

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

Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio (S374A210036)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need	25	24
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	30
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	15
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Resources	25	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	94
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP1</b>		
<b>CPP1</b>		
1. CPP1	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>CPP2</b>		
<b>CPP2</b>		
1. CPP2	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	110	104

# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - TSL - 6: 84.374A

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

Applicant: Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio (S374A210036)

## 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 applicant effectively demonstrates a need for the project by describing a high percentage of minority students, low student proficiency rates, a lack of teacher efficacy and an inconsistent Human Capital Management System. They address most of the factors of the need criterion with thorough descriptions of the gaps, weaknesses, and challenges and aligns the project focus with the identified needs. The applicant does not effectively describe how their project will be a part of a comprehensive effort within the district to improve teaching and learning.

#### Supporting Statements:

#### Strengths:

The applicant explains that the selected districts are part of the First Ring Schools Collaborative, an association of 16 high-need districts surrounding their city. The data that they provide shows that the average proportion of poor students across First Ring districts is 58% as compared to 16% for Outer Ring suburban districts. The schools have a 96% eligibility for the federal Free Lunch Program and include a high minority population with an average enrollment of 46% of African American students compared to an average of 6% for Outer Ring districts. (pg. e23) The data clearly demonstrates that the four participating school districts are deemed High-Need Schools that will benefit from the proposed project.

The application indicates that the target schools lack sufficient numbers of teachers of color (28%) to complement the 96% students of color, meaning that student needs may not be fully understood nor being met. (pg. e34) Furthermore, regarding student academic proficiency, the applicant reports that student achievement results across the network are low with 29% proficiency in math and 40% in literacy in 2018-19, demonstrating a need for improving teaching strategies to facilitate stronger student outcomes. (pg. e34)

The applicant documents a problem with high teacher and high principal turnover rates with almost one-third of the target schools having a new principal within the last year. Furthermore, they describe a high number of inexperienced educators where 11.7% of the teachers and 10.6% of the principals are inexperienced. (pgs. e34-e37) These statistics demonstrate

a need for project activities that specifically address educator and school leader competencies and retention.

The applicant presents a compelling argument that smaller school districts with high-need schools face unique challenges in recruiting, developing, and retaining human capital because they often lack the Human Capital Management System (HCMS) infrastructure necessary to align their resources and systems to support their educators' growth and development. (pg. e24) For example, the districts are struggling to recruit and retain effective teachers in their high-need schools, especially teachers of color. A key problem lies with the professional development (PD) and support for teachers being inconsistent (in type, frequency, and alignment to teaching expectations). The PD for school principals is typically district-wide sessions that are not tailored to individual principals. (pg. e25) The project has been designed to provide the smaller districts with the necessary support to offer professional learning and support like what would be found in a larger district. (pgs. e23, e24) The provision of specialized, tailored professional development and education for teachers and principals will likely result in more effective teaching strategies.

In terms of demonstrating that the project will build on related efforts and is a part of a comprehensive approach to remedy the educator workforce issues, the applicant reports that they will leverage and expand upon the existing HCMS structures across the districts to create a true collaborative network of educators. Each district will contribute resources from different existing funding streams such as, current local, state, and federal dollars to integrate district priorities with the goals and processes of the proposed project. (pgs. e26, e27) Furthermore, the applicant's approach is designed to focus on improving teaching and learning by leveraging human capital across the districts. The systems-level aligned approach begins at the district network level and builds upon each of the existing systems to create a robust HCMS. Having a Human Capital Management System that addresses teacher and principal professional development, evaluation, recruitment and retention, and career ladder will assist the district in recruiting, developing, and retaining high quality educators. (pgs. e27-e30)

Weaknesses:

The applicant's description of how their proposed efforts is a part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning is vague and does not effectively link what they are doing with what is already happening within the district as a whole. This makes it difficult to ascertain how the proposed project will affect long term sustainable changes in the HCMS system or improve student academic outcomes. (pgs. e27-e30)

**Reader's Score: 24**

### **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 addressed all factors of the selection criterion and thoroughly describes their plan for improving their educator workforce through enhancing their Human Capital Management System and providing professional development across four districts. The plan demonstrates alignment with their stated objectives and includes clear strategies for implementation and achievement of outcomes.

Supporting Statements:

## Strengths:

The applicant effectively demonstrates the Rationale for their project by providing a comprehensive description of the project activities associated with the research studies that the strategies are based upon. (pgs. e38-e41) They include a detailed Logic Model illustration that includes the specific resources, project components, outputs, outcomes, and measures. (Appendix A, pg. e59-e62, e170-e175) Having a well-supported Rationale will lead to effective planning and project implementation.

The application includes a detailed plan for expanding and improving the existing Human Capital Management System across four target districts, including a career ladder and educator stipends. (pg. e38) The system improvement includes the formation of a "cross-school collaboration" or a networked improvement community (NIC) that includes 18 schools. The network offers individuals and groups opportunities to develop, test, and scale improvements, and, thereby, accelerate learning. (pgs. e30-e34) All of these improvements are proven strategies for increasing retention of experienced teachers.

The proposed project includes the formation of job-alike communities across the districts for superintendents, assistant superintendents, HR directors, principals, and assistant principals, so that their work will be peer-driven and formed around common challenges (pg. e31) at the school level, the individual schools will use the same processes for strategic planning, recruitment and retention, leadership academies, PLCs, and coaching so that they can improve their own system school by school. (pg. e30) The project will build capacity among the districts and help facilitate the improvement of the teaching staff because there will be communities of practice formed.

Another key project component aimed at improving the HCMS system includes strategies for improving recruitment and retention of personnel. The project will support districts in creating year-long, multi-stakeholder, equity-driven recruitment systems to attract and retain effective teachers. Each district will build a multi-channel, online, and in-person marketing campaign and create its own, context-specific resources. (pg. e31) They will each participate in an annual regional recruitment event, which will bring together the target districts and leaders and students from local Minority Serving Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities to establish school-university partnerships to provide a direct pipeline of educators of color. (pg. e33) These recruitment and retention strategies will likely result in stronger systems that will build a high-quality educator workforce.

The application includes clear and specific strategies for providing ongoing performance feedback and periodic assessment of project progress. The evaluation includes the development and sharing of both formative and summative evaluation data on a year or twice-yearly basis, addressing each program component. The information will be shared with district- and school-level staff, who will integrate the data into their ongoing planning and implementation efforts. An external evaluator will be engaged and will provide regular reporting and a yearly comprehensive report on the project data and achievement of outcomes. (pg. e46, e47) The proposed evaluation will likely result in timely and useful analysis and recommendations for project adjustments to ensure project effectiveness.

## 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 an adequate project management plan that includes key roles, responsibilities, and timelines for project activities. The management plan includes appropriate resources for achieving the proposed objectives on time and within budget.

#### Supporting Statements:

#### Strengths:

The project plan includes a partnership with four LEAs that will directly impact 18 high-need schools, 50 administrators, 742 teachers, and 9,974 students (pg. e15) The leadership team includes a 100% full time Project Director, a part-time, 20% Principal Investigator, a part-time, 50% Grant Manager and an Advisory Council that includes representatives from each of the districts and target schools. Each of the project personnel have a wealth of relevant experience and expertise to contribute to the project. (pgs. e47-e49) The applicant demonstrates that they have a strong leadership team in place that can implement and effectively manage the proposed project.

The management plan includes having an Advisory Council, composed of the superintendent and one board member from each district, the PD, PI, and External Evaluator. The Council will meet quarterly to provide project oversight and support. (pg. e50) Having an Advisory Council ensures that the project has a combination of project-level and school-based support and oversight for the project.

The applicant meets the criterion for presenting an implementation plan by including a basic project timeline that identifies key project tasks, responsible personnel, plotted timeline in terms of quarters in each grant year for three years. (pgs. e51, e52)

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant's management/implementation plan does not include activity or objective milestones, making it difficult to ascertain if there are adequate strategies planned that will produce results that indicate the successful achievement of the full range of project objectives. (Page not found)

**Reader's Score: 15**

### **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 demonstrates that they have adequate resources to implement, manage and monitor the proposed project by providing a comprehensive set of budget worksheets and budget narrative and a strong description of a sustainability plan for the project beyond the grant funding period. The project is designed to foster stronger school districts and schools that will be able to sustain system changes once the grant funding ends.

## Supporting Statements:

## Strengths:

The application includes a well-developed plan for improving the local education system at every level, the collaborative network, district, school, principal, and classroom. The proposed strategies and activities will create lasting system changes and improvements because they are rooted in evidence and research. (Logic Model, Appendix A, pg. e53) Furthermore, the project is being led by a leadership team with a wealth of experience implementing the same system changes in school districts across the northeast sector of their state. (pgs. e53, e54)

In terms of the project building capacity and changing systems, the applicant presents a project that includes strategies for ensuring sustainability for system processes. The applicant proposes that the leadership team will utilize a Gradual Release Model (GRM) with schools to ensure effective knowledge transfer across the second and third year of the project. (pg. e54) Furthermore, collaboration is embedded at every level of project, as evidenced by letters of support and a Memorandum of Understanding. (Appendix C, pg. e54) Having strong stakeholder engagement and support contributes to the project success and long-term sustainability.

The applicant includes copies of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) from the districts and other project partners that indicate their support and contribution of resource for the project. The MOUs also demonstrate that the target schools will meet the required 50% match for this project, further illustrating a major commitment of resources to the project. For example, the schools propose to use a combination of public funding to continue PBC after the grant and the Project Director and Principal Investigator will work individually with each school to help identify which funds can be used to maintain the work. (pgs. e55-e57, Appendix C) Furthermore, the applicant reports that each district will bring together different existing funding streams, including current local, state, and federal dollars, to integrate district priorities with the goals and processes of this project. (pgs. e26, e27) These combined commitments effectively demonstrates that there are sufficient resources and plans for securing new resources to sustain the operation of the project beyond the length of the grant.

The application includes comprehensive budget worksheets and a clearly articulated budget narrative that demonstrates that the project is well-funded and resourced. The proposed budget includes appropriate expenditures that are in direct alignment with the proposed project objectives and associated strategies and activities. (pgs. e186-e233) The budget includes a detailed description of the non-federal fund match, demonstrating that the applicant has met the required match. (pg. e232) The proposed budget will ensure that the project can be effectively implemented on time and will fidelity.

## 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's proposed project meets the criterion for Competitive Preference Priority #1 by creating and implementing practices and strategies that support High-Need Schools in recruiting, preparing, hiring, supporting, developing, and retaining qualified, experienced, effective, and diverse educators and school leaders.

##### Supporting Statements:

##### Strengths:

The applicant presents a project that is rooted in creating systems for professional development and recruitment plans that will enable the target schools to recruit and support their teachers and leaders across the career ladder through training and supports. There will be Leadership Academies, Aspiring Leaders Academies, Leadership Coaching, Problems of Instructional Practice [POIP], Role-Alike Communities of Practice, as well as school-level systems (Instructional Leadership Teams [ILTs], Professional Learning Communities [PLCs], and Individual Instructional Coaching. (pgs. e19-e21) These strategies will likely result in shared learning opportunities which will lead to stronger teaching competencies.

The applicant describes the training and support mechanisms in detail, demonstrating a strong understanding of the criterion for the competitive preference priority. For example, the Leadership Academies focus on creating a safe climate and culture in buildings, distributed leadership, and individual leaders' POIP. The school leaders in each of the target school leaders will receive role-specific training and will participate in Leadership Academies and inter-district peer coaching. All educators will participate in professional learning in either communities of practice or PLCs. They will utilize a research-based approach focused on the outcomes of all students. (pgs. e19-e21) These strategies will likely increase the effectiveness of the school leaders and increase teacher retention.

##### 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:

#### Overview:

The applicant presents a project that is clearly designed to improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce. Project activities include the development and implementation of comprehensive educator recruitment, development, and retention plan. The strategies include specific activities for a “grow your own program” at the participating school districts.

#### Supporting Statements:

#### Strengths:

The applicant presents a strong plan for recruiting a diverse educator workforce that includes an external recruitment strategy and an internal “Grow Your Own” (GYO) model. The external recruitment strategy includes partnering with the four district’s Human Resource departments to approach recruitment as an ongoing, 12-month system to engage candidates via a multi-channel communication process. Each will include a specific focus to increase the number of educators of color. There will be the formation of an Aspiring Leaders Academy specifically for educators of color. As part of the two-year academy, participants will connect with peers and mentors through on-site and virtual sessions, as well as engage in practice with a focus on curriculum and instruction. Each district will use this academy to establish a cadre of prepared leaders as school-level administrative positions open. Additionally, each district will conduct an external Equity Audit, which will provide an outside perspective and a baseline on the districts’ current efforts around diversity, equity, and inclusion. (GEPA Statement pgs. e9 - e10, e21 - e22) These efforts will improve the recruitment, outreach, preparation, support, development, and retention of a diverse educator workforce

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio (S374A210036)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need	25	23
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	30
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	20
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Resources	25	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	98
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP1</b>		
<b>CPP1</b>		
1. CPP1	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>CPP2</b>		
<b>CPP2</b>		
1. CPP2	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	110	108

# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - TSL - 6: 84.374A

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

Applicant: Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio (S374A210036)

## 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 presented a discussion that provided justification for the proposed project . The applicant presents evidence for success by utilizing a seamless feed-back system for teacher leadership programs and trainings. The applicant provided evidence for funding of project programs.

### Strengths:

- (i) The proposed project will address gaps and weaknesses in services and infrastructure utilizing the current human capital system management that provides a seamless feed-back system for teachers, a comprehensive recruitment system, and an online training and evaluation tool (e. 25). The applicant noted weaknesses in the target area that included low skilled teachers, low teacher retention rates for teachers, a lack of professional development opportunities, poor teacher evaluation tools, and a lack of performance based incentives (e. 25-26).
- (ii) The propose project will improve relevant outcomes from funding streams that include local, state, and federal dollars (e. 26). For example, funds from Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, and Emergency and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds will be applied to support the goals of the program (e. 26 ).
- (iii) The proposed project systems-level approach will improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards by constructing a feed-back loop network level, district level, school level, and classroom level (e. 27). The system provides a mechanism for teachers, principals, and staff to communicate back and forth among the different levels (e. 27). This allows more opportunities for educators and school leadership to share methods and ideas associated professional development and training, performance-based compensation, coaching, mentoring, tracking data, and conducting evaluations (e. 28-29)
- (iv) The proposed system-levels design will address the needs of the target population by producing effective teachers and principals (e. 35-36). To accomplish this goal the program will implement services such as coaching, pay incentives, career ladders, minority outreach through recruitment, and leadership academies (e. 36).

### Weaknesses:

The comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning is vague. It's not clear how the implementation of a system-

level approach and feed-back loop is either comprehensive nor useful in improving teacher and learning. There should have been some effort to link the strategies and give specifics on how the communication between teachers and school leaders will lead to improved teaching performance and increased student development.

**Reader's Score: 23**

### **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 presented a comprehensive discussion regarding the components of the research design as well as the research/literature to support the project.

#### **Strengths:**

- (i) The proposed theory of action approach provides a rationale for the design by presenting comprehensive logic model with resources, project components, outputs, and outcomes (short-mid-long term) (e. 59). For example, under the program's human capital management system the project proposes to provide stipends for teachers for professional development sessions while still involved with classroom instructions (e. 38 ).**
- (ii) The research literature presented provided evidence for the implementation of program services to increase teacher performance, develop better pay incentives, and increase diversity to address high need minority populations (e. 44-46). Some of the services included career ladders, leadership academies, annual school reviews, equity audits and plans, strategic planning, and targeted recruitment (e. 38-40 ).**
- (iii) The proposed feedback loop up and down system creates a seamless communication process through program meetings, feed-back module with videos, assessments, teacher and student surveys, and program reports (e. 45-47). The external evaluator and the evaluation team will oversee this process and produce a comprehensive report that covers all evaluation measures associated with the project (e. 47).**

#### **Weaknesses:**

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

**Strengths:**

The proposed current Project Director (100% commitment) has several years of experience in implementing programs, fiscal planning, research evaluation, and policy review (e. 48). The applicant noted the project has a principal investigator (20% of in-kind support), who will supervise the Project Director (e. 48). Other program positions include grant manager (50% commitment), project coaches, teachers, and an Advisory Council (e. 50).

**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 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.**

**General:**

The applicant presented a discussion that included aspirations of increased qualified and skill personnel, expanding capacity, and utilizing resources.

**Strengths:**

- (i) The proposed current human capital management system will lead to system change through better recruitment, improved tracking, teacher and principal evaluations, and researched-based interventions (e. 53).**
- (ii) The proposed Gradual Release Model creates a method that educators can transfer information from one to school to the other (e. 52). Project level teams will be provided services such as teacher training and interventions and share the outcomes with the districts being serviced by the project (e. 54).**
- (iii) The proposed resources from public, state, and federal funds will provide sustainability beyond the funding of the grant (e. 56). For example, the Program Director and Principal Investigator will review the budgets of schools in the districts to determine if there are any dollars left over from Title I and Title II funding to sustain the program beyond the grant funding (e. 56). Also, the applicant stated that the program will explore efforts to acquire matching funding (e. 57).**

**Weaknesses:**

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

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:

The proposed services discussed in the narrative will be used to supporting educators and their professional growth. These services and programs include leadership academies, aspiring leader academies, leadership coaching, problems of instructional practice, and role-alike communities of practice (e. 20). The objective of these services is to provide high quality training and professional development activities that in the end will produce effective educators as well as place them on a career track for advancement (e. 20). The recruitment model will incorporate elements of these services to select individuals who are receptive to professional growth and development (e. 21).

Weakness:

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:**

The proposed recruitment approach will involve a retooling of human resource departments to engage in recruitment activities all year round (e. 21-22). Also, utilize focus groups of pre-service teachers that have been exposed to or reviewed recruitment marketing campaigns of the district's website and social media platforms (e. 22). This effort will provide important information regarding gaps attracting more teachers of color (e. 22). The applicant noted that an external equity audit will be conducted to gather viewpoints not connected to the program to gain knowledge of methods that work and those that do not in attracting educators of color (e. 22).

**Reader's Score: 5**

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio (S374A210036)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need	25	23
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	30
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	20
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Resources	25	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	98
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP1</b>		
<b>CPP1</b>		
1. CPP1	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>CPP2</b>		
<b>CPP2</b>		
1. CPP2	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	110	108

# Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - TSL - 6: 84.374A

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

Applicant: Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio (S374A210036)

## 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 applicant did a thorough job highlighting specific needs and aligning those needs to specific strategies (e.g., e24; e. 36-40). The applicant also provided data to express the magnitude of the concerns addressed (e.g., e24). The proposed project demonstrates a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and incorporates funding from Titles I,II and II, as well as ESSER; and IDEA funds (e26).

#### Strengths

The applicant has identified and chosen to address several needs with the proposed project (e23-26). Of the districts proposed for participation, 58% of the students are economically disadvantaged, compared to 16% in the surrounding suburban districts (e23). The applicant has identified concerns with student achievement (e34) and appropriate representation of educators who look like the students they serve in the districts proposed to participate in this project. Of the proposed schools, schools 96% of their students are of color; although, only 28% of the teachers are teachers of color (e35). Districts participating in this project will conduct equity audits to examine current practices that may be promoting bias (e10). Doing so is likely to lead to a new awareness of bias practices and beliefs, as well as concrete action steps each district can take to improve diversity. Understanding the positive associations between student achievement and students having educators that look like them, over time, it is likely that these steps will positively impact student achievement.

As a demonstration of need, the applicant has also cited evidence of need through teacher ratings. Looking at the districts to be included in this network, student achievement is low with 29% proficiency in math and 40% in literacy (2018-19), although 86% of the respective teachers were rated effective or above in these districts (e34). Aligning professional development with evaluations and training evaluators to strengthen inter-rater reliability on evaluation ratings, as this project proposes to do (e24), will help strengthen the reliability of evaluation ratings and reflect where teachers can develop to ultimately improve student achievement.

This project has also chosen to form a consortium of small districts, which often have difficulties with recruiting, developing, and retaining human capital, especially for high-needs schools because of a lack of infrastructure to provide aligned resources and systems to support educator growth and development (e23). This consortium will provide an opportunity for these districts to benefit from the professional learning and development that would be found in a large district, as well as increase opportunities for the sharing of resources and best practices (e24).

The proposed project will build upon other efforts within the districts that are supported by Title I, Title II, Title III, ESSER; and IDEA funds (e26). One way in which the project will expand upon an existing effort is by developing a system to link educators within the consortium to share feedback and information (e28). Currently, a system exists to track qualitative and quantitative data related to teachers to inform PD but there is not currently a system that links educators to share practice. Research has shown clear connections between opportunities for educators to collaborate and share practice and increasing educator capacity, therefore this intervention is likely to yield positive impacts for all involved.

The proposed project also demonstrates a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning across the districts. It will include 18 schools across four districts and create cross-collaboration to establish systems and shared understandings and language around practices in the district (e30). The project is also designed to impact the classroom (e34), the school (e33), the small-district network (e30) and the larger district (e31). Integrating this project into other efforts to improve teaching and learning in the district helps secure buy-in and garner commitment to the project and promote sustainability.

The Equity Audit will also examine policies, practices, culture, district data, curriculum and instruction, to provide district recommendations on how to better meet the needs of diverse students and increase the diversity of staff. These recommendations will be included in the overall strategic plan to ensure a shared focus across the districts (e32). This represents a comprehensive and robust effort to reduce bias within the district, that is likely to yield positive effects.

Overall, this project is well poised to begin addressing the academic needs of students through improvements in teacher and school leader effectiveness and to address many of the needs of small districts by creating a larger network of supports.

#### Weaknesses

Although the applicant has demonstrated a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning across districts (e.g. 18 schools, e30), it is not clear how it will serve as part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning within the respective schools or their districts. Besides stating that all participating districts have components of their HCMS based on state systems (e26), there was little information provided to describe any specific efforts in these schools or districts to improve student achievement, their HCMS or PBCS.

**Reader's Score: 23**

#### **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 proposed project is supported by research (cited throughout the application, e.g., e38) and is likely to improve student achievement through Teacher and school leader effectiveness by focusing on teacher recruitment, development, support, and retention throughout the network (e35). Because these strategies are research based and part of a high quality plan for implementation, it is highly probable that they will produce the desired results and improvements. The applicant has also identified multiple appropriate methods of evaluation to obtain ongoing feedback regarding the program and progress towards intended outcomes.

### Strengths:

The applicant demonstrated a clear rationale for the proposed project. Not only did they provide a rationale throughout the application, they identified the rationale for each component of the application starting on page e42. The applicant also cited studies on the advantages of a teaching force more closely aligned with the student population It serves; how children of color achieve more when they are taught by effective teachers of color; and that racially diverse educators have a positive impact on educational outcomes for all students, not just students of color (e37, e21), to name a few. They also addressed the importance of teachers and school leaders in effecting student achievement. Overall, the applicant provided a thorough and comprehensive review of the literature throughout the application and on pages e41- 43 to address the specific selection criteria. Grounding the project in a clear rationale and strong research base helps increase the likelihood that the project and its associated components will be successful in producing the desired outcomes related to the identified needs.

The applicant has also provided a thorough and detailed plan for project implementation (e51-52) and identified appropriate methodological tools for project success and attainment of objectives. The plan documents, detail the critical steps necessary to put the project in place and achieve its objectives. It provides a step-by-step list of tasks with assigned owners and due dates. Having a detailed plan for implementation of the project will assist with keeping the project team on track and focused towards the intended outcomes.

Multiple methods of evaluation to provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes have been provided (e43-47). The selected tools for evaluation have been validated and used previously by the project's evaluator on similar projects. Relevant data to provide feedback will be collected annually or biannually (e46). This will include both summative and formative methods of evaluation (e.g., surveys, focus groups, graduation rates, testing, etc.). Having multiple points and methods of data collection and review will help the applicant stay informed regarding progress and make mid-course corrections as needed. Ultimately, this will increase the likelihood that the project achieves its intended outcomes successfully.

Evaluative data from the project will be shared with district- and school-level staff, who will integrate the data into their ongoing planning and implementation efforts, with coaching and support from the project (e46). An end-of-year summative report of all evaluation measures will also be shared publically and with appropriate personnel. Not only are these methods appropriate for obtaining performance feedback and to periodically assess progress toward achieving intended outcomes, but they are also likely to provide rich data to inform implementation and lessons learned.

### Weaknesses:

None cited.

**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 has provided a detailed management plan to include clearly defined roles and responsibilities, as well as timelines for completing tasks. The management plan also includes more than a sufficient number of personnel at various levels, to support implementation and management of the program. This project is likely to achieve the intended outcomes on time and within budget.

Strengths:

The lead applicant has extensive experience in Ohio offering fiscal management, contract services, direct program services, consortium and cooperatives, among other things across 47 districts (e26). This prior experience increases the likelihood that the applicant will be successful in helping to manage this project as well.

The management plan is detailed with clear deliverables milestones, and timelines (e47-52). Having a detailed management plan with clearly detailed steps helps ensure that all project partners have a shared understanding of needed progress and the timeline in which progress needs to occur.

In addition, the project includes experienced project-level and school-based positions to support implementation (e48). The two lead positions for the project are the Project Director (PD) and Principal Investigator (PI), each of which has extensive experience with projects such as that proposed in the application. The PD has supported districts with fiscal planning data, collection and research, and educational budget and policy review and has experience delivering the interventions outlined in this project (e48). The PI oversees ESCNEO's Educator Quality Programs Department, working with educators and districts on implementing state/local initiatives related to educator effectiveness and student learning. Entrusting project oversight to two individuals with this level of experience is likely to lead to very positive outcomes for the project.

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 project is likely to result in system change and build local capacity to address the identified needs. It relies on putting in place a variety of systems and creating local buy-in from each participant to help ensure sustainability and appropriateness for context for each project component. The applicant has also demonstrated a sound and robust plan and financial model for sustainability of the project. They have also demonstrated diverse stakeholder input to support the project.

### Strengths:

Because the project focuses on activities at every level of the education system—network, district, school, principal, and classroom (e61) it is likely that it will result in systemic change and build local capacity.

Policy decisions related to the project will be specifically tailored to the needs of each local stakeholder (e58). Addressing local policies to align with the tenets of this project demonstrates a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and also increases the likelihood of sustainability and change at the system level.

The proposed project will also create systems, which by design support the continuation and accessibility of information as long as the systems remain in place, which will promote ongoing systemic change that will continue to build the capacity of educators to come. As part of this project a library of virtual resources, to include exemplars of candidate interviews, PLCs, and instructional coaching, as well as effective practices across grade levels and subject areas (e56) will be developed. This will also lead to a robust library of resources to further build local capacity beyond the project's participants.

Access to videos of effective educator practices across grade levels and content areas, along with supplemental materials (e57) will further help develop local capacity and provide access to this development through the system. Building the tenets of this program into the strategic plan and aligning it with the new HCMS (e57) will also help ensure that system level change occurs and is intentionally adopted in each district.

The project also likely has the necessary support and resources to continue the project beyond the length of the grant. Beginning in Year 3, the network will expand its resources to new districts, which will be charged an annual fee. This revenue will be used to supplement costs and help sustain the network (e56). The applicant has also designed the project in such a way that responsibilities can be gradually released to each school over time (e54). This will also help cut costs and ensure sustainability as the "middle man" will no longer be necessary for implementation. Each of these factors will help contribute to the long term sustainability of the project.

Each local stakeholder has also committed to maintaining aspects of this project beyond the term of the grant (e58) and has built its tents into their respective strategic plans (e57). This, and the demonstrated broad support and buy-in from teachers, school leaders, superintendents, union leaders, the Ohio State Board of Education, and the Ohio Educational Service Center Association (e116-168) all help increase the likelihood that this project will sustain beyond the term of this grant.

### 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:

This project is intended to support educators and their professional growth (e19) by adopting, implementing, or expanding efforts to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals in high-need Schools who have the knowledge and skills to significantly improve instruction. This project will work directly with 18 high needs schools and their educators (e15). All leaders will receive role-specific training, opportunities for collaboration and inter-district peer coaching and support (e 20), all of which are evidence-based strategies likely to produce positive results addressing the identified needs. The project will also focus on increasing recruitment of minority candidates through its grow your own model (e21). Stipends will also be used as incentives to recruit and retain teachers and teacher leaders with certifications in critical shortage areas (e21).

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 chosen to provide support and preparation strategies and practices focused on underrepresented teacher candidates, through its GYO model (e21) that will begin targeting new educators in the district from middle school (e21). Targeting future teachers before college has shown to be a promising practice to impact teacher recruitment. The applicant will also create an Aspiring Leaders Academy specifically for educators of color. Content for this academy will be developed by current leaders of color in the district (e22), which provides an opportunity for these leaders of color to provide critical input on policies and decisions in the district.

Audits to understand current DEI needs (including those related to HR practice) and efforts within the districts will also be conducted. Audit recommendations and plans for addressing them will be incorporated into the districts' strategic plans and professional development trainings for teachers and administrators (e22). This helps to ensure and promote change through the schools and district.

**Weaknesses:**

None Cited.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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