

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2021 01:40 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Arkansas Public School Resource Center, Inc. (S374A210008)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	19
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	25	25
Sub Total	100	89
Priority Questions		
CPP1		
CPP1		
1. CPP1	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
CPP2		
CPP2		
1. CPP2	5	1
Sub Total	5	1
Total	110	95

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - TSL - 6: 84.374A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Arkansas Public School Resource Center, Inc. (S374A210008)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. 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.

General:

Overview

The application demonstrates a clear need for the project. The application links programs/strategies, grant activities, and the identified gaps and describes how it will build upon state level efforts to advance student achievement. What is not clear is what existing funding streams will be used to support this project or what other efforts are occurring within participating districts, to make this a comprehensive effort at improving teaching and learning within each district. Because the applicant plans to use research-based strategies and had clearly aligned strategies with need, it is likely that the project will meet the needs of the target population.

Strengths

The applicant has identified specific gaps and weaknesses, as well as their magnitude, that will be addressed through this project. Students in targeted schools are meeting grade level standards at a lesser frequency than students across the state and schools targeted for participation are among the lowest performing across the districts (e25). The PEER model, intended to be used for this project (e18) is likely to lead to eventual advances in student achievement, given that it is multi-pronged (instructional improvement & talent management) and research-based. The 1:1 coaching of school staff using research-based instructional strategies, as well as models and observations of implementation (e31) are likely to lead to improved educator instruction and ultimately student achievement.

Schools proposed to participate in the project do not currently have a human capital management strategy, are experiencing high turnover and are understaffed with certified teachers (e22). Developing a HCMS will help to address these issues as the districts become more intentional about focusing on recruitment and retention, developing career pathways and providing educator supports, such as coaching and professional learning communities.

Also, few interventions for schools that are not among the lowest 5% exist to support the targeted schools (e19). This intervention would address an identified gap by providing an opportunity for needed supports around educator development, an HCMS strategy and PBCS to these schools.

This project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning in Arkansas and builds upon larger efforts to advance student achievement and educator quality. This project will use Arkansas' evaluation and PD system (e21) and builds upon state supports already available to schools (e.g. novice teacher initiative, e28). Integrating the project with current systems and structures helps promote longevity of the interventions proposed by this project and create alignment across the educational system in Arkansas, particularly as it relates to educator development and evaluation.

The applicant has proposed a research based HCMS (e22, e31), increasing the likelihood that it will prove successful at meeting the needs of the districts and its target populations. Because participating districts have traditionally not taken advantage of similar supports, pay incentives through the new HCMS are likely to provide some sense of motivation for participation (e42). The model prepares staff by focusing on increasing student achievement with research-based instructional strategies and concrete examples (e17). This project demonstrates a comprehensive effort at improving teaching and learning by improving student achievement by increasing effectiveness of district leaders, teacher leaders, and classroom teachers (e17).

Weaknesses

The applicant provided limited examples of and information around what existing funding sources will be used to support this project (e25-29). Although the applicant has provided examples of other initiatives that integrate with this work, it is not clear how these initiatives were funded.

The applicant has provided many examples of how this project will build upon comprehensive efforts of the lead applicant to improve teaching and learning, but limited information on how this project will be part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning in the target districts has been provided (e29-33).

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
 - (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.**

General:

Overview

The project's design addresses some elements of the selection criterion but does not adequately address others, such as a strong research basis and rationale. Although the proposed project is designed around a plausible rationale, little research is provided to support the project activities. The logic model aligns project activities with intended outcomes, but it is not fully clear that the project's design is rooted in current and relevant literature. The methodological tools and methods of evaluation seem appropriate to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.

Strengths:

The project demonstrates a rationale for effecting student achievement and supporting educators (e36-38). The project will provide multiple levels of support to educators, which will lead to increased capacity of these educators in these High-Need schools (e37).

Because the logic model is a multi-pronged approach focusing on the improvement of instruction, with 1:1 educator supports; a focused and intentional HCMS strategy to define recruitment and retention strategies to secure and maintain the best educators and incentivize those who seek advanced credentials, thus furthering their craft, the proposed rationale seems feasible to address the identified needs and lead to eventual gains in student achievement.

The applicant has proposed a solid plan for implementing the project (e34-e38, e90-98). The provided narrative (e34-38) and table (e90-98) for the implementation plan documents, in detail, the critical steps necessary to operationalize the project. The plan includes a step-by-step list of tasks with assigned owners and due dates, which will help the project partners and their respective teams stay on track throughout the project. The methodological tools proposed are also appropriate for successfully achieving project outcomes.

The Design Team will assume the responsibility of analyzing the effectiveness of major programmatic interventions and provide assistance in defining any mid-course adjustments during the three-year grant (e49). Having a team dedicated to these evaluative efforts helps ensure that the evaluation is carried out effectively and intentionally and that provided feedback is translated into actionable steps for project staff. Often when evaluation is seen as an afterthought, this critical step is missed.

Multiple data points and methods of assessment have been identified to garner performance feedback and periodic assessment of progress towards program objectives. Dashboards with teacher artifacts and ratings will provide ongoing feedback to be reviewed monthly with Teacher Leaders in order to focus on improving instructional strategies. Student data will also be reviewed three times throughout the instructional year (e44). Locally administered interim assessments will provide real-time data throughout the school year to frequently inform instruction and provide comparative data to chart progress with student growth and achievement (e37). School report cards and index reports will provide baseline and ongoing data regarding student progress (e36). Teacher recruitment and retention data will also be formally analyzed for progress towards Minority Recruitment Plan goals (e46). Relying on multiple data points to gauge effectiveness and progress helps to develop triangulation of the information and also ensures every aspect of the project is being monitored using data.

Weaknesses:

The applicant only moderately demonstrates a review of the relevant literature (e38-43). Although proposed strategies are research based and studies have been cited in the application, a review of the literature is limited. Because the review of literature and cited research throughout the proposal is limited, it calls into question the overall rationale for the project.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

In determining the quality of the management plan 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.

General:

Overview

The management plan described by the applicant is adequate to achieve the objectives of the proposed project. There is a clear timeline and the roles for key personnel are clearly defined. The lead applicant also has a history of experience in managing such projects, which all increase the likelihood that the project will be completed on time and within budget.

Strengths:

The applicant has included a detailed management plan that clearly defines the responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and intended outcomes (e90). Having this information clearly detailed helps ensure that all project partners have a shared understanding of needed progress and the timeline in which progress needs to have.

A detailed management plan with clearly identified responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks also helps ensure that the project will be completed on time and within budget.

The lead applicant will serve as the fiscal agent for the PEER partnership, and it has a demonstrated history in the management and implementation of statewide initiatives funded by federal grants (e48). Each CMO also has a project director and project lead to manage aspects of project implementation, which all make it more likely that the project will be completed on time and within budget.

Weaknesses:

None cited.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

- 1. 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 serves 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.**

General:

Overview

The applicant has proposed a project design that is likely to lead to systemic change and build local capacity. The applicant also has a long history of implementing such projects with success, which increases the likelihood of sustainability, as does the broad support of the project demonstrated by stakeholders.

Strengths:

The proposed project will likely build local capacity, as it will provide a repository of resources for educators to access regularly and in some cases, on-demand (e37).

The project model was also designed around regional hubs with the use of the train-the-trainer model, which provides the capacity of educators to go back and train others at their local school or charter. Eventually these educators will facilitate collaborative learning environments outside of their own school, district, and network (e32), further supporting the development of local capacity and overall system level change (e31).

Coaches will also conduct site visits to monitor fidelity of implementation, support teachers in new leadership positions, and provide trainings and model lessons (e37). This level of support and monitoring increases the likelihood that the

project will build capacity and lead to system change.

Ongoing analysis of strengths and weaknesses within schools, trends by grade level and content, and individual teacher performance, which will be used to formulate PD needs is also sure to lead to changes within the overall system. The applicant also had demonstrated success with this model for ten years (e17, e31), which further increases the likelihood that it will produce improvements as part of this project.

Because the applicant has a long history of implementing such projects and providing such services (e17, e31), it is likely that they will have success with this project and that it will be sustainable within the districts.

Each component of the project is also built on state requirements, assessments, research-based strategies, and existing tools, which will help ensure sustainability and support of the work after federal funding has ended (e34).

Virtual coaching, which also has fewer costs can also be used to increase sustainability of the project (e55). After the three-year grant cycle, units of study based on the Arkansas Department of Education's requirements that were created during the project will be marketed across the region and made available, for a fee to other member schools, producing revenue for sustainability of the project (e57).

The applicant has also received broad support for the project, starting on page e122 (e.g., governor, lieutenant governor, congresspersons), which helps improve the likelihood of sustainability after federal funding has ended.

Weaknesses:

None cited.

Reader's Score: 25

Priority Questions

CPP1 - CPP1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Supporting Educators and Their Professional Growth (Up to 5 points).

Under this priority, projects that are designed to increase the number and percentage of well-prepared, experienced, effective, and diverse educators--which may include one or more of the following: teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, or other School Leaders as defined in section 8101(44) of the ESEA--through Evidence-Based strategies incorporating one or more of the following options:

- a) Adopting, implementing, or expanding efforts to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals--to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, principals, or School Leaders in High-Need Schools who have the knowledge and skills to significantly improve instruction.
- b) Implementing practices or strategies that support High-Need Schools in recruiting, preparing, hiring, supporting, developing, and retaining qualified, experienced, effective, and diverse educators.
- c) Increasing the number of teachers with State or national advanced educator certification or certification in a teacher shortage area, as determined by the Secretary, such as special education or bilingual education.
- d) Providing high-quality professional development opportunities to all educators in High-Need Schools on meeting the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners.

General:

Strengths:

Among other things, the applicant has proposed to increase the number of teachers with State or national advanced educator certification or certification in a teacher shortage area and implement new practices and strategies to recruit prepare and hire, support and develop and retain qualified, experienced, effective and diverse educators.

The project is designed to place new teacher leaders in the 23 high-need schools proposed to participate in the study and assist these teachers with obtaining the teacher leader credential (e 78). New teacher leaders will receive ongoing PD to support them in their new roles. All staff will also receive personalized growth plans to expand their capacity (e79).

Weaknesses:

None cited.

Reader's Score: 5

CPP2 - CPP2

1. **Under this priority, applicants must develop projects that are designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce through adopting, implementing, or expanding one or more of the following options:**
 - a) **Educator candidate support and preparation strategies and practices focused on underrepresented teacher candidates, and which may include “grow your own programs,” which typically recruit middle or high school students, paraprofessionals, or other school staff and provide them with clear pathways and intensive support to enter the teaching profession.**
 - b) **Professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or State policies and practices in order to improve educator diversity.**
 - c) **High-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators.**
 - d) **Data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator and school leader diversity.**

General:

Strengths:

The applicant has proposed to develop professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or State policies and practices in order to improve educator diversity, offer high quality PD to address bias and promote inclusiveness and bias free work practices.

Cultural competence and competency trainings will be provided to all staff (e87) and the applicant will engage in ongoing conversations to promote diversity in the network.

Weaknesses:

The plan for increasing diversity is limited and includes general and vague strategies such as recruiting teachers from neighboring states and creating a baseline of what teachers and districts have (e85). No clear action steps for creating a pipeline of or recruiting diverse candidates has been addressed.

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Arkansas Public School Resource Center, Inc. (S374A210008)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	25	25
Sub Total	100	95
Priority Questions		
CPP1		
CPP1		
1. CPP1	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
CPP2		
CPP2		
1. CPP2	5	3
Sub Total	5	3
Total	110	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - TSL - 6: 84.374A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Arkansas Public School Resource Center, Inc. (S374A210008)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. 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.

General:

The applicant demonstrated the level of knowledge and familiarity of the needs of the target area. A discussion of strategies and programs (pay incentives, teacher learning programs etc.) were highlighted to show how these efforts would impact student outcomes and increase the skill level of educators. The design of the proposed project was comprehensive because it presented the areas the program in need of more structure and professional assistance. The approach of the program would have been more complete if the applicant had identified funding streams that were currently being used to support the implementation of services, programs, and activities.

Strengths:

(i) The applicant provided a comprehensive discussion regarding strengths and weakness in the school district that affect student and teacher outcomes. The proposed program implementation of increased instruction practices and effective teachers provides an appropriate response to increasing student achievement and student support to address (. 21). The services and programs initiated by the project will address challenges plagued by underserved and high poverty communities in the target area with a history of low academic performance (e.19). Regarding teaching, the applicant stated that the district has experience a high turnover rate in schools in high poverty communities and low performing students (e22). The applicant noted that an increase in salary and teaching training has provided evidence of increase academic outcomes. The applicant explained that through the programs (PEER) Human Capital Management model the program will increase effectiveness through strong performance-based compensation, improved leadership, development of teachers and staff, and increased academic achievement (e17-22).

(ii) The applicant identified resources to improve relevant outcome. The proposed partnership with the local University with an established history of producing qualified teachers is a good method because it provides an excellent opportunity for the program to bring in well trained teachers (e. 26). The applicant also stated that the project will utilize the state's Education Service Cooperatives to assist with meeting accreditation standards as well as providing educational opportunities. These Cooperatives are a group of agencies with educational specialist with demonstrated expertise in professional development, teaching support, and early interventions.

(iii)The proposed professional learning communities and instructional coaches will introduce methods and strategies to teachers that will improve their job performance and engagement with students (e. 31). Some of the activities that will be

used to assist teachers will include site visits, training workshops, and mentoring sessions. The applicant noted that the data collected from these activities will lead to the development of a collaborative network that teachers can utilize as a resource tool. One of the strategies that is noteworthy relative to improved outcomes is the use of a tracking system to examine levels of growth in teacher leaders consistent with state standards (e 33).

(iv) The proposed incentive funding provides a great opportunity to support collaborative activities that create better networks for teachers (e. 34). These networks will be a support tool for ensuring that teachers are trained appropriately through coaching and professional development exercises (e. 35). The objective of the incentive funding is two-fold, to retain teachers in high need schools and expand the number of well-trained and qualified teacher leaders in the district that would improve student academic performance (e. 35).

Weakness:

(i) No weaknesses noted.

(ii) The applicant did not identify funding streams from local, state, federal, or private entities that would support program services affecting outcomes. There was only mention of partnerships that the program will depend on to address leadership and teaching components of the program.

(iii) No weaknesses noted.

(iv) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(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.

General:

The applicant demonstrated a complete project design with strategies, services, activities, and programs. The program's focus centered component provides goals for students, teachers, and the overall system. The discussion regarding feedback included gathering data from program assessments and discussing that information with program staff, leadership, and stakeholders.

Strengths:

(i) The applicant presented a design that demonstrates a rationale for the proposed project. The proposed system focus component is very useful to address performance-based incentives by improving diversity outreach and implement in more skill development through workshops (e. 36). The applicant presented a logic model that includes all three focus areas with inputs, strategies, outputs, and results. Again, staying with system focus component as an example, the logic model presented Human Capital Management System (discussed earlier) that would establish teacher support through coaching and mentoring (e. 100).

(ii) The proposed research literature to support services, activities, and strategies was valuable because it provided credible evidence of the importance of improved teacher to student relationships that relate to increase student academic performance (e. 39). For example, the study by Hattie, 2015, presented an argument for the utility of high expectation through positive teacher student relationships (e. 40). The applicant explained that the lessons from the research will be woven into the professional development discussions so that teachers will foster skills to better engage all students

thereby increasing academic performance (e 42-43).

(iii) The proposed periodic observations is an excellent tool because it allows program leadership to monitor teacher and student academic progress throughout the year (e. 43). Critical to this process will be the use of the Arkansas Teacher Excellence and Support System to gather data relating to collaborations, observations, archival evidence, and ratings (e. 44). The applicant stated that the program will use interim assessments throughout the school year to measure student growth in literacy and mathematics (e. 46).

Weaknesses:

- a) No weaknesses noted.
- b) No weaknesses noted.
- c) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

In determining the quality of the management plan 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.

General:

The applicant provided a management plan that met the conditions of the criteria. It was clear who would be responsible for the project as well as the groups to assist in the implementation of project programs . The applicant provided timelines for accomplishing tasks were efficient and workable.

Strengths:

The applicant provides sufficient evidence of a quality team, highlighting the experience and education of key personnel. The applicant stated that the Project Director will oversee the implementation of the project. The applicant explained that the program has a finance and management team that will work together to ensure that the program is meeting goals and objectives (e. 48). The proposed advisory group is a critical component of the program because of their attention to data collection and analysis and the announcement of incentives awarded (e. 49). The applicant provided an organizational flow chart that represents the major activities/milestones, responsible staff to complete tasks, and timeline (e. 50). For example, the Project Director and Coaching staff will conduct the professional development sessions (Oct.-Nov. 2021) for each faculty member (e. 51).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. 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 serves 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.

General:

The applicant presented a discussion on how the program's Human Capital Management model will make improvements in the target area. The applicant noted that their model has never been implemented in charter schools or the district in the target area. Therefore, the applicant explained a system dashboard so that educators and staff can view pertinent information and data relating to program effectiveness .

Strengths

(i) The proposed Human Capital Management model with a Performance Based Compensation System provides great support for Teacher Leader training that is aligned with the coaching model (e. 51) Through this support the program staff will facilitate academic achievement improvements and strengthened the delivery of programmatic services (e. 51). The applicant explained that program services, under the Human Capital Management model, will affect systematic change in the district through professional development, aligning teacher evaluation with research-based classroom interventions, providing individual and small group sessions, interim assessments, and aligning regional learning opportunities with state initiatives (e. 53).

(ii) The proposed teacher development through incentives and training is a concrete approach to increase and sustain a teacher professional growth (e. 54). To solidify these efforts, the applicant explained, secure system dashboards will be developed to share data with schools in the district regarding instructional practice, tracking and monitoring student achievement, evaluating teacher performance, and training staff to used educational tools for learning (e. 54).

(iii) The applicant provides information regarding resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. The applicant stated that project has a fee-based fiscal design that will be utilized to support the coaching support model (e. 55). Furthermore, the applicant stated that the program will initiate a tiered marketing plan that involves pilot group, fees to provide services for that pilot group that will support membership schools, and outreach efforts to attract private philanthropic resources to assist with the implementation (e. 57).

Weaknesses:

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

Reader's Score: 25

Priority Questions

CPP1 - CPP1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Supporting Educators and Their Professional Growth (Up to 5 points).

Under this priority, projects that are designed to increase the number and percentage of well-prepared, experienced, effective, and diverse educators--which may include one or more of the following: teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, or other School Leaders as defined in section 8101(44) of the ESEA--through Evidence-Based strategies incorporating one or more of

the following options:

- a) **Adopting, implementing, or expanding efforts to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals--to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, principals, or School Leaders in High-Need Schools who have the knowledge and skills to significantly improve instruction.**
- b) **Implementing practices or strategies that support High-Need Schools in recruiting, preparing, hiring, supporting, developing, and retaining qualified, experienced, effective, and diverse educators.**
- c) **Increasing the number of teachers with State or national advanced educator certification or certification in a teacher shortage area, as determined by the Secretary, such as special education or bilingual education.**
- d) **Providing high-quality professional development opportunities to all educators in High-Need Schools on meeting the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners.**

General:

Strengths:

- a) The proposed Human Capital Management model will improve teacher instruction by implementing structured leadership training model that include mentoring, coaching, and incentives (e.77).
- b) The proposed Professional development plan that includes the development of Professional Learning Communities and instructional coaching provides an effective approach to conduct site visits to monitor and assist teachers (e. 78).
- c) The applicant explained that the project will partner with the local university to assist with increasing the number of teachers with state or national advanced certifications (e. 82). The applicant explained that the Project Director and staff will lead the effort to publicize the opportunities for teachers to enroll in course work to complete the certification process (e. 82). The applicant noted that participants enrolled in the course or courses will meet weekly to monitor their progress (e. 82). The objective is to build staff capacity efficiently and quickly (e. 82).
- d) The applicant stated that the program will implement a School Support Services model to address the needs of diverse learners (e. 83). PEER coaches will apply strategies under the professional development to train teachers. The applicant explained that School Support Services uses a Response to Intervention approach that will lead to the development of personalized learning plans (e. 84). These plans will guide the teacher in assisting student, through instruction, from diverse backgrounds (e. 84). This process will take place over a three-year period (e. 84).

Weaknesses:

No Weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

CPP2 - CPP2

1. **Under this priority, applicants must develop projects that are designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce through adopting, implementing, or expanding one or more of the following options:**
 - a) **Educator candidate support and preparation strategies and practices focused on underrepresented teacher candidates, and which may include "grow your own programs," which typically recruit middle or high school students, paraprofessionals, or other school staff and provide them with clear pathways and intensive support to enter the teaching profession.**
 - b) **Professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or State policies and practices in order to improve educator diversity.**

- c) **High-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators.**
- d) **Data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator and school leader diversity.**

General:

Strengths :

- a) The applicant presented a list of strategies to support and prepare underrepresented teacher candidates that provide pathways to the teaching profession. Some of the strategies include, mentorship, assistance of the local university's teacher academy (grow your own pipeline); recruitment of teachers in boarder states; providing monetary incentives; and participating in professional school networks (e. 85).
- b) The applicant presented several strategies to promote professional growth and leadership opportunities. For example, the program's steering committee will meet quarterly to discuss and provide feedback regarding educator diversity plan (e. 85). Other areas that will provide opportunities for professional growth and leadership opportunities include support presentations for teachers, enrollment in the teacher academy, and review of the minority recruitment plan (e. 86).
- c) The applicant implemented to a professional development plan to address bias in instructional practice. The program plans to introduce methods to mitigate issues relating to cultural inclusion by implementing a presentation series on equity (e. 88). The program's professional development component will include this activity along with others to promote better understanding in culturally diverse work environments (e. 88).
- d) The applicant provided several tools to implement data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources. For example, the program offers professional development sessions that introduce cultural competency and collective efficacy concepts to participants (e. 88).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide clear evidence of an equity and inclusion plan to attract minority candidates. There applicant did not provide a timeframes or specific strategies of when programs would be implemented to recruit minority candidates. The applicant only mentioned that program staff will review the minority recruitment plan which is not a sufficient approach to addressing the deficits teacher leadership roles.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/03/2021 12:26 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2021 11:07 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Arkansas Public School Resource Center, Inc. (S374A210008)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	20
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Resources	25	25
Sub Total	100	95
Priority Questions		
CPP1		
CPP1		
1. CPP1	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
CPP2		
CPP2		
1. CPP2	5	3
Sub Total	5	3
Total	110	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - TSL - 6: 84.374A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Arkansas Public School Resource Center, Inc. (S374A210008)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. 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.

General:

Overview:

The application demonstrates a clear need for the project by identifying educator qualification gaps and weaknesses, a lack of an effective Human Capital Management System, and poor student academic performance. They effectively link proposed programs/strategies and grant activities with remedying the problems. The applicant thoroughly describes how it will integrate with and build on similar or efforts within the target districts and state system. (pg. e18).

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant reports several significant problems and gaps in system or services. For example, there is a lack of systematic implementation of high-quality educational interventions designed to address academic achievement. The applicant reports that the current state initiatives designed to incentivize increasing academic achievement focus on punitive interventions identified in the state ESSA Accountability plan and there are few initiatives that focus on closing the achievement gap or increasing the performance of High-Need charter schools and districts in the state until they consistently fall into the bottom 5%. (pg. e19) Furthermore, the results of the state A-F rating scale for rating schools shows that 51.7% of High-Need schools identified as target schools for the grant received letter grades of Ds or Fs as compared to the state average of 18.3%. The applicant reports that six (6) of the schools chosen for the Teacher and School Leadership project are ranked in the bottom 5% of all schools in the state and meet the definition of "in need of comprehensive support and improvement." (pg. e19) This clearly indicates that there is a lack of student growth and performance towards grade level standards. (pg. e24)

In terms of teacher qualifications, the applicant states that the target schools employ 6% of the state workforce of teachers who are teaching out of field on an ALP (Additional Licensure Plan). This is in comparison to the state 2.1%. Furthermore, 30% of the state workforce of teachers are teaching with licensure exceptions such as waivers (pg. e20) The schools are having difficulty staffing all positions with certified staff members annually as evidenced by the 1142 teachers who are currently in the state classrooms without full credentials. (pg. e22)

The applicant reports that there is a lack of an effective district Minority Recruitment Plan producing equitable results, negatively impacting minority students who would benefit from having educators who can relate to them authentically. (pg. e20)

With regard to demonstrating that the project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes, the applicant provides a comprehensive description of the various partnerships and collaborations that have agreed to be a part of the project and/or resources that can be leveraged to support the project. For example, the applicant proposes to use the TSL grant funds to establish collaborative, outcomes-based work plans with each of these partners to assure there is no duplication of services. (pg. e25) Furthermore, a project partner, The Education Renewal Zone (ERZ) is a broad-based P-20 initiative assigned the task of concentrating and coordinating available resources to improve school performance and student achievement. Grant resources will be used to support a collaborative agenda of service delivery established by the ERZ with an emphasis on service delivery to the target schools. (pg. e26) Another example is the Teacher Practice Network, funded by two Gates Foundation grants for focusing on building teacher leaders. All project participants will be encouraged to join the network and use it to share their learnings with other Teacher Leaders across the state. (pg. e27)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide a clear description of the strategies for, nor do they identify the various local, state, or federal level resources and/or funding sources that will be leveraged or used to support the proposed project. This makes it difficult to fully ascertain the extent to which project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes. (Pages not found)

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (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.**

General:

Overview:

The applicant has presented a strong and thorough description of their project design, demonstrating their understanding of the elements for a quality project design and implementation process. The proposed model is built upon established human capital management research that focuses on increasing the effectiveness of district staff leaders, teacher leaders, and classroom teachers with the overall goal of increasing the overall academic achievement of the student population. (pg. e17)

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a three-prong model that includes a focus on students, teachers, and the system. (pg. e36) The project will establish collaborative, outcomes-based work plans with each of the project partners to develop multiple levels of support for the target schools. (pg. e26) Teachers will be provided with opportunities and resources to increase and

improve their competence, earn appropriate credentials, and gain leadership skills. The applicant will leverage existing resources and use grant funds to achieve their goals for success and sustainability within each of the schools and the system. (pg. e37)

The proposed project includes a researched based Human Capital Management (HCMS) model that includes a Performance Based Compensation System (PBCS) to support the creation of a successful Lead Teacher Professional credentialing program that will increase staff diversity while growing leadership capacity and increasing academic achievement. (pg. e39) The model is based on the research by Odden and Kelly at the Consortium for Policy Research in Education ("CPRE") (pg. e22)

There is an established memorandum of understanding, a long-term school support plan that specifies the area of need, services to be provided, and the cost to the district. The proposed project will utilize this long-term systematic improvement model, utilizing an MOU (Appendix F) and pay for the coaching services at each target school. (pg. e29 & e30)

The project will develop teacher leaders who will have the skills to train their colleagues via a wide array of professional development strategies, and by year two will actively facilitate collaborative learning environments outside of their own school, district, or network. There will be Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and instructional coaching (Biancarose et. Al, 2010; Sanders et.al, 2009). Teachers will benefit from one-on-one coaching from Teacher Leaders while novice teachers will have mentors. The same Teacher Leaders will lead the bi-monthly PLCs to learn and develop new classroom instructional strategies. Project Coaches will provide site visits to monitor fidelity of implementation and provide direct training or model lessons. (pg. e31 & e32)

The student focus is tied directly to improving student achievement; the teacher focus is the framework to identify and implement educational strategies designed specifically to improve staff competencies, build teacher leaders, and meet high-quality standards around credentialing and certification; and the system focus allows schools to establish and implement an equitable HCMS with performance based incentives that identifies and implements management strategies designed to improve staff diversity and skills, public school performance and student achievement. (pg. e36)

The applicant includes a detailed Logic Model illustration depicting their foundational rationale for the proposed project. The Logic Model appropriately includes the inputs, outputs, results, and both short- and long-term outcomes accompanied by a narrative explanation of all, making it easy to visualize and understand the project Rationale that forms the foundation of the proposed project strategies. (pgs. e99-e103)

The proposed project includes sufficient plans for conducting periodic analysis of project processes, progress, and outcomes. There are built in strategies for periodic observation and collection of data of teacher performance as well as frequent monitoring of student academic progress. The project will utilize the state's Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) rating system to regularly monitor the performance of classroom teachers through classroom walkthroughs, direct and indirect observations, and a review of the classroom teacher's professional growth plan. Student academic progress will be systematically measured three times throughout the instructional year (fall, winter, and spring) to determine student and school baseline performance measures and establish individual student and school goals. (pg. e43 & e44)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

General:

Overview:

The applicant presents a well-thought out, detailed project management plan that includes critical information about what will take place, when it will be implemented and who the responsible parties are for each (Appendix "C") The plan includes the project activities and associated milestones, demonstrating the applicant's ability to fulfill the project objectives on time and within budget. (pgs. e47-e51)

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant has established a set of project management tools that includes a calendar of events that provides an outline of the tasks, activities, milestones, timelines, and evaluation plans. (pg. e47, Appendix C) The outline is specific and measurable. The management tools will provide the applicant with the mechanisms necessary to implement, monitor and manage the project with fidelity, on time and within budget.

The applicant clearly explains that the project oversight, management, and coordination will be the responsibility of the Project Director. The director will be supported by the fiscal agent staff and Executive Director (pg. e47) The project partner resource center will serve as the fiscal agent for the project. The organization has an established history in the management and implementation of statewide initiatives funded by federal grants, philanthropic partners, and the State.

The partners in the initiative, service providers, evaluator, Teacher Leaders, Principals, and coaching staff will serve as members of the project design team. This advisory group will serve as a critical element of the project network's focus on the data collection/analysis. This advisory group will meet quarterly, either virtually or face-to-face with one of these meetings organized to share promising practices, discuss problems of practice, annual report of data collection and analysis, and the announcement of incentives awarded. (pg. e49) Furthermore, the organizational implementation team will be supervised by fiscal agent's Executive Director, who will maintain a leadership role with the grant will meet monthly (pg. e48).

Weaknesses

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

- 1. 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 serves 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.

General:

Overview:

The applicant has planned appropriately for their proposed project. They include a budget worksheet and narrative that clearly illustrates how grant funds will be expended. They propose appropriate expenditures that are in direct alignment with the project activities, goals, and objectives. Their project plan is likely to result in sustainable system changes and teacher credentialing improvements. It is clearly designed based on target school and state educational system identified needs. The applicant has established a strong network on project partners who have demonstrated their commitment to the project and its long-term sustainability through letters of support and plans for establishing memorandum of understanding. (pgs. e 51-e57, budget appendices pgs. e208-234)

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant effectively describes how the state's professional development process and system has transformed over the years (pgs. e54-e55) while proposing to link with and expand upon the system to provide target schoolteachers flexibility for fitting professional development into their schedule, addressing equal access and quality across the network of schools, and modeling for teachers how to create collaborative learning environments that they can replicate with their students. The applicant purports that this becomes their sustainability model based on its cost-effective design and lower cost for initial service delivery. (pg. e56)

The proposed project teaches collaboration among leadership roles to ensure professional development planning is equitable, team-based, job-embedded, aligned to content standards and goals and sustainable over time. (pg. e54) It is founded on the concept that the target schools will learn specific strategies to grow and support the workforce. School Leadership will be trained on how to utilize, support, and compensate Teacher Leaders by using differentiated roles, incentives, and support systems. (pg. e53)

The applicant clearly describes the alignment of their model with the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)'s Educator Career Continuum, which allows teachers to choose a career pathway. (Appendix G7). The applicant fiscal agent has been invited by DESE to become an "Approved Provider", enabling them to incorporate the project pathway goals into their Teacher Leader training. This will allow every Teacher Leader in the project to complete DESE certification as a Career Educator, Master Educator, and/or Professional Educator with ongoing incentives and support. Pathways to National Board Certification and micro credentialing will also be used as incentives to grow teachers in the project. (pg. e54)

The applicant includes a detailed budget and budget narrative. (pgs. e208-e234) They include appropriate expenditures for project personnel costs, local and distance travel, program supplies, subcontracts, and incentives. They meet the federal grant match requirements. The requested funds align with the project design. (pg. e234)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 25

Priority Questions

CPP1 - CPP1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Supporting Educators and Their Professional Growth (Up to 5 points).

Under this priority, projects that are designed to increase the number and percentage of well-prepared, experienced, effective, and diverse educators--which may include one or more of the following: teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, or other School Leaders as defined in section 8101(44) of the ESEA--through Evidence-Based strategies incorporating one or more of the following options:

- a) **Adopting, implementing, or expanding efforts to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals--to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, principals, or School Leaders in High-Need Schools who have the knowledge and skills to significantly improve instruction.**
- b) **Implementing practices or strategies that support High-Need Schools in recruiting, preparing, hiring, supporting, developing, and retaining qualified, experienced, effective, and diverse educators.**
- c) **Increasing the number of teachers with State or national advanced educator certification or certification in a teacher shortage area, as determined by the Secretary, such as special education or bilingual education.**
- d) **Providing high-quality professional development opportunities to all educators in High-Need Schools on meeting the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners.**

General:

Overview:

The applicant effectively proposes a plan for developing and implementing practices and strategies that support their target schools for recruiting, preparing, hiring, supporting, developing, and retaining qualified, experienced, effective, and diverse educators. The project includes a clear plan to establish a Human Capital Management Strategy with strong staff recruitment and professional development strategies, addressing the CPP sub-criterion A.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The project includes a systematic professional development plan that includes establishing Professional Learning Communities for shared learning and instructional coaching. Participating Teacher Leaders will meet bi-monthly to learn and develop new classroom instructional strategies and Project coaches will provide site visits to monitor fidelity of implementation, support the teachers as they assume new leadership roles and to provide training or model lessons that are personalized to the school's goals. Each participating teacher will have a professional growth plan outlining their areas of growth and goals, documenting their professional development activities, and used for monitoring and measuring progress and goal achievement. (pg. e81)

The project is designed to effectively deliver resources, support, and strategies to increase each school's organizational capacity and to assist them with growing educational opportunities and outcomes for their staff. (pg. e81) The project will provide the schools with an on-site coach to serve as a facilitator of tasks and activities to lead discussion and collaboration focused on student learning, which will strengthen the capacity for educators to utilize and implement new instructional strategies into their daily practice. (pg. e83)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

CPP2 - CPP2

1. Under this priority, applicants must develop projects that are designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce through adopting, implementing, or expanding one or more of the following options:
 - a) Educator candidate support and preparation strategies and practices focused on underrepresented teacher candidates, and which may include “grow your own programs,” which typically recruit middle or high school students, paraprofessionals, or other school staff and provide them with clear pathways and intensive support to enter the teaching profession.
 - b) Professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or State policies and practices in order to improve educator diversity.
 - c) High-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators.
 - d) Data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator and school leader diversity.

General:

Overview:

The applicant presents a well-developed plan for establishing a comprehensive Human Capital Management System that will drive the engagement, productivity and support for recruiting, training, compensating, and assessing performance management for teachers and teacher leaders. (pg. e88) The plan includes professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or State policies and practices to improve educator diversity. Furthermore, the project includes clear plans for providing high-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators. (pg. e86)

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant describes an effective plan for establishing teacher lists of those that are non-certified and set up a specific interview to support their career plans; assist them with establishing written action plans, establishing a mentor on each campus for the non-certified teachers. This process will help the project to identify and serve those educators to help them achieve appropriate credentialing. (pg. e84)

The applicant proposes to establish a training for paraprofessionals that outlines the supports that will be provided for a “grow your own” paraprofessional program across all of the target schools; seek college coursework at no cost for educational staff, including the paraprofessionals. (pg. e84-e85)

The project also includes the establishment of a strategic recruitment plan that attracts certified teachers from surrounding states and to recruit retired teachers from bordering states, helping to address some of the teacher recruitment issues, potentially including the Minority Teacher recruitment issues. (pg. e85)

Weaknesses:

The applicant’s description of their proposed “grow your own” teacher recruitment and development program does not sufficiently explain how they will be focusing the efforts on the recruitment and development of underrepresented teacher

candidates. This makes it difficult to fully ascertain how they will fulfill the intent of Competitive Preference Priority #2.
(e84)

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2021 11:07 AM

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2021 01:40 PM