

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/31/2023 08:24 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Innovation Project (TIP) (S374A230028)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	20	18
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	23
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	30	30
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	5
Sub Total	10	10
Total	110	106

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - TSL Panel - 4: 84.374A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: The Innovation Project (TIP) (S374A230028)

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 demonstrates a need for the project in adequate ways. It identifies the gaps and weaknesses and how the project will build on related efforts to improve outcomes with the use of current funding streams. The applicant explains how the project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning, and how it will address the needs of the target population.

Strengths:

- (i) The applicant has shown a need for the project by referencing several gaps and weaknesses within the districts that will be served for this project. For instance, the applicant indicates that there is a need to recruit and retain effective teachers, particularly teachers of color. The applicant proposes to address this gap in diversity by developing a recruitment system that creates district-university partnerships with Minority Serving Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities around the state of North Carolina. (e24-26)
- (ii) The applicant adequately shows the integration of this project with similar efforts to improve outcomes using existing local state and federal funding streams. For example, 18 partner districts meet regularly to discuss their challenges and come up with solutions to meet those challenges, superintendents engage in PLC's regularly to support the goals of the project, each district utilizes the Educator Effectiveness system to measure student growth, and all partners will utilize local, state and federal dollars to integrate the priorities of the project (e24-26)
- (iii) The proposed project is a part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning. For instance, interventions are often looked upon as additional things to do because there is no feedback. The project proposes to create a comprehensive management system that has impact to all involved at every level, network, district, school, and classroom. Some of the strategies involve communities of practice, an Analysis and Equity Plan around recruitment, and coaching for educators (e26-27). (e26).
- (iv) This project will successfully address the needs of its target population and other identified needs. The needs are

focused on high teacher and principal turnover rates and the lack of diverse teachers. The highest turnover rate in RTT's high-needs school was 16%. The project's solution to this is (1) systematic recruitment and retention, (2) PLCs and coaching to provide meaningful support; and (3) career ladders and upskilling opportunities with pay incentives. For principal turnover rates, the project will address the need through leadership academies with job-embedded PD for school leaders, communities of practice and ILT's to facilitate effective distributive leadership. To address the need for more diverse teachers, the applicant proposes systemic recruitment and retention focused on teachers of color, partnerships with HBCUs and MSIs, Aspiring leadership academies, equity and analyses plans and Praxis support (e27-28)

Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses noted.
- (iii) No weaknesses noted.
- (iv) The logic model mentioned that student achievement would be addressed in this project, however there was not a detailed account on how that would happen (e58-61).

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:

The applicant presents an adequate rationale for the proposed project. It includes a high-quality literature review that connects with the objectives of the project and the plan for implementation. Appropriate methodological tools (Logic Model) were used to ensure the successful achievement of the project's objectives.

- (i) The applicant presented an adequate rationale for the project. The project includes six objects that focus on improving recruitment, retention, and promotion of educators specifically educators of color, increasing the effectiveness of school leaders and teachers, creating a system of continuous improvement (e29). All of the intended activities are aligned closely with the objectives, which should result in closing some of the identified gaps and weaknesses (e29-40).
- (ii) The project includes a high-quality literature review. The project will use multiple methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of their objectives with the use of NC Dept. of Education's assessment, evaluation and data systems, NC State Testing, student growth (EVAAS), teacher and leader effectiveness (NCEES) and NC's Teacher Working Conditions Survey (e43).
- (iii) The project (TIP) will use an external evaluator to implement an evaluation. This evaluation will produce data for RTT project staff and district personnel to use. The evaluation will monitor and display key implementation metrics, develop results, and process measures, build capacity, and provide rapid feedback. The evaluators will provide frequent brief reports covering project objectives (e43-45).

Weaknesses:

- (i) The project does not go into detail on how the project will increase student performance or the impact it will have on student achievements (e37).
- (ii) No weaknesses noted.
- (iii) The outside evaluator was not specified therefore it is difficult to determine if the compensation is appropriate (e44-45).

Reader's Score: 23

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 quality of the management plan is exceptional. The plan includes six objectives along with strategies to achieve them. The project has clearly defined roles and responsibilities along with descriptions. There are clear timelines and desired milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (e45-50)

Strengths:

The project has both project level and district level positions because it is being implemented across several districts. The project level positions include a director, a principal investigator, grant managers, data manager, and project coaches. The school-based positions include lead teachers, master teachers, and an advisory council. All the roles have been clearly defined and for those who have already been selected, their experience and education align with the roles they have received. (e45-48).

An advisory council was implemented to serve as quality control for project implementation(e48)

The project has a detailed timeline that includes project activities, who is responsible for completing the activities, and when. (e49-50)

The project has a clearly defined budget and allocation of funds that are appropriate for the project task (e192-199).

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:

It is highly likely that the project will result in system changes and improvements. The project is likely to build capacity overall but especially in the area of recruitment of diverse educators. Based on information provided, the project has support from stakeholders in both services and financial commitment beyond the length of the grant.

(i) The project addresses every level of the education system: network, district, school, and classroom to address challenges and implement initiatives, therefore change is expected. The project outlines research-based interventions that are designed to impact student achievement. (e51).

(ii) The applicant has clearly set goals and milestones that are expected to be reached within the grant period. The project has been conducted in other schools across NC with positive results (e51). The project will likely address the needs of the target population of not only securing effective teachers but securing an effective diverse population of teachers. The project seeks to expand beyond the districts targeted in this application (e52-53). The project is likely to build capacity because the design is about changing systems. The project leadership team will use the gradual release model with schools to ensure the effect transfer of knowledge within the second and third years of the project. During the length of the project, the project leaders will shift responsibility for the ownership of activities to the districts. (e52-53).

(iii) The applicant has demonstrated that there are resources to continue with the project beyond the grant. The project has the support of the districts it is serving, the governor of NC, School District Superintendents, educators, NC Department of Public Institutions, members of congress, Presidents of NC HBCUs and MSIs (e51-56).

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 30

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 project Reimagining Teaching Talent (RTT) is designed to promote educational equity for underserved students in K-12 grades. The project will expand and improve the recruitment, training and ultimately the promotion of educators. The project will create a Equity Team to guide recruitment. (e17-19 74-76) .

Strengths:

RTT will conduct an equity analysis to examine the policies, practices, culture, curriculum, and any other sources of inequity, and will result in recommendations for districts to better meet the needs of diverse students and increase diversity of staff(e17-19).

RTT will launch a district-wide Equity Team in each district to develop an equity driven recruitment system, district-university partnerships with Minority Serving Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Praxis support and aspiring leader academies (e 19-20, 74-76).

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 TIP project was designed to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving students, with a focus on underserved students, through building or expanding districts capacity to hire, support, and retain diverse educator workforce, by developing data systems and timelines and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resource practices that support development of educator diversity(e19-20).

Strengths:

The project aims to create a pipeline of diverse educators in each of the partnering districts by leveraging retention and recruitment strategies (partnering with MSIs and HBCUs, year-round recruitment and retention systems, and recruitment and retention bonuses) (e19-20, 74-76)

The project emphasizes differentiated and personalized professional development to support professional growth and strengthen student learning.

The project will provide Praxis support and an Aspiring Leadership Academy will be developed. (e19-20, 74-76)

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: **5**

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Innovation Project (TIP) (S374A230028)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	20	18
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	30	30
Sub Total	100	93
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Diverse Workforce	5	5
Sub Total	10	10
Total	110	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - TSL Panel - 4: 84.374A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: The Innovation Project (TIP) (S374A230028)

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:

- i. The proposed project identifies specific gaps and weaknesses in services (e.g., low student academic achievement, a wide achievement gap, difficulty in recruiting and retaining high-quality certified teachers, and low teacher and administrator salary), including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. These gaps and weaknesses will be addressed by targeting professional learning on specific content, teacher and administrative coaching, and sharing resources between districts. (pg. e21).
- i. The proposal recognizes that there is a disconnect between high teacher evaluations and low student achievement. The project notes that currently evaluators are not consistently identifying effective teachers, which is evidenced by the high percentage of teachers rated effective or higher (greater than 86% in three districts) and yet, data indicates low student achievement. The realization of this disconnect indicates the recognition for the need of a stronger teacher evaluation system, predicated on student achievement. (pg. e23)
- ii. The proposed project will integrate and build upon other TIP initiatives to improve relevant outcomes in member districts. The mindset developed through TIP's Restart work will enable district leaders to think creatively about implementing innovative roles and systems. Additionally, TIP is facilitating an inter-district initiative with six districts to use a combination of remote and local positions to scale Multi-Classroom Leadership in their schools. Leveraging the existing TIP network, RTT will test, confirm, and scale an approach to HCMS that addresses the greatest barriers to recruiting and retaining top talent with a focus on diversifying the workforce. (pg e25)
- ii. School districts participating in the proposed project will use their existing funding streams, from Title 1, Title II, Title III, Title IV, IDEA and ESSER funds from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources. (pg. e26)

Weaknesses:

iv. The Logic Model and narrative mentioned that student achievement would be addressed however the specifics were vague. (pg. e58-e61).

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

The proposed project's rationale is adequate, in that the project clearly identifies the need to address the teacher evaluation system, as well as low student academic achievement. The design of the project includes a review of the relevant literature, to address the intended outcomes. The project uses appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. The project demonstrates that the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Strengths:

- ii. The proposed project design includes a high-quality plan for to successfully implement the plan. Strategies use include, evidenced-based structures and support, that promote the retention of teachers; job-embedded professional development and the implementation of Aspiring Teacher Academies. (pg. e43)
- ii. The project plan proposes the use of state-developed performance assessment; student growth assessments (EVAAS) and an assessment for teacher-leader effectiveness (NCEES), to ensure that the successful achievement objectives are met. (pg. e42)
- ii. The proposed plan will use multiple methods to evaluate the project, such as TSL performance measures, frequent performance feedback and progress monitoring, the use of external evaluators and continuous data, used to evaluate the success of meeting project milestones. Uses numerous methods to evaluate the project will increase the validity and reliability of the data. (pg. e43)
- ii. The proposed project includes a review of relevant literature. (pg. e48)
- iii. The methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress through coaching meetings, performance evaluations and periodic and frequent feedback, as well as ongoing data analysis toward achieving intended outcomes. (pg. e44)

Weaknesses:

- ii. There is little said about one of the most pressing rationales, which is increasing student performance/achievement. The majority of the project's rationale is based on implementing methods to improve, recruit and retain teachers, with little discussion on improving student achievement. (pg. e37).
- ii. The proposed project does not address the potential impact of the project on student learning, which is one of the outcomes of the project (pg. e41)
- ii. The numerous research citations were older than 10 years. More current research reviews would strengthen the design.

(pg. e41)

iii. The outside evaluator was not named, nor was a resume documented. Hence, it is difficult to determine if the evaluator has appropriate qualifications or if the level of compensation is appropriate (pg. e44,45 and e203).

Weaknesses:

ii. There is little said about one of the most pressing rationales, which is increasing student performance/achievement. The majority of the project's rationale is based on implementing methods to improve, recruit and retain teachers, with little discussion on improving student achievement. (pg. e37).

ii. The proposed project does not address the potential impact of the project on student learning, which is one of the outcomes of the project (pg. e41)

ii. The numerous research citations were older than 10 years. More current research reviews would strengthen the design. (pg. e41)

iii. The outside evaluator was not named, nor was a resume documented. Hence, it is difficult to determine if the evaluator has appropriate qualifications or if the level of compensation is appropriate (pg. e44,45 and e203).

Reader's Score: 20

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:

The proposed plan considered the complexity of ensuring that the management plan included key personnel (both district and school-based) in each of the eight participating districts. It is important that personnel are equipped with the requisite experience and knowledge, to carry out their duties and responsibilities (pg. e45)

The plan's key personnel have the experience and knowledge to successfully help implement the plan, as evidenced by their resumes. (pg. e62)

The plan includes clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing tasks, to ensure that personnel understand both their responsibilities and the expected milestones they are expected to meet, within the project's timeline. This is also important to ensure that the project stays on track. (pg e45)

The management plan is thorough and the job descriptions are aligned with plan's proposed objectives, which are to increase teacher instructional quality and improve student achievement. (pg. e45)

The use of an Advisory Council to support the implementation of the proposed plan was detailed to ensure and assess the fidelity of the plan's design. (pg. e46)

The management plan is sufficiently detailed enough to achieve the objectives within the timeframe of the budget, as demonstrated by their resumes and letters of reference. (pg. e192-199)

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:

- ii. The proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population. This is evident by the project's use of a Gradual Release Model (GRM) with schools to ensure that professional development was transferred and to ensure the effective knowledge transfer across each year of the project. (pg. e52)
- ii. The implementation of the Inspiring Leaders' Academy, will encourage collaboration within and between districts, which, is essential to ensure buy-in and support across all districts (pg. e52)
- ii. The project addresses the needs of the target population (e.g., students of color and a diverse teacher workforce). Specifically, the project notes that students of color benefit from having teachers of color. Consequently, the project plans to recruit from HBCU's to increase diverse educators. (pg. e32)
- ii. The project proposes to use an Advisory Council, comprised of school-based and district-level personnel, which will help build capacity by encouraging collaboration across all platforms. (pg. e26)
- iii. The project demonstrates a strong commitment among its partners and strong public support from teachers, school leaders, superintendents, the Governor's office, and members of congress, HBCUs and the State Superintendent of Education. (pg. e56)
- iii. The project demonstrates that there are resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, such as Title funds, IDEA, ESSER and other state and federal funding. (pg. e25)
- iii. The project outlines a comprehensive multi-year financial and operating model, including FTEs, fringe, equipment cost, incidentals, etc., that is critical for long-term success. (pg. e191-e200)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 30

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:

The project is focused on under-served high school students, in high-needs districts. (pg. e27-29)

The applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students. (pg. e17)

The project is designed to promote equity in students' access to educational resources and opportunities (pg. e16, e18)

That project examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and provides responses that include increasing the number and proportion of experienced, fully certified, and effective educators, and educators from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds or the communities they serve. (pg. e15)

The project also focuses on improving the retention of fully certified, experienced, and effective educators in high-need schools or shortage areas. (pg. e18)

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:

The applicant demonstrates that the project is designed to increase the capacity to hire, support, and retain an effective and diverse educator (pg. e32)

The proposed plan highlights a detailed plan to partner with HBCU's to recruit diverse teachers. (pg. e27-e28)

The project proposes to support a diverse educator workforce and professional growth through coaching, collaboration, and continuous feedback to strengthen student learning (pg. e15, e19)

The development of data systems, timelines, and action plans to promote inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that support the development of educator diversity is evident. This is important to ensure that the diverse applicants feel welcome and supported in the hiring process and beyond – to ensure the likelihood that they will remain teaching in the district (pg. e34; e123).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Innovation Project (TIP) (S374A230028)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	20	18
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	22
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	30	30
Sub Total	100	95
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. Diverse Workforce	5	5
Sub Total	10	10
Total	110	105

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - TSL Panel - 4: 84.374A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: The Innovation Project (TIP) (S374A230028)

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 applicant has submitted a project that will impact 79 high-need schools, 168 administrators, 2048 teachers, and 31,679 students. Most districts are small and rural (e14; e96-100). Six project objectives are planned that will lead to improved recruitment, retention, and opportunities for the educators. Gaps and weaknesses in services have been identified. Outcomes should address the need for the project that was provided by the applicant (e14; e20-29). There are existing funding streams that will be utilized for this project that are part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning (e24-26).

Strengths:

- (i) Specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project. Some strategies utilized to remediate the weaknesses will be expanded hiring practices especially pertaining to recruitment and hiring of a diverse educator workforce and establishing a fair and equitable compensation system. The applicant detailed the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses, particularly in the areas of student learning, teacher need, and teacher incentives. For instance, there is a disconnect between high teacher evaluations and low student performance. (e23) Needs, gaps, and desirable outcomes were largely determined through a Superintendents' retreat. (e20-24)
- (ii) The proposed project will integrate with related efforts to improve relevant outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources. Examples of such efforts include the State's Restart Schools law supporting flexibility in school law and financing and use of the State's evaluation protocol. (e24-25) The Superintendents from consortium schools meet regularly and provide direction for the project and other initiatives that support the goals of the TIP project. All districts share a management system that will be enhanced through the project. (e24-26)
- (iii) The project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. The applicant intends to enhance the human capital management system to be able to recruit, hire, train, retain, and reward teachers that make a difference in their classroom and schools that equates to increased learning. (e26-29) Activities and strategies such as professional learning communities, flexible scheduling, recruitment

and hiring of a more diverse workforce of teachers, and coaching will be utilized and evaluated by all consortium schools and support educators at all career stages. (e26-27)

(iv) The proposed project is appropriate to and will successfully address the needs of the target population. Needs affecting the partnering schools' students are high percentages of economically disadvantaged students, high ethnic diversity, and low proficiencies in mathematics and ELA. There is also high educator turnover and a lack of diversity among teachers. (e27-29) The Logic Model (e58-60) specifies increased student achievement as an outcome and first objective. Evaluation of student achievement as a result of the inputs/strategies is accomplished by analyzing the scores from State testing instruments. (e170; e173-175) The applicant hopes to, at a minimum, match the State's requirement for growth which is 2.7% for mathematics and 2.0% for ELA. One strategy utilized that has a research base for raising student achievement and enhancing teacher retention is school-based professional development. (e39)

Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses noted.
- (iii) No weaknesses noted.
- (iv) The Logic Model and narrative mention that student achievement will be addressed, but specifics are lacking. Only general outcomes are provided in the Logic Model. (e27-29; e58-61)

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:

A rationale was provided by the applicant (e29-40). A high-quality literature and research review was conducted that correlates well with and shows validation for the objectives of the project. Methodological tools are presented and appear to represent appropriate and validated methods for training and research (e40-43). A thorough evaluation plan was presented that aligns with the Logic Model (e58) and the objectives for the project. An outside evaluator was not provided; therefore, it is difficult to determine if qualifications and budget are appropriate (e43-45; e169-181).

Strengths:

- (i) A rationale was demonstrated by the applicant. Six objectives focusing on improved recruitment, retention, and promotion, increased educator effectiveness, increased student achievement, and systemization of continuous improvement practices were highlighted. All activities of the project relate closely to the objectives and support closing of one or more gaps. (e29-40)
- (ii) The design of the proposed project includes a thorough 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. Most citations are current and relevant to the project. Implementation was outlined in a high-quality plan

aligned to a Logic Model. (e58) Methodological tools are largely state- developed and approved tools. (e40-43)
(iii) An outside evaluator will work with project staff to provide ongoing and thorough evaluation of the desired outcomes and feedback to stakeholders. Collected data will be triangulated, analyzed, and compared to a baseline. Methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (e43-45; e169-181) A detailed recruitment plan was presented to showcase the applicant's commitment to recruiting a diverse team of talented educators. (e74-76)

Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) Numerous research citations are older than ten years or not based on seminal research. Relevancy would be enhanced by providing more current research. (e40-43)
- (iii) The outside evaluator was not specified; thus, it is difficult to determine the qualifications of the evaluator or if the level of compensation is appropriate. (e44-45; e203)

Reader's Score: 22

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 management plan is structured to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (e45-51; e192-207) Job descriptions for key personnel were found with FTE and budget allowances appropriate to the tasks specified. (e45-51; e62-73; e77-94; e192-199)

Strengths:

The management plan provides for both project-level and school-level strategies given the large number of schools involved. Job descriptions were provided for key personnel that align with education and experiences showcased in their resumes. The Project Director has extensive grant and project leadership. (e46-47) FTE allotted, and salaries are appropriate to the positions. (e45-48; e195) An Advisory Council is in place to coordinate the elements of the project and serve as a quality control entity. (e45-51; e62-73; e77-94) A detailed timeline showing project activities, personnel responsible and timing by quarter was supplied. (e49-50) Yearly milestones were provided and reasonable for the project. (e51)

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:

It is highly likely that the project will cause system changes and improvements in the districts that make up this consortium and serve as a model for other rural districts. (e58-61) Capacity building is evident in both the overall project plan and a detailed plan for recruitment of diverse educators. (e52-54) The applicant appears to have strong stakeholder support that has committed to financial considerations and services well beyond the life of the grant. (e56; e100-158)

Strengths:

- (i) It is highly likely that the project will cause system changes and improvements in the districts that make up this consortium. Additionally, it is likely that the model would be transferable to other consortia housing rural districts. A Logic Model (e58-61) was provided that showcased a systemwide plan for strategies that should provide desirable outcomes. (e51-52) Scalability and capacity building of the project is likely as most of the State's counties are rural and innovations from TIP outcomes will probably be utilized in the other rural schools. The plan includes a gradual release model of training to ensure knowledge transfer. Collaboration is evident and a clear, ongoing feedback loop is in place. (e22; e52-54)
- (ii) The applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. (e54-55) Sustainability strategies are built into the Logic Model. (e58-61)
- (iii) The applicant has met the 50% match requirement which is included in a multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan. (e43-45; e55; e169-181) Partner commitments and letters of support are evident from a variety of entities. (e100-158) Broad support from stakeholders, critical to the project's long-term success is evident in the letters of commitment. (e56) A library of sustainability resources will serve stakeholders throughout and beyond the project. (e55)

Weaknesses:

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

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 has demonstrated that the project is designed to promote educational equity and adequacy for the districts involved in the consortium. The project will expand and improve the Human Capital Management System and serve as a catalyst for change in recruitment, training, and promotion of educators. TIP also creates an Equity Team to guide recruitment processes toward a teacher and leadership demographic that more closely matches those of the students. The project should lead to enhanced and equitable learning opportunities for students. (e17-19; e74-76)

Strengths:

a. The project is designed to meet the needs of 79 schools that include those at the elementary, middle, and high school level. Seventy-five schools meet the high-need criteria. (e17-19; e74-86)

b. The project is designed to expand and enhance the management system, which includes an embedded compensation system, an equity analysis using a validated instrument from the What Works Clearinghouse, and an equity plan that measures equity of both resources and opportunity. (e180; e209) Career opportunities will be enhanced. Recruitment and retention of teachers in hard-to-staff areas and from underrepresented groups are key components. (e17-19; e74-86)

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 TIP project is 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. (e19-20)

Strengths:

The project aims to create a pipeline of diverse educators in each district. Recruitment and retention strategies will be utilized to assure that educator demographics more clearly resemble those of the students. Professional development opportunities will be differentiated to provide optimum growth. Praxis support and an Aspiring Leaders Academy will be developed. (e19-20) A unique activity is an annual regional recruitment convening which will bring together project partners with the primary focus on establishing district-university partnerships to provide a direct pipeline of educators of color. (e20-21)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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