

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/28/2023 04:18 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Wake County Public School System (S374A230024)

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

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

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - TSL Panel - 3: 84.374A

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

Applicant: Wake County Public School System (S374A230024)

## 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 narrative includes a clear needs assessment that provides meaningful data that can be used to develop an impactful program. The project proposes some useful initiatives that may address the needs of the participating districts. The lack of detail regarding the connection of current activities to the proposed work limits the ability to judge the full potential of the project.

- (i) The narrative clearly identifies specific gaps and weaknesses in the services provided by the target district. For example, the district reports a significant number of openings at any one time that is being addressed by only one recruiter (p. e33). In addition, the narrative identifies the lack of pay as an issue that is impacting retention and recruitment (p. e31). The narrative includes several potential activities that may have an impact on the identified gaps. For example, the use of the Future Teacher Program may impact teacher vacancies (p. e34).
- (ii) The narrative includes a limited description of the project and activities currently being administered in the district that would align well with the current initiatives. For example, the narrative identifies the Future Teacher Program that could potentially impact the gaps identified in the analysis (p. e34).
- (iii) The narrative includes some support for the projects focus on a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning in the district. For example, the certification efforts described may impact a teacher's ability to teach (p. e35).
- (iv) The narrative includes sufficient support to justify the design of the proposed project. For example, the Logic Model demonstrates the logical progression of the inputs, actions and expected outcomes that would be realized if the project were fully implemented (p. e64).

**Weaknesses:**

- (i) No weaknesses were noted.
- (ii) The narrative lacks some details on how the many initiatives and activities of the project will be braided into the current work. For example, it is unclear how the proposed advertising recruitment efforts will compliment any activities that are currently happening in the district (p. e22).
- (iii) The narrative includes many initiatives and programs that are only tangentially related to the improvement of teaching and learning. For example, the task force to Develop a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education (DRIVE) is a state level initiative that appears to have little impact on the specific gaps identified in the narrative (p. e37).
- (iv) No weaknesses were 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:**

The project design includes many elements that are well-aligned to the gaps identified in the needs section. The activities to be implemented are mostly research-based and the authors include an implementation plan for most of the objectives. The lack of an implementation plan for some of the objectives and the details related to how the evaluation will be conducted limit the potential success of the project.

- (i) The proposed project is based on a clear rationale. For example, the authors postulate that implementing the planned activities will impact participants in ways that would encourage retention and impact hiring (p. e38).
- (ii) The narrative includes a sufficient description of the design of the project, including supporting research for most of the proposed activities. For example, the authors include clear objectives that outline methodological approaches to addressing the needs of the target group (p. e41). Also, research is well used to describe the Performance Based Compensation System (PBCS) (p. e44). The narrative includes a sufficient implementation plan for some of the objectives. For example, Objective 3 is clearly defined with actionable steps included to illustrate how it will be accomplished (p. e42).
- (iii) The authors note they plan to hire an external evaluator for the project, which could provide useful data from which decisions can be drawn (p. e47).

**Weaknesses:**

- (i) No weaknesses were noted.
- (ii) The narrative lacks research support for some of the included objectives. For example, it is unclear what impact the recruiter will have on the hiring and recruitment in the district, and if the literature supports such an initiative (p. e42). Some of the objectives lack a clear implementation plan. For example, it is unclear what will be done to increase diversity in the district (p. e41).
- (iii) The project lacks a clear definition of the data that will be used to provide periodic feedback to project staff (p. e47). The proposal lacks clear measures of the identified objectives. For example, it is unclear how the PBCS will be evaluated for impact on project participants (p. e46).

**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 management plan included is well-developed and includes all the elements necessary to implement the planned activities. The included chart provides sufficient detail needed to realize the planned activities and the experience of the individuals included in the project will be sufficient to accomplish their assigned tasks.

The staff identified to implement the planned activities appear to have sufficient experience to provide the technical expertise and direction to the program. For example, the sole recruiter for the district will know how to guide the new recruiters hired to expand his work (p. e49). The project narrative includes a thorough chart that clearly outlines the project objectives, milestones, and timelines (p. e67). The chart also clearly identifies the responsible party for each action and when they occur, which will serve to guide the project staff in their implementation (p. e68). The included resumes of the people to be involved in the oversight project provide clear evidence of the experience needed to successfully implement the project. For example, the Area Superintendents have the extensive experience necessary to provide oversight to the staff involved in the program (p. e69). The included budget is clearly aligned to the activities outlined in the project timeline (p. e67) as well as to the activities outlined in the narrative. For example, adequate funding will be provided for the business and analytics recruitment platform needed to provide data for decision-making (p. e213). The inclusion of internal full-time staff to implement the planned activities will build sufficient capacity to potentially realize long-term results (p. e69).

**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:

The project includes a sufficient breakdown of the necessary resources and elements to adequately implement the planned activities. The proposed ongoing funding will support the project into the future, which will continue to build the capacity of the target district. The initiatives to be implemented in the project are well-developed and aligned to the needs of the participating district.

- (i) The proposed project includes many elements, that if implemented well should have a positive impact on the participating district. For example, the PBCS should incentivize teachers to continue teaching and inspire others to work for the district which will result in long-term impact on students (p. e52). In addition, the differentiated approach to incentivize both teachers and paraprofessionals, as well as provide each with the training necessary to improve their practice will have long-term effects on the instructional program (p. e44).
- (ii) The project includes elements that would clearly build capacity in participants. For example, the education funds provided to teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals will allow for increased certification and training needed to advance in their careers as well as in their practice (p. e45).
- (iii) The narrative includes a strong commitment from the target district to use federal funds to continue the project when the grant funding has ended (p. e55). In addition, the project includes several letters of support that demonstrate the level of commitment of partners involved in the project (p. e104). The budget narrative clearly outlines the matching funds that will be used with this project, which demonstrates the commitment of the district and their partners (p. e214).

#### Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses were noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses were noted.
- (iii) No weaknesses were 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 proposed project clearly focuses on the increase of highly qualified teachers serving underrepresented groups in the target district.

The project includes a clear plan to increase the number of highly effective teachers who are serving students from underrepresented backgrounds. For example, the use of funding to ensure all teachers at high-needs schools are Nationally Board Certified will increase the number of effective teachers at these sites (p. e22). The relationships developed and programs that will be implemented with local universities will increase the district's ability to seek out and hire the staff necessary to fill gaps identified in the project. For example, the work with university interns will establish connections to the district that should result in a new teacher being hired (p. e53).

**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 project includes several strategies that are aligned with the district's goals and vision to increase the diversity of staff teaching in the target schools.

Strengths: The narrative includes several potentially effective strategies to impact the diversity of teaching staff in the target district. For example, the alternative credentialing options will allow teachers to enter the profession while completing learning requirements through a mentoring process or through a Residency Pathway will increase access to interested applicants (p. e24). The alignment of the efforts of the proposed project and the district's board policy will provide significant support for recruitment and diversity activities. For example, the marketing plan to reach traditionally underrepresented groups will be promoted and shared by the district (p. e22).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

**Reader's Score:**     **5**

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## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Wake County Public School System (S374A230024)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need	20	18
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	25	23
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	25	25
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Resources	30	30
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	96
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. Diverse Workforce	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	10	10
<b>Total</b>	110	106

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - TSL Panel - 3: 84.374A

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

Applicant: Wake County Public School System (S374A230024)

## 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 provided clear evidence of the need for the project. They note the academic challenges that students are facing as a result of a lack of highly-qualified teachers. Additionally, their project design takes into account the challenges facing North Carolina in general, but also the identified high-needs schools specifically.

##### Strengths:

(i) The applicant has provided extensive evidence of the need for this project. The applicant has identified 24 high-needs schools targeted for this project. A school was considered eligible if it had a high poverty percentage, had been identified as academically at risk through a number of different identities, or had a gap between the racial/ethnic representation between students and teachers. (e 19) The applicant also noted a disparity in the racial makeup of the district's National Board Certified Teachers, noting that currently, 89% of this group is white. They also noted a large percentage of non-licensed educators within the 24 targeted schools. (e21) They also provided specific data from the target schools, including the average teacher retention rate (24%) and academic proficiency information. (e27)

(ii) The applicant provided clear evidence that the project is designed to build on existing work happening in the district. This is a positive aspect of their project design, as building on existing work increases the likelihood of capacity building and improvement over time. One specific connection is the work related to retention and recruitment that began in March 2022. (e36).

(iii) The applicant has aligned the project design with efforts to improve teaching and learning within the district. They noted the partnership between the district and the Durham County Board of Education that serves as an educator prep course where teachers take some of the coursework within the schools where they work. (e35) They also note other state-wide initiatives the project design aligns with. These connections are supportive of the project design and increase the likelihood of long-term change and they help the district leverage existing programs without having to expend additional funds from the project budget.

(iv) The applicant noted the lack of highly prepared educators in the identified high-needs schools. They also demonstrated the challenge they face to recruit and retrain teachers in the target schools. This lack of educators is hurting academic achievement for students. (e38)

**Weaknesses:**

(i) No weaknesses noted.

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

(iii) More detail about how they intend to connect their initiatives to teaching and learning would strengthen this section. They have demonstrated relatedness, but no specifics - if they were to include information about the types of support they will offer, how they will assess the learning, etc, that would provide additional evidence of a thoughtful connections between the project design and an emphasis on teaching and learning. The applicants note that they plan to connect to existing initiatives, but do not provide sufficient detail. It would also be helpful to hear more about internal strategies that they intend to connect and expand on. (e35)

(iv) 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:

The applicant has a well-developed project design. They have done an excellent job linking their project objectives and design elements to the rationale and literature they note. The teacher recruitment and retention strategies are well-developed.

Strengths:

(i) The applicant has demonstrated a clear rationale for their project design. In addition to the gaps noted at the local level, they have connected the project design to regional and national data as well. They have provided evidence of large retention issues and the district's response to these challenges. Additionally, they have provided a very thoughtful logic model that outlines specific inputs and activities and the anticipated outcomes. (Appendix A)

(ii) Throughout the narrative, the applicant has provided clear linkages between the project design and the research literature. The well-developed linkages to the research literature provide strong evidence of a thought project design. These connections support a broad rationale noting the challenges related to teacher recruitment and retention, but also

the specific project design. They have outlined four well written objectives, and for each objective, they note how the project activities are informed by relevant research. (e40-44)

(iii) The applicant plans to use an external evaluator both for program evaluation but also to support the development of school-level performance measures to support the development of the performance-based compensation system. This is a good use of funding as the evaluator has expertise in this area of the project and frees up project personnel to do more targeted support. The external evaluator will provide formative and summative feedback loops, as well as the development of a web-based decision support solution that will include a dashboard to support quick visualization of project progress. (e47-48)

**Weaknesses:**

(i) No weaknesses noted.

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

(iii) More detail would strengthen the evaluation section. While they talk about the broad strokes that will take place, it would be beneficial to see more detail about the reporting structures that are designed to ensure strong communication between the external evaluator and the district personnel implementing the project. A timeline for communication or reports would also help add necessary detail to this section. (e47-48)

**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 applicant has provided an adequate management plan that provides information about key personnel and the new personnel they will hire to support the project design. They have been very thoughtful in ensuring that the personnel identified for the project are adequate to support implementation and directly related to the gaps noted in the needs section. It is evident through their staffing plan that they are being intentional. This is evident with their attention to recruiting, moving from a single recruit for the district to a team that can focus on both recruitment and retention strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant has a well-designed management plan that is likely to support quality implementation. They note that they have experience successfully implementing other large federal grants. Demonstrating previous success with a large federal grant demonstrates that they have built some capacity to take on large-scale projects and will be able to build on this expertise during the implementation of this project if funded. (e48-50)

They have identified key personnel that will support the project and have noted the additional personnel that will be hired. They provide resumes for existing personnel along with job descriptions for the new positions. As written, all personnel

are well-suited to support a successful implementation. They highlight the strategic position additions that are clearly tied to the project design. This clarity strengthens their application as it is evident they know who they need to implement the project effectively, and they are clear about the expertise of their existing staff and any roles they may need to hire. (e 48-50, Appendix F)

The action steps and outcomes that they note in their logic model, are closely tied to the management plan, indicating very thoughtful intentionality when designing communication strategies, activity implementations, as well as determining appropriate staffing. (Appendix A)

One of their noted gaps was in recruitment, and they have been very thoughtful in the plan to support the single recruiter by adding additional team members, but also being intentional in how these new team members support this project, specifically aligned with their identified gaps. (e51)

The applicant provided a Gantt chart with information about milestones and activities for the different project elements. This includes the people responsible and a monthly timeline for the duration of the year. This is a well-developed explanation of anticipated milestones and will likely keep the project on track. (Appendix A)

**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 has done a thorough job demonstrating the adequacy of resources for the project. They have shown that they have built stakeholder buy-in at the local and regional levels internally and externally. Internally, they have noted a new strategic plan related to an updated Equity Policy and have linked this to their project design. This commitment, along with the project plan, has provided a strong indication that the project has the likelihood of supporting system change while also building local capacity.

Strengths:

- (i) The applicant has thoroughly connected the project design to existing initiatives within the district, including their new Strategic Plan related to Equity Policy and the Retention and Recruitment Core. Because they have made explicit connections to existing initiatives, there is a strong likelihood that project implementation will lead to system changes. (e51-52)**

They have worked directly with the local teacher union/advocacy organization in the development of their plan. This intentional step helps to ensure that they are aligned with all of their stakeholders as they begin their project implementation. (e52-53)

(ii) The applicant notes that they had a committee that helped design this project. This committee was made up of stakeholders both in and out of the district, as well as senior district leadership. This is one of the ways that they are working to ensure that this project not only addresses identified needs but also builds local capacity. (e52)

They also note their university and Community partners and how they are working to support the grant, another example of building local capacity through the development of strong partners. (e52)

(iii) The applicant has demonstrated the capacity for sustainability both fiscally and through the human capital development work they are doing as part of the project. They noted that they are utilizing local funding to support performance-based compensation that was taken away from legislative funding. (e55)

They also note that they have identified potential funding pools for long-term sustainability, including Title II funding, Restart funds, and recurring local funds. they also plan to apply for some state-wide funding. (e55)

**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 applicant has clearly met the requirements for this competitive preference priority. They intend to focus on increasing the number of highly-qualified teachers, particularly in high-needs schools.

Strengths:

The applicant has provided a strong project plan that clearly addresses both components of this competitive preference priority. They are focusing their work on 24 high-needs schools where they have noted significant academic challenges, as well as high levels of teacher turnover and under-qualified instructors. Their project plans to address these challenges through teacher professional development and the implementation of a performance-based compensation system with a specific emphasis on retaining teachers in high-needs schools. (e20-22)

Additionally, their plan is well connected to relevant research-based literature, and they have cited design elements they will incorporate. Connecting the project design to relevant literature helps ensure that they are implementing best practices with a high likelihood of success. (e20)

**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 has a clear plan to address this competitive preference priority. Much of their project design focuses on increasing recruitment and retention through the intentional development of greater capacity. They are also intentionally addressing the need to recruit and retain a diverse educator workforce.

Strengths:

The applicant has a strong plan to address this competitive preference priority. They have noted extensive barriers to recruitment and retention and this project plan drastically increases their staffing and response to be able to provide more intentional recruitment strategies. They also note that their newly developed strategic plan has an emphasis on equity and diversity. (e22-25)

Their plan not only focuses on diverse recruitment strategies, but they are also mindful of how to support these newly hired/recruited educators once they enter the classroom. This support will take place through workshops and other professional development. (e23)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/28/2023 02:59 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/28/2023 03:10 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Wake County Public School System (S374A230024)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need	20	16
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	25	23
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	25	25
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Resources	30	30
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	94
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. Promoting Equity	5	5
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. Diverse Workforce	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	10	10
<b>Total</b>	110	104

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - TSL Panel - 3: 84.374A

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

Applicant: Wake County Public School System (S374A230024)

## 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 WCPSS proposed project is well defined and provides sufficient evidence to support the needs of the project. Specifically stating the gaps and providing researched based solutions to closing gaps is apparent through the proposal. (e28) The Grow-Your-Own initiative can yield favorable to decrease the teacher vacancies in the Wake County PS. The recruitment and retention plan, if effectively executed will also support the teacher shortage in the school district.

- i) Specifically providing the magnitude of the gaps that exist in Project LEADERS schools provides sufficient evidence of data from the district. The student letter grades, especially the failing grades in the 24 targeted schools ensures a foundation for which to start to address this challenge. (e28) Additionally, the proposal provides information on gaps that impact WCPSS versus the national average. Comparing school data to national average data provides an in-depth opportunity to understand other existing gaps in national data. Furthermore, the applicant indicates gaps and weaknesses in the area of low teacher pay and rewarding high quality educators. (e30). The proposal includes gaps and weaknesses that will increase the number of restart schools. (e32). This will afford these schools to receive cross-departmental support starting with the board of education. (e32)
- ii) The grant seeks to decrease the number of teacher vacancies that impact the readiness of beginning teachers through the grow-you-own initiative. (e33) Current grant funding is provided by Title II funds to support this initiative. (e33).
- iii) Wake County Public Schools established a core team of educational stakeholders who created a comprehensive retention and recruitment framework.(e36) Embedded in the proposal, WCPSS utilizes Participate Learning which states that international education programs and services increase knowledge of other languages and cultures.(e36) There is a plethora of research cited under the improve teaching and learning section, to include the NC Governor Roy Cooper task force initiative entitled DRIVE.(e37)
- iv) The applicant shares that project LEADERS is intentional and based on sustainable evidence-based practices to strengthen the school district's capacity to recruit and improve student achievement. (e38)

**Weaknesses:**

- i) No weaknesses are noted.
- ii) No weaknesses are noted.
- iii) The proposal identifies limited internal comprehensive efforts to improve and support rigorous academic standards for students.
- iv) The applicant did not clearly determine the success of the project's implementation for the targeted population. (e38) Providing details on the expected outcomes for the targeted population can support the effectiveness of the proposal.

**Reader's Score: 16**

**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:**

The applicant's narrative provides a detailed outline of the strategic plan and how the plan will address design of the project. The research provided through the initiative ACTIVATE will support the branding and marketing for the school district. (e41) The evaluation plan will supply both formative and summative feedback which can provide immediate instructional success for students in high needs schools. (e47).

**Strengths:**

- i) Through the districts core beliefs, the applicant used the "new" strategic plan for the district that outlines targeted strategies to implement and achieve the desired results. (e39) Through the Theory of Action Plan, WCPSS outlines if the central office provides services, then the principals will implement components that ultimately lead to student success. (e40)
- ii) The applicant outlines four objectives that will be used to determine how research and professional development inform the design of the project. The proposal indicates that ACTIVATE, a platform for recruitment and marketing will occur in Year I of the proposal. (e41)
- iii) The proposal indicates that WCPSS will contract with an external program evaluation with both formative and summative feedback. (e47) Additionally, the applicant stated that a web-based decision support solution will be used to identify specific needs at the subset of high need schools, strategically manage the placement of staff, etc. (e47).

**Weaknesses:**

) No weaknesses are noted.

ii) The applicant suggests the use of the ACTIVATE platform, however, there is insufficient details to how the platform will provide the desired results. (e41) Additionally, the applicant states that detailed information will appear in Appendix A about this initiative, however, it is not evident on the chart. (e41 and Appendix A)

iii) No weaknesses are noted.

**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:**

The applicant provides a thorough management plan that includes descriptions of key project staff and details on roles and responsible and implementation timeline for the proposed project with detailed milestones for accomplishing the project tasks. (e48)

The applicant has provided details to determine that lessons were learned through the previously received grants. These grants yielding reforms for one of the Title I Schools. (e48). If the applicant duplicates the successful strategies provided in the previously approved grants, it is likely to yield favorable results in this proposed grant. The proposed project's Quality of Management Plan includes a detailed summary of the staff and roles of the responsible staff. (e48) The applicant provided the resumes and job descriptions for the grant funded personnel. (Appendix B and F) (e51). Specific details are provided in the Logic Model and Timeline that has Inputs, Action steps, Short-term, Intermediate, and Long-Term time frames. (Appendix A). One significant detail outlined in Appendix A is the creation of a Residency Licensure cohort. (Appendix A) Implementing an alternative route to teaching cohort will support the teacher shortage.

**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:**

Detailed information summarizes that the proposed project will result in system improvement. The investment in developing teacher leadership is evident throughout the process and there is a shared level of responsibility that will be accomplished by the planning committee. (e52)

i) Coordination with existing work within the state will be connected to support this work. (e51)

The proposed project outlines seven focus areas to including developing applicant pipelines and developing pools of highly qualified candidates. (e52) Additionally, the applicant shares that other existing initiatives demonstrate the school district's investment in teacher and leadership development in recruitment and retention. (e52)

ii) The resource for the project includes establishing a planning committee to develop the project. (e52) This committee plans to build on relationships with university and community partners for the proposed project. The collaboration with the planning committee will ensure that the resources are appropriately aligned with the expectations of the goals. (e53)

iii) The applicant provided detailed figures which indicated that 5,439 employees are paid at the master's degree level or higher. Additionally, beginning July 1, 2023, the school district was allocated \$4.4 million to pay employees who missed the August 1, 2023, state deadline. (e54)

The applicant states that the project is designed to leverage resources across the district and provides a multi-year financial plan for the project. (e55)

**Weaknesses:**

i) No weaknesses were noted.

ii) No weaknesses were noted.

iii) No weaknesses were 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 applicant thoroughly demonstrated that the proposed project is designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students. Additionally, the applicant determined the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and include educators working to increase their skills to become Nationally Board Certified.

The applicant proposes that the project will ensure non-licensed educators at 24 high-need schools will be offered opportunities to advance their professional skills to become licensed through the pursuit of National Board Certification to improve retention of fully certified educators in targeted high-needs schools. (e22)

The proposal aims to support the cost (\$1,900) of NBCTs to ensure underserved students have access to certified teachers in targeted high-needs schools. (e22) The applicant states that providing upfront cost will afford the district to have more NBCT.

**Weaknesses:**

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:**

The proposed project specifically provides a design 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 that promotes practices that strengthens, develops, streamlines, and creates competitive recruitment and compensation packets.

Strengths: Project LEADERS targeted schools where 50% or more of the students were FARMS, had a D or F school performance grade and met a specific performance deficiency. Targeting these schools will provide opportunities to place educators who have been provided with quality professional development. (A3) Strengthening existing structures for hiring and developing a cohesive recruitment plan which specifically targets educators who need effective mentoring and coaching will likely increase student academic performance. (A3) Also, incentivizing teachers that meet the targeted goals established for the schools with an annual \$2000.00 stipend may increase retention in those schools. (A3)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

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