

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/31/2023 04:45 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (S374A230045)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	30	22
Sub Total	100	92
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Diverse Workforce	5	4
Sub Total	10	9
Total	110	101

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - TSL Panel - 5: 84.374A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (S374A230045)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Need for Project (20 points)

The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining evidence of the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

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

Strengths:

Overview: Overall, the application presented an exceptional need for the project. The application demonstrates gaps or weaknesses for an underserved student population within the four partnering districts. The application provides sufficient discussion to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs from outside resources. The application also provides a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and supports rigorous academic standards for students. Lastly, the applicant shows an approach to addressing the needs of the target population.

i. The application demonstrates a need for a project by providing factual data on (page e.17) that illustrates 95% of schools (22/23 schools) meet high need criteria and 84% of population consists of students of color (page e.20). The application also provides information for districts having a higher turnover rate than the national average (e.21).

ii. The application provides adequate discussion on efforts to improve relevant outcomes by using existing funding streams and support from the community (e. 23) to continue to expand on what they have accomplished in the last few years.

iii. The application provides a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students by demonstrating an evidence-based model for high needs students. The application also sufficiently illustrates TAP systems to improve teaching and learning for students and educators (e. 26). iv. The applicant shows an adequate approach to addressing the needs of the target population by using a strategic approach to develop and retain a diverse and effective educator workforce with NIET Instructional Framework, District Leadership Team (DLT), and TAP Systems (e. 27).

iv. The applicant shows an adequate approach to addressing the needs of the target population by using a strategic approach to develop and retain a diverse and effective educator workforce with NIET Instructional Framework, District Leadership Team (DLT), and TAP Systems (e. 27).

Weaknesses:

- i. No weaknesses noted.
- ii. No weakness noted.
- iii. No weaknesses noted.
- iv. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. Quality of the Project Design (25 points)

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:

- (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.**
- (ii) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.**
- (iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**

Strengths:

Overview: The application presents an exceptional project that demonstrates a rationale. The application demonstrates a project that includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. The application demonstrates sufficient performance feedback that permits periodic assessment toward achieving intended outcomes.

- i. The application presents a project that demonstrates a rationale using a four-research based strategy (TAP Systems). The rationale for the project is to increase skills of current educators and increase teacher attrition (e.29).
- ii. The application demonstrates a project that includes a high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation using the theory of action. The application provides an exceptional evaluation methodology to ensure project achievement objectives using the NIET rubric (e. 34).
- iii. The application demonstrates an exceptional performance feedback that permits periodic assessment toward achieving intended outcomes utilizing a qualitative and quantitative assessment plan. The assessment plan will use interviews, logic model, and evaluations that will be led by the Research and Evaluation Department of the applicant (e.41 - e.42).

Weaknesses:

- i. No weaknesses noted.
- ii. No weaknesses noted.
- iii. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the Management Plan (25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers 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:

Overview: The application demonstrates an exceptional management plan. The application provides objectives, a budget, clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

The application demonstrates an exceptional management plan for the proposed project that illustrates historical fiscal responsibilities to showcase their ability to manage the budget. The application also provides a descriptive chart (Table 1. Milestones & Key Tasks Summary) that strategically aligns the project timelines for short and long-term goals (e. 45) through 2026. The application presents highly qualified staff to manage responsibilities for the grant timelines and milestones (e. 47 - e. 50). The applicant's AZ PRIME districts will use evaluation data for performance measures regarding recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, and dismissal (e. 35).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. Adequacy of Resources (30 points)

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.
- (iii) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

Strengths:

Overview: The applicant provides limited discussion the project will result in system change or improvement for educators using their TAP & HCMS systems. The application provides local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population. The applicant provides resources to operate the project by demonstrating commitment of any partners and stakeholders beyond the length of the grant.

i. No strengths noted.

ii. The application provides local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population that focuses on expanding teacher leadership and excellence throughout the district using NIET and DIF (e. 52).

iii. The applicant provides resources to operate the project by demonstrating the commitment of partners and stakeholders beyond the length of the grant by providing 39 letters of support from internal and external stakeholders. The applicant also has strong partnership and recognition from the Arizona Department of Education (e. 53).

Weaknesses:

i. The application provides limited discussion about whether the project will result in system change or improvement. Although the applicant states that the TAP System will change their HCMS and PBC systems (e.37) the project doesn't clearly explain how this will be accomplished. The applicant only provided a statement that suggests these systems would create changes necessary for the classroom (e. 50).

ii. No weaknesses noted.

iii. The applicant doesn't have the multi-year or financial and operating plan.

Reader's Score: 22

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 5 points).**

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students.

a. In one or more of the following educational settings:

- (1) Elementary school.**
- (2) Middle school.**
- (3) High school.**
- (4) Career and technical education programs.**

b. That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or more of the following:

- (1) Increasing the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, in-field, and effective educators, and educators from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds or the communities they serve, to ensure that underserved students have educators from those backgrounds and communities and are not taught at disproportionately higher rates by uncertified, out-of-field, and novice teachers compared to their peers.**
- (2) Improving the retention of fully certified, experienced, and effective educators in high-need schools or shortage areas.**

Strengths:

Overview: Overall, the application provides a sufficient design to promote educational equity in resources and opportunity for underserved students in elementary, middle, high school, and career or technical educational programs. The applicant provides sources that demonstrate an increase in the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, and effective educators from underrepresented students. The applicant provides sufficient methods to improve the retention of fully

certified educators in high needs schools.

a. The applicant demonstrates a sufficient design to promote educational equity and adequacy for underserved students. For example, the application does provide a plan to promote educational equity and adequacy for underserved students. The plan is to train leadership to support underserved populations. (e 18, e.14, & e.29)

b. The applicant documents sources that will increase the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, and effective educators from underrepresented students. For example, the applicant discusses teacher leaders bringing expertise and knowledge to leadership teams and multiple trainings for teacher leaders. The application discusses retention by providing statistics that state the applicant turnover rate is 21% in which they would like to reduce (e.37).

Weaknesses:

a. No weaknesses noted.

b. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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 5 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, by developing data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator diversity.

Strengths:

Overview: The application demonstrates an adequate competitive preference project for effective and diverse 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.

The application designed a project to adequately increase effective teachers. In order to address increasing effective teachers, the application presents a TAP system that plays a critical role for the instructional leadership team (e. 37). The applicant illustrates an instructional leadership team (ILT) that plays a crucial role for the success of the TAP and is composed of administrators such as principals and teacher leaders. Along with the TAP system, the application provides an HCMS that will aid and increase the district's ability to attract, retain, and develop diverse staff (e. 37).

Weaknesses:

The application provides vague details for retaining diverse educators serving students. For example, the application presents a limited method to recruit diverse staff through compensation and other unknown strategies that were not detailed or provided (e. 37).

Reader's Score: 4

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (S374A230045)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	20	18
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	30	24
Sub Total	100	92
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Diverse Workforce	5	4
Sub Total	10	9
Total	110	101

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - TSL Panel - 5: 84.374A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (S374A230045)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Need for Project (20 points)

The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining evidence of the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

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

Strengths:

Overview: The application demonstrated a need for the project adequately. It documented gaps in its services. The applicant described how the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. The applicant addresses the needs of the target population. However, the applicant's discussion describing how that the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs lacks clarity.

1- The applicant documented specific gaps and weaknesses in services that will be addressed by the proposed project. For example, the applicant identified gaps related to the ability to recruit and retain effective teachers and building the capacity of their current educators. The applicant provided data that shows their district has a 21% turnover rate. In addition, the applicant provided data that shows 30% of their educator workforce has less than three years of experience. (e21-23)

2- The applicant provided strategies that demonstrates that the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs. For example, the applicant's narrative states the proposed project expands previously implemented projects that have had success with teacher recruitment and retention. (e23-24)

3- The applicant provided a plan that suggests that the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. For example, the proposed project will use the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric as a framework to improve instructional practices within the applicant's district. The proposed rubric will be used for evaluation, professional development, compensation, retention, recruitment, placement, and hiring with the goal of improving teaching and learning. (e25-27)

4- The applicant's proposal outlines strategies that suggest that the project will successfully address the needs of

the target population and other identified needs. For example, to improve the recruitment of teachers, the applicant proposes to provide a district-based induction training and support program for new teachers. To improve instructional practices, the applicant will implement a roust monthly coaching program for teachers and teacher leaders. (e27-28)

Weaknesses:

1. No weakness noted.
2. The applicant's narrative describing how that the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar efforts to improve relevant outcomes lacks specific details. For example, the applicant's narrative states that the proposed project will expand previously implemented efforts. However, the applicant's narrative does not specifically describe which aspects or components of the previously implemented programs will remain the same or change. In addition, evidence of relevant outcomes is not presented clearly. (e23-24)
3. No weaknesses noted.
4. No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **18**

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. Quality of the Project Design (25 points)

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:

- (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.**
- (ii) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.**
- (iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.**

Strengths:

Overview: Overall, the applicant's project design is exceptional. The applicant provided a rationale for the proposed project design. The applicant's narrative includes multiple researched best practices and evidence from relevant literature that justifies their project design. The applicant provided a detailed evaluation plan that is excellent in its design. The applicant provided a high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and described appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. The applicant's project design is comprehensive and well-thought out.

1- The applicant provided a rationale for the proposed project design. For example, the applicant's rationale for the proposed project is that increases in teacher and school leader effectiveness will result from both increases in the skills of current educators as well as improved recruitment and retention of effective, diverse educators due to the combination of increased support and opportunities for leadership roles and additional compensation. The applicant's rationale is supported by several research articles and evidence from multiple researched best practices. The applicant provided data on their student's performance to solidify their proposed project rationale. Lastly, the applicant provided a highly detailed logic model that clearly states the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project. (e29-32)

2- The applicant provided a high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project

implementation, and documented use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. For example, the applicant presented multiple studies to support each project goal. The applicant presented multiple use of appropriate methodological tools such as classroom observations, student grades, coaching logs, journals, and focus groups. Lastly, the applicant's narrative presented a comprehensive project implementation plan. The proposed implementation plan is well-developed and detailed. (e32-41)

3- The applicant provided a plan that describes which methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. For example, the applicant proposes to implement an evaluation plan that includes quarterly update meetings to review plans. The applicant will review current progress and preliminary data to foster regular communication between the evaluator, key project personnel, and each district. The applicant will use qualitative and quantitative data to address their research questions. Data used includes administrative records, retention rates, evaluation ratings for teachers and school leaders, and student outcomes. The applicant's evaluation methods are comprehensive. The applicant provided a table that clearly presents all evaluation methods that will be used. (e33-35)

Weaknesses:

- 1- No weaknesses noted.
- 2- No weaknesses noted.
- 3- No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the Management Plan (25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers 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:

Overview: The applicant's quality of management plan is exceptional. The applicant's proposed management plan demonstrates a high level of ability amongst project staff to ensure the success of a project of this magnitude. The applicant provided a detailed budget table and narrative that is aligned with achieving the proposed project objectives. The applicant provided a narrative that describes their proposed project timeline, and milestones for accomplishing tasks. The applicant's management plan is comprehensive. The applicant's management plan is detailed in nature.

The applicant provided a detailed management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project and the plan included defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. The applicant provided a detailed table that clearly shows project milestone and key project tasks. Each project task is assigned to project staff and given a specific timeline. The applicant's proposed budget is aligned with the proposed objectives and project activities. The applicant's proposed management plan demonstrates a high level of ability amongst project staff to ensure the success of a project of this magnitude. The proposed project will be led by the Project Director. The proposed staff appear to be professionals with the right educational background and experiences to implement a project of this magnitude. (e47)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. Adequacy of Resources (30 points)

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.
- (iii) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

Strengths:

Overview: The application demonstrates adequacy of resources in sufficient ways. The applicant demonstrated a strong likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement. The applicant demonstrated ways in which their proposed project will build local capacity to provide, improve, and expand services for the target population. The applicant provided multiple letters of support from partners and stakeholders. However, the applicant provided limited documentation that demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant.

1- The applicant demonstrated a strong likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement. For example, as it relates to change in the classroom, the applicant's proposed project implements three ways which will result in positive changes in instructional practices and student performance. Additionally, the applicant's plan to implement weekly collaborative learning teams led by trained teacher leaders that provide job-embedded professional learning tied to specific classroom challenges appears to be highly beneficial for improving student outcomes. (e50-51)

2- The applicant demonstrated ways in which their proposed project will build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population. For example, the applicant proposes to support district leaders in improving district practices and embedding improvements in existing structures and systems to ensure sustainability. The applicant proposes to support school leaders through weekly collaborative meetings so that principals and other school leaders will develop a more consistent approach to evaluating classroom practices and reinforce expectations (e52)

3- The applicant demonstrated ways that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. For example, the applicant's narrative states that they are committed to using local, state, and federal Title I and II funds to continue implementing the proposed project beyond the grant period. The applicant's application includes multiple letters of support from various stakeholders demonstrating commitment of partnerships and support. (e53-55)

Weaknesses:

1- No weaknesses noted.

2- No weaknesses noted.

3- The applicant demonstrated in limited ways that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of

the grant. For example, the applicant's narrative states funding streams that will be used to continue project efforts after the grant period. However, the applicant failed to provide a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan. (e53-55)

Reader's Score: 24

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 5 points).

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students.

a. In one or more of the following educational settings:

- (1) Elementary school.**
- (2) Middle school.**
- (3) High school.**
- (4) Career and technical education programs.**

b. That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or more of the following:

- (1) Increasing the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, in-field, and effective educators, and educators from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds or the communities they serve, to ensure that underserved students have educators from those backgrounds and communities and are not taught at disproportionately higher rates by uncertified, out-of-field, and novice teachers compared to their peers.**
- (2) Improving the retention of fully certified, experienced, and effective educators in high-need schools or shortage areas.**

Strengths:

Overview: The applicant provided significant evidence that demonstrates their proposed project exceptionally meets the criteria for this competitive preference priority. The applicant documented the educational setting for the proposed project. The applicant demonstrated that the proposed project outcomes and activities are aligned to promote equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities. The applicant demonstrated that the proposed project will be implemented in multiple elementary, middle, and high schools. The applicant's proposed project includes a detailed learning acceleration program that expands the number of fully certified teachers within their schools. The application includes a detailed plan that focuses on improving teaching and learning conditions, improving educator retention, and eliminating the teacher shortage through providing additional compensation based on performance, fulfilling teacher leadership roles, and equipping teachers with the necessary support to meet student needs, such as school-based professional collaborative learning, individual coaching, and induction support for new teachers.

A- The applicant demonstrated that the proposed project will be implemented in multiple elementary, middle, and high schools. (e18)

B- The applicant's proposed project includes several components that provide career advancement opportunities, support educators through professional development and build collective efficacy. The applicant's plan includes the implementation of a new evaluation process for teachers and the implementation of job-embedded, collaborative professional learning for teachers and school leaders. The proposed project strengthens the applicant's school's capacity to provide a cohesive induction system to support new teachers to integrate into the school community and build effective

instructional practices (e18-20)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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 5 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, by developing data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator diversity.

Strengths:

Overview: The applicant's plan does not fully meet this competitive preference. The applicant provided a plan that is designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, 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, by developing data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices.

The applicant provided a plan that is designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, and effective educators serving students. For example, the applicant's proposed project includes a plan to implement valid and reliable evaluation processes for teachers and school leaders and expand formal, instructionally focused roles for teacher leaders. The applicant will implement job-embedded, collaborative professional learning for teachers and school leader. The applicant will also implement a data system to track recruitment, hiring and retention of their educator workforce. (e27)

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided a plan that is designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, and effective educators serving students. However, the applicant's narrative does not include a clear plan to promote and support the development of educator diversity. It is unclear as to how the applicant will promote and expand educator diversity within their school districts. (e27)

Reader's Score: 4

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (S374A230045)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	20	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	30	26
Sub Total	100	96
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Diverse Workforce	5	4
Sub Total	10	9
Total	110	105

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - TSL Panel - 5: 84.374A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (S374A230045)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Need for Project (20 points)

The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining evidence of the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (i) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.
- (iii) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.
- (iv) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

The application demonstrates the need for the proposed project in an exceptional way. The application describes how the gaps and weaknesses will be addressed by the proposed project. The application clearly describes how the proposed project will integrate and build on similar efforts; how the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students; and how the project design will address the needs of students, teachers, and school leaders.

Strengths:

(i) The application effectively identifies specific gaps and weaknesses in services, infrastructure, and opportunities that will be addressed by the proposed project. The applicant organization, a national nonprofit, is partnering with four Arizona Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to apply for a Teacher and Leader Program Incentive grant for the proposed project: Arizona Prioritizing Recruitment/Retention and Induction to Maximize Equity (AZ PRIME). The project will address the gaps and weaknesses and will focus on aligning, expanding, and improving the LEAs' human capital management systems (HCMS), which include performance-based compensation (PBC) system and career advancement opportunities. The proposed project will recruit and retain effective teachers; build the capacity of the current educator workforce; and increase the diversity of the teaching workforce. The application demonstrates that at least 23 schools (22 of which meet the high-need criteria) serving 13,364 students, 735 teachers, and 34 school leaders will directly benefit from AZ PRIME. (pgs. e14; e19-e23)

(ii) The application effectively demonstrates how the proposed project will integrate with and build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs and policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources. The application describes how the proposed project will use local resources to establish components of the HCMS proposed in this project. The proposed project will build on career advancement opportunities for teachers and with coaching and feedback, and implementing strategies identified as best practices. The districts are seeking additional support to unify and integrate systematic, effective practices of aligned support. These practices include identifying and developing teacher leaders, providing structures and support for school and district leaders to lead continuous improvement efforts, coaching teachers to improve practice; integrating character education to

build a positive school culture; and implementing a local, new teacher induction model. The applicant describes state policy and priorities alignment, such as alignment with state priorities related to the recruitment, training, and retention of educators to Arizona schools. (pgs.e23-e24)

(iii) The application effectively demonstrates how the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students, building on the foundation for systems change. The application combines the benefits of using an evidence-based model with demonstrated result in high-need districts across the nation and the resources of a national nonprofit partner, to use the model to address the local and individual needs of educators and students in the AZ PRIME districts. The System for Teacher and Student Advancement (TAP) establishes a comprehensive framework to improve teaching and learning. The proposed project will align instructional improvement goals with its HCMS functions for evaluation, professional development, compensation, retention, recruitment, placement and hiring. The project will utilize a common set of educator competencies for teachers and school leaders. The proposed project will utilize the NIET Teaching a Learning Standards Rubric that defines competencies for teachers and the NIET Principal Standards Rubric that defines school leader competencies. The project will implement a comprehensive performance award system that combines educator evaluation ratings with student growth measures to establish competitive awards or all AZ PRIME educators. (pgs. e26-e27)

(iv) The application describes a strong project design that is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population. The proposed project will enable districts to use strategic staffing, compensation, and other HCMS strategies to attract, develop, and retain a diverse highly effective educator workforce. The project will serve students by improving their access to quality instruction through intensive on-site support for district leaders, school leaders, and teacher leaders. The application describes how the proposed project will provide district leader coaching, school leader coaching, and teacher leader training and coaching. These activities contribute to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators.(pgs. e27-e29)

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses were noted.

(ii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iv) No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. Quality of the Project Design (25 points)

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:

- (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.**
- (ii) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and**

the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.

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

Strengths:

Overview:

The application demonstrates the quality of the project design in an exceptional way. Specifically, the proposed project is designed around a consistent rationale and includes a detailed logic model that aligns project activities with intended outcomes. The application describes a review of the literature and a plan for project implementation. There is evidence that the proposed methodological tools and methods of evaluation are appropriate to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. Additionally, the application demonstrates that the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

(i) The application effectively describes a clear rationale that is informed by research indicating that components are likely to improve relevant outcomes. The application includes a detailed Logic Model that includes resources, strategies/activities/outputs, and outcomes (short-term; long-term). The rationale is that increased teacher and school leader effectiveness will result from both increases in the skills of current educators as well as improved recruitment and retention of effective, diverse educators due to the combination of increased support, opportunities for leadership roles, and additional compensation. The districts will establish a system to support educators and their professional growth through four research-based elements that form the foundation of the TAP System, and the school-level AZ PRIME strategies. (pgs. e29-e31; e58)

(ii) The application includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. The TAP System's theory of action is grounded in the literature as evidenced in several references (Appendix F7). The positive impact of the TAP System can be attributed to its four elements: multiple career paths, ongoing applied professional growth, instructionally focused accountability, and PBC, which has been shown to promote educational outcomes. Research indicates that teacher leadership is associated with positive school, teacher, and student outcomes, including school instructional improvement, teacher job satisfaction, self-esteem, effectiveness, retention, and student achievement. Additionally, the application provides research indicating that effective teacher professional development is key to improving instructional practices and student outcomes. (pgs. e31-e41)

(iii) The application demonstrates that the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. The project evaluation will be led by NIET's Research and Evaluation Department, utilizing formative and summative evaluation. The evaluation plan is organized around four research questions aligned with the nine Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 measures. The application describes methods to ensure reliability and validity of the methodological tools to assess the quantitative and qualitative data. The application describes meetings to review plans, progress, and preliminary data; timely summaries of findings from program implementation the impact data analyses; and monthly meetings with the project director to examine data to provide performance feedback to assess the progress toward meeting the objectives. (pgs. e41-e44)

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses were noted.

(ii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iii) No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the Management Plan (25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers 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:

Overview:

The application demonstrates the quality of the management plan in an exceptional way. The application includes a clear management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The application includes an alignment of activities, the grant year, period, and persons responsible; and a set of milestones for each year of the project that will be used to communicate specific deliverables and signify project checkpoints to validate program progress. The application describes the training, experience, time commitments, and responsibilities of the key personnel.

Strengths:

The application demonstrates a strong management plan to achieve the measurable objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. The application thoroughly aligns milestones, key activities, the grant year, period, and responsible parties. The application includes a set of milestones for each year of the project that will be used to communicate specific deliverables and signify project checkpoints to validate program progress. The application describes the training, experience, time commitments, and responsibilities of the following key personnel: Chief Executive Officer (100% FTE), Executive Director of Services (15% FTE), Project Director (100% FTE), Senior Specialists (4 positions at 100% FTE), Vice President of Research and Evaluation (10% FTE), Senior Research Associate (100% FTE), Federal Award Senior Manager (33% FTE), and Communications Staff Writer (10% FTE). (pgs. e44-e50)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. Adequacy of Resources (30 points)

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.
- (iii) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model

and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

Strengths:

Overview:

The application clearly demonstrates the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. The application demonstrates that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement; is likely to build capacity to address the needs of the target population; and demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. The application includes broad support from stakeholders, including numerous letters of support and an MOU with partners. However, the application does not include a clear multi-year financial and operating model, and accompanying plan.

Strengths:

(i) The application demonstrates how the proposed project will result in system change or improvement. The implementation of the TAP System in AZ Prime districts will result in positive changes to HCMS and PBC systems, creating conditions necessary for change in classroom practices. The school leadership teams will build overall instructional leadership capacity to drive school-level change, including using data to set goals, designing professional learning, and ensuring that coaching and feedback are having an impact. (pgs. e50-e52)

(ii) The proposed project is clearly focused on building local capacity to provide, improve, and expand services that address the needs of the target population. The proposed project will prioritize building local capacity to provide, improve, and expand services that address responding districts' teacher, school leader, and student needs. The project will use the District Instructional Framework, with its clearly defined indicators for instructional excellence. The applicant organization will support district leaders in improving district practices and including the improvements in existing structures and systems to ensure sustainability. (pgs. e52-e53)

(iii) The application clearly demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including the demonstrated commitment of the partners. The applicant demonstrates sustainability planning that will begin with the first kickoff meeting with AZ PRIME districts, and will remain integral to every conversation and advisory meetings throughout the grant period. The AZ PRIME districts demonstrate their commitment by providing a 50% in-kind matching contribution, which includes restructuring the school day, personnel time and effort, implementing the AZ PRIME, and preparing the financial sustainability from the first day of the grant period. The AZ PRIME districts demonstrate a financial commitment through funding teacher leader positions. The application demonstrates that compensation for teacher leader roles is a core strategy in the state's plan and is an approved use of state funds for schools in need of improvement. AZ. The application includes numerous letters of support and an MOU with partners. (pgs. e53-e54; e105-e148)

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses were noted.

(ii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iii) The application does not include a clear multi-year financial and operating model, and accompanying plan. (pgs. e53-e54)

Reader's Score: 26

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 5 points).

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students.

a. In one or more of the following educational settings:

- (1) Elementary school.
- (2) Middle school.
- (3) High school.
- (4) Career and technical education programs.

b. That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or more of the following:

(1) Increasing the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, in-field, and effective educators, and educators from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds or the communities they serve, to ensure that underserved students have educators from those backgrounds and communities and are not taught at disproportionately higher rates by uncertified, out-of-field, and novice teachers compared to their peers.

(2) Improving the retention of fully certified, experienced, and effective educators in high-need schools or shortage areas.

Strengths:

Overview:

The application clearly demonstrates that the proposed project will promote equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities. The application demonstrates that the proposed project will be implemented across elementary schools and middle schools in 16 high-need schools. The application describes how the proposed project will improve the retention of full certified, experienced, and effective educators in high-need schools. The applicant describes how the proposed project is designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources to underserved students. Additionally, the application describes the number of educators and students who will be involved in the proposed project.

Strengths:

(a) The application demonstrates that the proposed project will be implemented across educational settings in elementary schools and middle schools. (pg. e14; e18)

(b)(1) The application demonstrates that the proposed project examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implements responses, such as increasing the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, in-field, and effective educators, and educators from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds or the communities they serve, to ensure that underserved students have educators from those backgrounds and communities and are not taught at disproportionately higher rates by uncertified, out-of-field, and novice teachers compared to their peers. At least 23 schools (22 of which meet the high-need criteria) serving 13,364 students, 735 teachers, and 34 school leaders will directly benefit from AZ PRIME. The work proposed in this grant proposal aligns the districts' organization visions, improvement efforts, strategic plans as well as to multiple state policy goals, including equitable access to effective educators. (pgs. e14; e18; e27; e29)

Weaknesses:

(a) No weaknesses were noted.

(b) No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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 5 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, by developing data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator diversity.

Strengths:

Overview:

The application demonstrates that the proposed project will support professional growth to strengthen student learning. The application describes how the proposed project is designed to increase well-prepared, effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students in high-need schools. However, the application does not provide a clear plan on how the proposed project will promote and support the development of educator diversity.

Strengths:

The proposed project will implement a comprehensive performance award system that combines educator evaluation ratings with student growth measures to establish competitive awards for all AZ PRIME educators. Additional compensation for teacher leaders who provide instructional support for teachers will build the capacity for the district to recruit and retain teacher leaders who have demonstrated effectiveness. (pg. e27)

Weaknesses:

The application does not provide a clear plan on how the proposed project will support a diverse educator workforce. (pg. e27)

Reader's Score: 4

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