, and are linked to the proposed timeline (e81).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

## 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). (20 points)

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. (5 points)

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. (5 points)

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score:

## Priority Questions

### Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

**Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 3 points).**

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 sufficiently addresses sub-criterion (a) of this Competitive Priority Preference. The proposed program focuses on approaches to learning through structured play and recess, with an emphasis on strategies that build social and emotional competencies with an emphasis on those that promote equity (e29).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:**

**Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty (up to 3 points).**

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:**

(a) The applicant suitably presents information to explain how the proposed project will address the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic on the students most impacted by the pandemic including impacts that extend beyond the duration

of the pandemic itself. For example, as part of asset-mapping, the applicant utilized the results of a survey that examined the areas where Nebraska teachers felt supported and those areas where they needed assistance (e24). The applicant will also assess the needs of the target student population through surveys (e82). By developing a program that offers students supportive positive relationships and learning environments, incorporating trauma-informed practices and staff training, the project will address unmet needs of students impacted by COVID-19, in particular focusing on students in poverty, students of color, students with special needs, and immigrant students (e32).

(b) The applicant adequately addresses the second criterion for this Competitive Priority Preference, focusing on professional development and ongoing support for afterschool educators. Specifically, the applicant intends to design implementation systems and supports for continuous improvement among out-of-school time staff by providing access to and use of evidence-based social emotional learning programs and a detailed practitioner's guide through technology and online resources (e29, e32).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**     **3**

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**Status:**             Submitted  
**Last Updated:**    09/02/2022 02:06 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/02/2022 02:38 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	30
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	5
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	10
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	65
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. COVID-19	3	3
<b>Sub Total</b>	6	6
<b>Total</b>	106	71



# Technical Review Form

Panel #18 - EIR Early Phase - 18: 84.411C

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

Applicant: President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 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. (20 points)

#### Strengths:

The applicant has presented adequate information and findings that demonstrate that social-emotional learning (SEL) Kernels is a promising new strategy that builds on existing evidence-based programs to provide a more flexible, targeted, and feasible approach to improving student outcomes. SEL Kernels are an innovative alternative to existing SEL programs that are often expensive, rigid, and difficult to implement. Traditional approaches take the form of comprehensive scripted programs whereas SEL Kernels provides strategies that are less costly, flexible, and adaptable to individual and setting specific needs and easy to implement (e23).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses

Reader's Score: 20

### 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. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework. (10 points)

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The applicant's conceptual framework is premised on the growing body of evidence from experimental studies and several meta-analyses which show that high-quality SEL programs impact student's academic achievement and school related behavior (e26). Thus, high-quality SEL programming is an effective way to improve key outcomes for high-need students. The project's logic model provides information about participation in SEL Kernels Training, mid-year booster sessions and access to behaviorally informed implementation supports (e70). These practices are integral in student motivation and engagement in learning as well as changes in children's social emotional competencies and behavioral outcomes (e70).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses

**Reader's Score: 10**

- 2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)**

**Strengths:**

The project's goals are clearly illustrated, and the objectives are specific and measurable. Furthermore, the applicant details steps and timelines required to accomplish each goal (e82). The applicant details a plethora of performance measures such as surveys, interviews, observational data, and monitoring of data collected (e30).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses

**Reader's Score: 5**

- 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. (15 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant's project is adequately designed to meet the needs of the underserved students in Nebraska by promoting the development of skills tied to academic achievement and positive life outcomes including executive function, self-regulation, emotion knowledge and social problem-solving. The project's model is appropriate to achieve needs of target population as it is easy to implement, less costly, flexible, and adaptable to individual needs as compared to traditional approaches to SEL that take the form of comprehensive scripted programs. (e22-e23)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:**

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Sub**

- 1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant's project management team consist of experienced and qualified partners who share a strong history of collaboration. The EASEL lab is led by someone with a track record of school-based OST partnerships and an expert in children's social, emotional and behavioral development with a focus on vulnerable populations. Other key personnel have requisite experience and qualifications relevant to the project (e36).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant is silent on whether they would employ persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. Furthermore, the applicant did not specify qualifications and experience for key personnel that are yet to be hired.(e105

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan, the Secretary considers:**

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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. (10 points)**

**Strengths:**

The management plan is convincing and is centered around the four project goals. The applicant demonstrates clear milestones to measure the progress towards achieving each goal. Each partner in the partnership has defined responsibilities and the proposal details each team's specific tasks and responsibilities against a detailed timeline (Appendix J). Furthermore, the project has a full-time project director who will provide overall leadership and will be responsible for ensuring progress toward all project goals, objectives and milestones. Also, the project director will monitor project costs to ensure the appropriate and efficient use of resources (e37).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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). (20 points)

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 0**

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

**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. (5 points)

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:**

**Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 3 points).**

**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's project will promote equitable outcomes among young students in Nebraska by providing high quality SEL training, materials, and supports to low-income communities via after-school programs (e20). Furthermore, SEL Kernels were co-developed with educators from diverse communities within the US and intentionally designed to be inclusive with regards to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses

**Reader's Score:** 3

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:**

**Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty (up to 3 points).**

**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 identified use of reports from educators and health professionals to come up with an assessment of the impact of the pandemic on children's social, emotional and mental health. As a result, the applicant's project responds to the challenges of disrupted teaching and learning and exposure to high levels of stress and trauma caused by the COVID 19 pandemic by establishing structures and routines that provide predictability and safety, support positive relationships and engagement with learning, and incorporates trauma informed practices and staff training (e22).

b. The applicant's SEL Kernels model is an evidence-based instructional approach that are designed to be low-cost, easy

to use and adaptable to different context and needs (24). The model is built on the successful findings of a pilot program called Brain Drain (e25). Furthermore, the model is built on the findings of a quasi-experimental study of SEL in Canada, where Kernel use coincided with improvements in executive function, and self-regulation skills, prosocial behavior, student-teacher relationships, and a reduction in disciplinary events (e26).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses

**Reader's Score:** 3

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/02/2022 02:38 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/10/2022 09:41 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	28
<b>Total</b>	30	28

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Tier 2 - 1: 84.411C

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

Applicant: President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

## Questions

### 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 with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)

#### Strengths:

The proposed four-year study meets What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Group Design Standards without Reservation because it will use a one-year cluster randomized control trial (RCT) with participating schools put into blocks based on similarities for setting, achievement, and high needs status demonstrating the potential to produce evidence of effectiveness (p. e39). A sample size of 90 schools with 8,000 students in targeted outside of school time (OST) programs, including 630 students who will be evenly distributed across the treatment and control groups as an analytic sample, is proposed exceeding the WWC guidelines for a minimum of 350 participants (p. e12, p. e29, pp. e39-40). The analytic strategy proposes to use a two-level hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) regression model to account for the impact on student and staff outcomes within the program based on the randomization blocks, which aligns with WWC standards (p. e40). The evaluation plan does not anticipate high attrition in the year the RCT will be conducted because the student sample will only include those students in the randomization who submitted signed parental consent forms and are enrolled in the OST program aligning with WWC standards (p. e39). Further clarification is provided indicating a plan to monitor overall and differential attrition with corrective actions taken, if necessary, which may result in meeting WWC Group Design Standards with Reservation (p. e 41). The minimum detectable effect size (MDES) for the student outcomes is .209, which is supported by published research, and the MDES for staff outcomes is .304 (pp. e84-85). The external evaluator, Abt Associates, will commit personnel to the project who have earned the status of WWC reviewer certification demonstrating the capacity of the project evaluation to measure evidence of effectiveness and meet collection outcomes (p. e36, p. e66). Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the measurement battery for the impact evaluation of seven reliable instruments to determine student and staff level outcomes, which is also illustrated in Table 6 with how each measurement criteria aligns with the WWC domains (p. e43, p. e89).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.



Sub

Reader's Score: 20

**2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)**

**Strengths:**

The proposed project timeline indicates which measurement instruments will be used to collect data for each objective with who will be responsible and when the instrument will be utilized illustrating the potential to provide feedback that could possibly be used to progress monitor toward anticipated outcomes (pp. e81-83).

**Weaknesses:**

The evaluation plan uses general terms, such as regular, frequent, and ongoing, to describe the frequency of progress monitoring, which does not provide sufficient evidence of periodic assessment toward intended outcomes (p. e37, pp. e43-44, pp. e81-83).

Reader's Score: 3

**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. (5 points)**

**Strengths:**

The proposed project demonstrates the potential for acceptable implementation through alignment of key components across the goals, objectives, outcomes and performance measures, management plan, quality and responsibilities of project personnel, and the evaluation plan (pp. e29-30, pp. e31-35, pp. e35-37, pp. e39-45). The Logic Model further demonstrates alignment across the inputs, key components, outputs, and outcomes with two mediators related to increased use of Social Emotional Learning practices and more positive adult-child relationships and interactions establishing the potential capacity for implementation of the evaluation plan (pp. e69-70). Project measurement thresholds are described on Table 5. Logic Model Components and Measurement of Fidelity, with the plan defined for adequate fidelity of implementation at the sample level, as well as an exploratory plan for examining the relationship between the implementation fidelity measures and student outcomes providing a basis for acceptable implementation (pp. e44-45).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were detected.

Reader's Score: 5

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 10/10/2022 09:41 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/10/2022 06:06 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	30	28
<b>Total</b>	30	28

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Tier 2 - 1: 84.411C

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

Applicant: President and Fellows of Harvard College (S411C220046)

## Questions

### 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 with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)

#### Strengths:

The evaluation design is a randomized control trial at the school/program level (p. e39) which can generate evidence that meets What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations.

Assignment to groups will take place after classroom assignments are completed (p. e39), minimizing the risk of students joining the study after group assignment. In addition, consent to participate in the study will be sought from parents before group assignment (p. e39), minimizing the risk of attrition due to non-consent. Both of these together maximize the likelihood of generating evidence that meets WWC standards.

A power analysis shows the study is powered to detect effects as small as 0.20 on student outcomes and 0.30 on staff outcomes, and prior research is used to illustrate that these are reasonable effect sizes to expect for these outcomes (p. e40).

Analyses will account for non-independence of data – students clustered within programs and staff clustered within schools (p. e40), which reduces alternative causal mechanisms as explanations for any effects found and increases the likelihood of generating evidence that meets WWC standards.

Attrition and baseline equivalence will be examined as potential sources of bias and strategies for analytically correcting for these, e.g., propensity score matching to achieve baseline equivalence post hoc, are proposed (p. e41). While these factors cannot be controlled nor eliminated a priori, even if they occur at higher than acceptable levels, the evidence produced can meet WWC standards with reservations.

The measures to be used are published, reliable, and valid for the outcomes to be measured (pp. e86-e88), so the data generated can produce evidence that meets WWC standards.

The Evaluation team is experienced and certified in WWC standards, increasing the likelihood of generating evidence that meets WWC standards.

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)**

**Strengths:**

The evaluation plan proposes to provide implementation and outcome data to the project team on an ongoing bases in order to assess progress toward achieving intended implementation and outcomes (p. e43).

**Weaknesses:**

It is unclear what frequency these data will be provided back to the project team, and the fidelity measure proposed to assess implementation progress is yet to be created (p. e43).

**Reader's Score: 3**

**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. (5 points)**

**Strengths:**

Key project components, along with aligned draft measurable thresholds for acceptable implementation – and a plan for finalizing these – are outlined (p. e45). In addition, key project outcomes are specified and aligned with performance measures (p. e29-e30). The relationship between implementation fidelity measures and student outcomes is mentioned (p. e45), and mediators are specified in the logic model (p. e69-e70).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 10/10/2022 06:06 PM