

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/15/2023 05:13 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

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	25
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	8
<b>Sub Total</b>	70	63
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	5	0
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. Workforce Diversity	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	7	0
<b>Total</b>	77	63

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

## 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 factor:

Reader's Score: 20

#### Sub

1. (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 proposed project, Duval IDEAS: Inclusion Diversified Education for All /students, is a unique project that is built upon the use of High Leverage Practices (HLP), a model developed by the Council for Exceptional Children and the University of Florida. (Cartagena, 2020) (Page e16 and Page 21)

High Leverage Practices supports students' academic, social and emotional development by addressing four areas: collaboration, assessment, behavioral, and instruction. (Page e16 and Page 21)

The proposed project will include documentation of the impact of HLP on academic and behavioral outcomes in inclusion classrooms. The combination of HLP and inclusion classrooms is significant as the increase of students with disabilities integrated into the classroom has increased as the least restrictive environment for those students is pursued. (Page 16-e19)

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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: 25**

**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 clearly demonstrates that the proposed project's design will include pedagogy informed by Universal Design for Instruction to provide professional development (PD) for mainstream classroom teachers. The three-day initial training will include specific topics from the High Leverage Practices model. (Billingsley, 2019) The HLP approach is grounded in Chan Zuckerberg's Initiative of the Whole Child Development Model. (Page e24 and Pages e113 - e114)

The applicant also includes fidelity monitoring and on-going support which includes checklists, classroom observation and feedback on implementation. (Page e24)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**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 proposed project design is clearly supported by goals, objectives and outcomes that are clearly specified and measurable. For example, the project design includes three defined goals such as increasing behavioral and academic outcomes of high-need Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students. (Page e25 and Pages e98 - e100)

The goals are clearly linked to the objectives and outcomes for the proposed project. These links will help to ensure that the goals will be achieved. For example, to increase teacher knowledge, the objective is to support teacher effectiveness through professional learning. The outcome includes improved teacher perceptions of PD and increased instructional practice effectiveness. (Page e25)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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 identifies the target population as students with disabilities who are currently in inclusion spaces. These students and their teachers are the focus of the proposed project. Due to the shortage of qualified special education classroom teachers and the national and local moves toward more inclusion, the proposed project will focus on professional development for teachers to use High Leverage Practices in the classroom that includes students with disabilities. (Pages e19-e21)

One of the needs of the Duval County Public Schools is that the school has not met its target to have a lower

**Sub**

percentage of students in self-contained placement. If the proposed project finds success, this issue will be addressed by keeping students in integrated settings. (Page e26)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant indicates that science teachers will be participating in the proposed project. (Page e10) However, the design does not indicate that science teachers are necessarily the teachers that need the interventions proposed. The design has a focus on elementary age children and not science education.

It is not clear how the applicant will decide which of the over 1,000 teachers in the district are to receive the interventions planned. It is not clear if the teachers that are self-selected are the individuals who are in need of the interventions. (Page e10)

The applicant does not clearly define the specific needs of the integrated students. It appears that all the interventions are for all students and teachers regardless of the type of individual needs. Not all exceptional student education students have the same needs.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 the following factor:**

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Sub**

- 1. (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 proposed program is supported by individuals in key positions that have quality, relevant training and experience. For example, the Project Direct has a background in leadership skills, special education and staff development. (Page e27 and Pages e45 - e81)

The job description for ESE Specialist clearly defines the open positions and will ensure that the persons hired will have relevant training and experience. That job description includes the requirement of a bachelor's degree with a license in at least one area of Exceptional Student Education. (Page e77)

The Duval Public School District and the University of North Florida have aligned with other partners to recruit 1,000 minority educators to the district within the next two years. This is one effort to encourage underrepresented groups to be hired for open positions. (Page e29 and Page e140)

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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

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

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant includes a timeline for some of the elements of the proposed project such as cohort recruitment. This milestone is the responsibility of the Project Director and the Specialists and will complete by July in years one thru three. Those efforts will ensure that that component of the project will be completed on time and within budget. (Page e32)

The applicant provided a letter of support that states the general obligations of the university partner. In that letter the University authorizes the participation of several faculty members as co-investigators for the proposed project. (Page e83)

The applicant includes a detailed timeline for evaluation reporting. (Page e38)

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant does provide some major milestones for the project, the lack of details in the breakdown of the activities in a more manageable manner will make the project difficult to manage. For example, the professional development and training are not clearly outlined and aligned to a timeline with links to persons responsible for those milestones.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Priority Questions**

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

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:**

**Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)**

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

**Strengths:**

Did not apply.

**Weaknesses:**

Did not apply.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:**

**Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning  
(up to 2 points)**

Projects that are designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through building or expanding high-poverty school districts' capacity to hire, support, and retain an effective and diverse educator workforce, through adopting or expanding comprehensive, strategic career and compensation systems that provide competitive compensation and include opportunities for educators to serve as mentors and instructional coaches, or to take on additional leadership roles and responsibilities for which educators are compensated.

**Strengths:**

Did not apply.

**Weaknesses:**

Did not apply.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/15/2023 05:09 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

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	28
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	9
<b>Sub Total</b>	70	67
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	5	0
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. Workforce Diversity	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	7	0
<b>Total</b>	77	67



# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

## 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 factor:

Reader's Score: 20

#### Sub

1. (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 provided a comprehensive description of the proposed project, DUVAL Inclusion Diversifies Education for All Students (IDEAS), a promising new strategy to evaluate the effect of High-Leverage Practices (HLPs) on the academic and behavioral outcomes of students with disabilities enrolled in Exceptional Student Education (ESE) inclusion classrooms. The project targets K-5 teachers and students in inclusive general education classroom environments and has the potential for replication nationwide (Abstract -p. e13, e16).

The project supports the critical issue of identifying and implementing effective strategies to support academic and behavior outcomes for students with disabilities – a challenge for K-12 school systems throughout the nation, which enroll approximately 15% (8 million) of students with disabilities. While there has been tremendous progress in implementing strategies to support students with disabilities (SWD) in least restrictive environment spaces, additional research is needed to identify best practices to support maximum student success.

As inclusion classroom placements now include more than two-third of students with disabilities where over 80% spend the school day in traditional classrooms, school systems (and their school teams, i.e., teachers, counselors) require additional support with recommendations and professional development for best practices to provide quality services to SWD. Studies has indicated that to be truly effective, that inclusion “must be done right and responsibly to work” (Vaughn and Schum 1995 – p. e18). And, in support, studies also indicate the importance of appropriate learning environments where inappropriate learning environments can lead to poor outcomes for SWD where inclusion strategies are not effectively implemented or may not be the best option for specific students.

The significance of the proposed project is also important because the benefits of enrollment in inclusion classrooms have mixed results. For example, studies (Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study – 2000-2006) that indicated that students who spend at least 75% of the school day (as opposed to those who spent less than 25% of their day) in inclusion classrooms score significantly higher in reading and math. While other studies (Barrett et. Al. 2019) have indicated mixed results (pp. e18 – e20).

The need for the proposed project, Duval IDEAS, is also important due to the critical shortage of qualified special education classroom teachers. School systems throughout the nation are faced with the challenges of hiring and retaining teachers, including special education teachers exacerbated by the results of the COVID-19 pandemic. For

**Sub**

example, in the 2020-2021 school year, 40% of districts throughout the nation experienced a shortage of qualified special education teachers (pp. e20 – e21). While there have been similar shortages for other subject areas (i.e., 37% physics), the challenge is more impactful because it affects grades from K-12 throughout the school system rather than in one specific subject area. In Florida (as throughout the nation), special education teachers have been identified as the instructional position most in need of certified staff. Also in Florida, the need for projects and strategies such as those identified in Duval IDEAS is more critical as special education was the top certification area taught by teachers without the required certification, with 9,000 teachers out of field and 1,480 vacancies (FLDOE 2022) (p. e21).

The project utilizes an experimental design to address the challenges faced by the identification and implementation of best practices for SWD enrolled in inclusive environments. It also addresses the need for qualified special education teachers to be trained to provide appropriate instruction to ensure student success. Strategies used in the project are based upon the successful foundation of the promising practices of HPL and supported by the evidence-based practice, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which provides a model for classrooms to maximize learning for all students (p. e23).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**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: 28**

**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 provided a comprehensive and thorough description of the conceptual framework of the proposed project, Duval Inclusion Diversifies Education for All Students (IDEAS). The conceptual framework for the proposed project is an adaptation of the High-Leverage Practices (HLP) conceptual framework for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs, which integrates the foundational components of the HLP model with related professional development topics and contributing school-level factors. The project will utilize an experimental design and follow up to 360 teachers and their students upon completion of their participation in the Duval IDEAS professional development activities as compared to a matched randomized control group (p. e28).

The project will explore the impact of HLPs as a framework to support students with disabilities and improve academic and behavioral outcomes in inclusion classrooms (p. e16, p. e21, p.e23). Initially developed as a strategic framework for exceptional education teachers to use in self-contained classrooms, the model is also recognized as a possible approach for students with disabilities enrolled in inclusion classrooms and as a support for mainstream classroom teachers. The project will provide professional development to teachers in the HLP pillars: Collaboration, Assessment, Behavioral, and Instruction. The four pillars are supported by 22 Practices that can teach academic content and emotional, behavioral, and social skills and are the foundation to effective instruction for Exceptional

**Sub**

Student Education (ESE). (p. e23, p. e111). They include practices such as: 1) Collaboration – HLP1 – Collaborate with professionals to increase student success; and 2) Instruction – Use assistive and instructional technologies. (p. e16, p. e23, p. e111).

As a support, classrooms will be organized in accordance with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principals. UDL is a framework for improving and enhancing teachers and student learning where there is support for all learners with the implementation of strategies to minimize the need for student and/or instructional accommodations. Each cohort of teachers (120 per year) will participate in a three-day Academy followed by implementation of the HLP model during the following school year. Teachers will also receive support through such strategies as monthly meetings with a mentor and classroom observations that include self-assessments (pp. e7 - e9).

The applicant provided a detailed logic model to further support the project design (p. e91). The logic model included an identification of Resources, Activities, Outputs, Assumptions, and Outcomes to answer questions such as: Does the PD have an effect on the students without disabilities (p. e91). As an example of the specificity of the logic model, the following information was provided: 1) Resources - K-5 ESE students in inclusion classrooms; 2) Activities - Group 1 - HLP strategies embedded into lesson plans; 3) Outputs - PD for 120/year K-5 teachers; and 4) Outcomes - Short – Self-efficacy, motivation, engagement in learning (climate); Medium - Increase in teacher instructional practice (observational tool); and Long - Increase in teacher retention (e91).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**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 provided a detailed statement of Goals, Objectives, Intended Outcomes, Performance Measures, and Targets for the proposed project (p. e25, pp. e98 - e100). Three Goals were identified with supporting Objectives and Intended Outcomes as evidenced in Table 1. For example, for Goal 3 - Refine a replicable, sustainable model for teacher professional learning in implementing HLPs with GE ESE students, the following information was provided: 1) Obj. 3.1 – Implement IDEAS with fidelity to maximize student impacts and 2) Intended Outcomes – High-fidelity implementation) (p. e25).

These were supported in Appendix J in a highly defined table (pp. e98 – e100), which also identified Goals/Objectives, Intended Outcomes, Performance Measures, and Targets. For example, Goal 3 - Refine a replicable, sustainable model for teacher professional learning in implementing HLPs with GE ESE students (p. e100) included the following information: 1) Obj, 3,2 – Implement IDEAS with fidelity to maximize student impacts; 2) Intended Outcomes – Sustained impacts on teachers and students; 3) Performance Measures - percent of students maintaining or increasing student proficiency rates at follow-up; and 4) Targets – Years 4 and 5 only - 80% (p. e100).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

Sub

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 provided a general overview of activities to meet the needs of the target population: K – 5 teachers and elementary school students who are enrolled in inclusive classroom environments. Implementation will focus on strategies identified in the pillars of HLP with particular focus on foundational instructional practices for teachers and students. For example, the following information was provided: 1) Assessment, a strategy to be implemented includes HLP4 – Use multiple sources of information to develop a comprehensive understanding of a student’s strengths and needs; 2) Social/Emotional/Behavior, HLP 10 – Conduct functional behavioral assessments to develop individual student behavior support plans and Teach social behaviors; and 3) Instruction, HLP 14 – Adapt curriculum tasks and materials for specific learning goals and Teach cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support learning and independence (p. e21, p. e26, p, e111).

**Weaknesses:**

A more detailed description of the specific learning and behavioral characteristics of the elementary school students with disabilities (i.e., emotional, developmental, learning disabilities, physical, sensory–hearing or visually impaired) would provide critical information to accurately determine and evaluate if the project meets the needs of the target population (pp. e26 – e27).

**Reader's Score: 13**

**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 the following factor:**

**Reader's Score: 10**

Sub

1. **(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 provided a thorough description of the key project personnel who will be implementing the proposed project. The description included a summary statement regarding the applicant’s commitment to hire individuals from underrepresented groups and indicated that it will “promote diversity and equity in the recruitment and hiring of members of underrepresented groups” (p. e29). The applicant also provided strategies to be utilized for recruitment, including collaborating with the Duval County Public Schools Departments of Human Resources and Office of Equity and Inclusion to ensure diversity in hiring practices (p. e29).

A clear description of the project key personnel was also included, supported by resumes that documented their qualifications. For example, the DCPS Lead Professional Learning Instructor will serve as Project Director and Co-Investigator. Her resume documented her expertise in educational leadership, exceptional education, planning, and professional development – skills important for successful leadership of the proposed project (p, e27, e45). In addition, a job description was provided for a Lead ESE Training Specialist to support the Project Director who will

**Sub**

be hired upon receipt of the project award. Expected qualifications include certification in Exceptional Student Education (ESE), experience in professional learning instructional strategies professional development, technical assistance, data collection, collaboration, and change management (pp. e28 – e29, p. e76).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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

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

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided a sound and well-defined management plan to achieve expected project outcomes. The description included a summary of project partners and their responsibilities supported by a table, which identified Activities, Milestones, Timelines, and Responsible Project Team Members.

The comprehensive summary provided a description of the responsibilities of each of the key project partners, Duval County Public Schools ) - fiscal agent and lead grantee; University of North Florida (UNF) - professional development and evaluation expertise, Institutional Review Board process and dissemination plan; and CIC Planning Group (CIC) – evaluation partner (pp. e29 – e31). Documented supportive Letters of Commitment were also provided for each of the key partners (pp. e83, e84, e85). For example, the Superintendent of Duval County Public Schools and the President of CIC both signed Letters of Commitment for the project.

In addition, the applicant included an additional schedule of the plan to monitor project activities (i.e., weekly meetings with co-investigators, quarterly finance meetings, monthly technical assistance meetings, and as needed, administrative support from the fiscal department) (p. e31).

To further document the high quality management plan, the applicant provided a table with specific information for each phase of the project (Startup, Ongoing, and Evaluation) and identified specific supportive timelines, activities, and responsibilities of each key project team member (pp. e31 – e32). For example, the applicant provided the following information for Ongoing Activities: 1) Ongoing Activities – Dissemination plan finalized; 2) Responsible – Project Director (PD), Co-Investigators (I), and Evaluator (E); and 3) Timeline - Jan 2024 to DEC 2028; Due – December 2 (p. e32).

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

The numbers in the timeline (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5) in the “Due” columns of the Management Plan were not clearly defined. For example, they appear to be related to each year of the project period. However, more specific details would confirm the reference (pp. e31 – e32).

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Priority Questions**

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

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:**

**Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)**

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)
- (d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:**

**Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning (up to 2 points)**

Projects that are designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through building or expanding high-poverty school districts' capacity to hire, support, and retain an effective and diverse educator workforce, through adopting or expanding comprehensive, strategic career and compensation systems that provide competitive compensation and include opportunities for educators to serve as mentors and instructional coaches, or to take on additional leadership roles and responsibilities for which educators are compensated.

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

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**Status:**           Submitted

**Last Updated:**   09/15/2023 05:09 PM

Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

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	28
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	9
<b>Sub Total</b>	70	67
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	5	0
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. Workforce Diversity	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	7	0
<b>Total</b>	77	67



# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

## 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 factor:

Reader's Score: 20

#### Sub

1. (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's project IDEAS (Inclusion Diversifies Education for All Students) is a collaborative study developed by Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) and the University of North Florida (UNF) to assess the impact of High Leverage Practices (HLPs). HLPs are practices developed by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) in partnership with CEEDAR Center (Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform) of the University of Florida (p. e16). The applicant references research showing that inclusion has become increasingly utilized as the least restrictive environment (LRE) for students with disabilities. The applicant provides supporting evidence of more positive outcomes (significantly higher reading and math test scores) for students who spend at least 75% of their school day in an inclusion classroom, over students who spend less than 25% in an inclusion setting. The applicant notes that the body of research has mixed evidence relating to impact on short-term academic outcomes (p. e19).

In addition to mixed evidence, there is also extensive criticism of the existing research. One notable criticism is that within the research there is pervasive selection bias, i.e., students who are identified as appropriate for inclusion settings have higher academic abilities and fewer behavioral problems. The applicant also highlights disparities in the academic placement setting of children who are members of marginalized groups. The applicant cites the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD), noting that "Black and Brown children are more likely to be identified as special education, and are then more likely to receive harsher discipline and be placed into a more restrictive environment (NCLD, 2020; Morgan et al 2022)," (pp. e19-e20). The applicant's project will build upon existing research regarding inclusion and the LRE, by providing a unique intervention model that will equip educators to differentiate their classrooms to support academic, social, and behavioral development for both students with disabilities (SWD) and their non-disabled peers (Cartagena, 2020)," (p.e21).

Sub

**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: 28**

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's project, Duval IDEAS, will explore the impact of High-Leverage Practices (HLPs) as a framework to improve academic and behavioral outcomes of SWD in inclusion classrooms. The educators in the treatment group will receive training and support on four HLP pillars: Collaboration, Assessment, Behavioral, and Instruction. The program includes a pre-service three day academy for teachers, with on-going coaching and observation throughout one school year of implementation (pp. e21-e22). The applicant further explains the conceptual framework with a logic model showing the differences between the study and control groups with clear resources, activities, assumptions, outputs and short-term, medium-term and long-term outcomes. These include medium-term outcomes of fewer discipline actions, increased state scores in English Language Arts and Math, and increased teacher instructional practice (p. e91).

**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 has thorough and well-defined goals and objectives, with accompanying measurement methods, which are both qualitative and quantitative in nature. A few of these measures include focus groups/interviews with participants, observations, teacher participation in HLP professional development (fidelity threshold: 80% of teachers complete 80% of PD); knowledge of HLPs (90% of teachers report proficiency on 70% of HLPs), implementation of HLPs (75% of teachers demonstrate mastery of 75% of HLPs in classroom observations) (pp. e40, e98-e104).

**Sub**

**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 proposes that IDEAS will improve academic and behavioral outcomes for all elementary children, but particularly for SWD placed in inclusion classrooms. DCPS has a higher than average percent of SWD in self-contained classrooms, and the district is currently not meeting six of the fourteen Exceptional Student Education (ESE) indicators. These challenges are exacerbated by classroom teachers who lack traditional preparation to support ESE students. While the district does have more than 1,000 teachers, it is less common for elementary teachers to have ESE certification, particularly in grades K-2. The applicant's model clearly defines how it will address some of the missing competencies in the elementary classrooms with students who are in inclusion settings and support educators in developing classrooms that meet the needs of SWD (pp. e26-e27).

**Weaknesses:**

There is a lack of explanation for how the diverse needs of SWD will be met and if the outcomes will be generalizable to students with differing needs and abilities.

**Reader's Score: 13**

**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 the following factor:**

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Sub**

- 1. (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 includes in the narrative the ways in which DCPS is committed to ensuring diversity in the workforce. For example, they note that "DCPS and UNF have aligned with other community partners on the '1,000 by 2025 Initiative,'" which has a goal of recruiting 1,000 minority educators to the district within the next two years" (p.e29).

The roles of the staff are clearly defined, and the applicant has provided resumes and curriculum vitae that document the high level of training and experience of key project staff (the Project Director and Co-Investigators). The key staff have advanced degrees in ESE and combined decades of experience in the field. Additionally, the

**Sub**

roles that are not yet hired have job descriptions for ESE Specialists that demonstrate appropriate qualifications for the role (e.g., certification in at least one area of ESE and 5 years of ESE experience (pp. e45-e81).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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

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

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant has provided an excellent and comprehensive evaluation timeline, with staff responsibilities clearly defined and the ability to ensure the project is meeting objective and budgetary milestones (pp. e38, e106-e108).

**Weaknesses:**

The project implementation timeline lacked sufficient detail and clear task completion milestones (pp. e31-e32).

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Priority Questions**

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

- 1. **Competitive Preference Priority 1:**

**Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities: Implementers and Partners (up to 5 points)**

**Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate how the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:**

- (a) Community colleges (as defined in the NIA)**
- (b) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the NIA)**
- (c) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the NIA)**

**(d) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the NIA)**

**Strengths:**

CCP1 not addressed.

**Weaknesses:**

CCP1 not addressed.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:**

**Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning  
(up to 2 points)**

**Projects that are designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through building or expanding high-poverty school districts' capacity to hire, support, and retain an effective and diverse educator workforce, through adopting or expanding comprehensive, strategic career and compensation systems that provide competitive compensation and include opportunities for educators to serve as mentors and instructional coaches, or to take on additional leadership roles and responsibilities for which educators are compensated.**

**Strengths:**

CCP2 not addressed.

**Weaknesses:**

CCP2 not addressed.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/15/2023 05:09 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/06/2023 05:55 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

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

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

# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Early-phase Tier II Panel - 5: 84.411C

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

Applicant: School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

## 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: 30

#### 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 applicant proposes to conduct a robust RCT that has the potential to meet WWC standards without reservation. The proposed plan has an impressive amount of power and has a minimally detectable effect size of 0.13 for ESE student outcomes, which is conservative (page e35). The power analysis is detailed and includes all the values for the parameters needed for the analysis and to replicate it.

The evaluation plan includes a detailed description of the metrics that the applicant's intended to use. The description provides clear evidence of their reliability and validity supported by peer-reviewed journal articles (pages e36-e37). The range of proposed measures, from student motivation to teacher efficacy, is a strength of the application.

Another strength of the evaluation is that it contains clearly stated research questions and their associated analyses (page e35-e37). The proposed analyses are appropriate for the research questions.

The proposed evaluation includes a plan to standardize all the variables, which is consistent with best practices in similar situations (page e35).

The proposed analysis (HLM) is appropriate given the nested nature of the data (page e35). The three levels of analysis that the applicant proposes to use consistent with best practices in educational evaluation.

Overall, the evaluation plan, if conducted as described, has the potential to meet WWC standards without reservations.

#### Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

**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:**

A strength of the evaluation is the plan to conduct monthly meetings with the project leadership (page e38). The feedback plan is further strengthened with quarterly and annual reports.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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 four exploratory research questions will permit the applicant to evaluate the potential impact of a set of moderating and mediating variables that are appropriate for this type of evaluation (page e35-e36).

The evaluation includes clearly stated covariates, that are appropriate for this type of evaluation (page e39-e40).

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 10/06/2023 05:55 PM



Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/06/2023 12:30 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

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

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

# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Early-phase Tier II Panel - 5: 84.411C

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

Applicant: School Board of Duval County (S411C230166)

## 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: 30

#### 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:

Elementary schools were selected for this project to address larger systemic problems in the district, related to achievement and discipline (e26)

The third-party evaluator has experience in education research, and specifically EIR and WWC, and has developed the motivational climate tools to be used in the project (e28).

The proposed study is a cluster RCT, with 240 teachers being randomly assigned to the control and treatment groups. The applicant's plan to deal with attrition meets WWC guidelines (e34).

Impacts will be estimated using multilevel modeling (e35), providing impact analysis for teachers in schools, and students in classrooms. All measures for RQ1 and RQ2 meet the WWC guidelines for validity, reliability, non-alignment, and consistent measurement. The confirmatory and exploratory research questions are clearly defined (e33-34).

Overall, this is a rigorous proposal that could produce meaningful and replicable findings.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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)

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The proposal includes a clear timeline for providing formative feedback, allowing both the program team and evaluators to adjust their plan, as needed (e38). The evaluation timelines for collecting various data sources were clearly defined (e39).

The checklists used for fidelity will be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The team will refine checklists over the course of the project, providing a timely and responsive tool for educators throughout the district (e37).

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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 study includes a formal fidelity implementation evaluation (e39). The key components and mediators are clearly defined (e39). The implementation is a robust mixed methods analysis using clearly defined measures (e40).

The goals, outcomes, measurement tools, and targets are clearly defined and thoughtfully selected (e98-99)

Fidelity monitoring will be conducted using several means; a self-check tool, classroom observations, and lesson plan reviews (e24)

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 5**

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