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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Pasadena Unified School District (U411C190282)
Reader #1:   **********

		Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		25	25
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		35	35
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan			
1. Resources/Management Plan		20	19
	Sub Total	80	79
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority			
1. Absolute Priority 3		5	0
	Sub Total	5	0
	Total	85	79

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - EIR Early Phase Tier 1 - 4: 84.411C

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

Applicant: Pasadena Unified School District (U411C190282)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

   (1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

   (2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

   Strengths:

   Criteria One
   •   Research notes that despite efforts to fix it, disparities continue to widen between students of colors as they face greater rates of suspension, expulsion and arrest than their white classmates (e19). School districts across the country are engaging in long-term change to transform their approaches to school discipline. The applicant's project, strongly grounded in incorporating research-based practices within (PBIS) Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, RtI (Response to Intervention), RP (Restorative Practice), and SEL (Social Emotional Learning), will aid in the prevention of punitive discipline responses and therefore increase students' access to supportive relationships, academic rigor, and culturally relevant and responsive teaching. When multi-tiered systems of support are utilized, students and educators enhance their social and emotional skills and coping strategies. The applicant's work will improve relationships between educators, students, and parents.

   Criteria Two
   •   This project will incorporate best practices associated with PBIS, RtI, RP, and SEL. Effective school discipline is important in building a school climate and culture that is both safe and productive. Projects like this one that feature intervention to improve disciplinary conflicts and suspensions are more critical to addressing discrepancies in disciplinary practices (e21). The applicant will enhance the YEES (Youth Educational and Emotional Supports) program by including a full-time school mental health counselor and substance abuse counselor (e22). Additionally, the project will feature comprehensive professional development that features training for district and school-level administrators (e23). The project will capitalize on data driven decision making regarding behavioral needs, use of evidence-based practices by staff and students, and integrated elements of training, coaching, and evaluation (e25).

   Weaknesses:
   None noted

Reader's Score: 25

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:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

Criteria One
• The applicant proactively plans to utilize existing student, staff, and parent surveys to create a baseline that measures the perceptions of campus culture as it relates to discipline, academic performance, social emotional skills, and pro-social school climate elements (e27).
• The applicant has concisely identified four project goals including building school and district capacity to implement the project, improve student outcomes (academic, behavioral, and pro-social), improve school-level outcomes (academic, behavioral, and pro-social), and improve teacher attitudes and perceptions of student misbehavior and working conditions(e28-e29). For each of these goals, the applicant has included time bound objectives and anticipated outcomes/milestones. The objectives include measurable attributes that will aid the applicant in evaluating the project. One example can be found within Goal 3—improve school-level outcomes (academic, behavior, and pro-social) as a result of YEES implementation. The applicant includes an objective to decrease the number of disciplinary removals and/or emergency placements. The applicant will measure its achievement of the goal by the decrease in discipline disparities in September 30, 2020 and September 2023. There are check and balances in place to continuously monitor fidelity of implementation and make timely adjustments to project components during the grant period.

Criteria Two
• The applicant's Logic Model (e82) features teacher professional development for superintendents, principals, and school staff. This will provide the necessary training for staff to effectively implement social and emotional learning and restorative practices. Additionally, the Logic Model includes students receiving various supports ranging from academic to mental health to substance abuse to character education to anger management. These support services will equip students with the skills sets and coping mechanisms to process and integrate their social and emotional skills across settings (school, home, community). The training and support provided to members of the school community also extends to parents as they can attend sessions to learn of strategies that will aid in their students' success. All of these activities are aligned with the project's goals, objectives, and outcomes. The model integrates school-wide integration of interventions, restorative practices, and social and emotional learning with the expertise of the applicant to help address the academic achievement, abseentism, exclusionary discipline disparities, and implicit biases in a comprehensive manner.

Criteria Three
• Throughout the grant implementation process, the applicant will utilize multiple, formal and informal feedback methods to inform ongoing adaptation as needs, findings, and insights emerge. These methods include feedback collected from the Coordinating and Advisory Council (CAC), surveys, focus groups, interviews, and observations. The applicant's presentation of stakeholder feedback during monthly meetings will aid in the assessment of implementation fidelity, identification of barriers, and scale up interventions. All stakeholders within the project will have an opportunity to provide feedback that will result in continuous improvement of the project (e31-e32). Assessment of the feedback will foster timely refinements and adjustments to implementation.

Weaknesses:

None noted

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

1. **The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

   (1) 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.

   (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

   (3) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

   Strengths:

   Criteria One
   • The Management Plan clearly defines how the project will be executed, monitored, and controlled. The applicant defines the project's milestones and activity schedule. Each activity within the plan is time bound, aligned with a milestone, and supportive of project planning, system efficiency, and multi-tiered supports. The document highlights the project's priorities and aligns resources to achieve them (e88-e89); the timeline is doable. For example, the applicant's timeline includes recruitment completion of four intervention schools and four comparison and MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding). The timeline indicates that this will start and end July 2021; the work will be the responsibility of the evaluator.

   Criteria Two
   • Utilizing experience from past project management, the applicant has identified an extensive number of staff members whose expertise will result in successful practices that will facilitate the processes associated with implementing Literacy Matrix. Furthermore, the key project personnel have the experiences and knowledge necessary to ensure that the project is implemented in compliance with the requirements of the grant (e33-e35, e50-e81). Key project personnel have experience in the areas of teaching and learning, educational leadership, social work, research and best practices, data collection and analysis, professional learning for educators, and program evaluation. The applicant's experienced personnel will provide regular support to engage participants in the effective delivery and monitoring of project components.

   Criteria Three
   • Prior to each school board budget cycles, the applicant will proactively provide the early project results so the school board can use the information to inform decisions regarding allocation of internal resources and allocations. This will foster the partnership and collaboration between the applicant and school districts; it will increase the likelihood of sustainability by way of actively seeking buy-in from school personnel.

   Weaknesses:
   • The applicant indicates that there is a plan to write a Sustainability Plan. This plan should be written prior to receipt of funding; doing so will indicate the applicant's plan to ensure there is financial stability.

Reader's Score: 19

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority

1. **Within Absolute Priority 3, we give competitive preference to applications that address the following priority:**

   Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in the notice). These projects must address the following priority area:

   Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science (as defined in the notice) coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in the notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

   Note: Projects addressing this priority must be administered in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

   Strengths:

   n/a

   Weaknesses:

   n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/14/2019 05:22 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Pasadena Unified School District (U411C190282)
Reader #2: **********

		Points Possible	**Points Scored**
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		25	25
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		35	33
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan			
1. Resources/Management Plan		20	17
	Sub Total	80	75
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority			
1. Absolute Priority 3		5	0
	Sub Total	5	0
	Total	85	75

Technical Review Form

Reader #2: **********
Applicant: Pasadena Unified School District (U411C190282)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

   (1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

   (2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

   Strengths:

   1)   Youth Educational and Emotional Supports (YEES) will contribute to the increased knowledge of disproportionate discipline and exclusionary discipline practices as well as the efficacy of implementing Behavioral Response to Intervention (RtI), Restorative Practices (RP), and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). The proposed project's contribution is established through the research cited for students with disabilities and minority students and the need to reduce/eliminate disparities in school disciplinary practices.   In addition, the need in Pasadena Schools is justified through the data provided on p. e 19, e 20 and in Appendix I showing 82% minority students, 59% living in poverty, 784 homeless and foster students and 13% of students with family member incarcerated.
   2)   Project YEES is designed to build on promising new strategies by incorporating RtI, RP, and SEL with a focus on equity, culture, and bias awareness. A thoughtful approach has been designed through the reflection on the existing programs – Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), Behavioral RtI, and Restorative Practices. Social and Emotional Learning will be added to the strategies to be used for RtI.   Project YEES (Youth Educational and Emotional Supports) will provide support and interventions through a multi-tiered program. This includes school-wide interventions (Tier 1), therapeutic mental health services and substance abuse counseling services (Tiers 2 and 3), and Saturday School.   Strengths and weaknesses have been identified from the existing programs – Tier 2 and 3 need to be strengthened according to the data. This project is designed to make the necessary adjustments and provide the missing pieces in Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. The two schools who already have received the Tier 2/3 interventions show promising results which further strengthens the likelihood of success for this project.   Another strength for this project is the inclusion of the training of parents through the Parent University. In addition, all school staff will receive training in SEL and RP to address cultural fluency and implicit bias thus positively impacting the school climate for all students. (p. e 20 – e 26)

   Weaknesses:

   No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

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:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

1)		The YEES project's one overarching goal – to reduce disparities in exclusionary discipline, improve academic performance, increase social emotional skills and improve pro-social school climate by employing RtI and RP within an SEL framework - is a lofty goal that will make a huge difference for each participating school's climate and their students. The goals, objectives, and outcomes are clear, aligned, and measurable. The outcomes are specific and include student, parent, and teacher perceptions of the overall school climate including safety as well as discipline records. These goals, objectives, and outcomes clearly show what this project is striving to accomplish. For example, goal 4 states: "Improve teacher attitudes and perception of student misbehavior and working conditions as a result of YEES implementation." One of the corresponding outcomes is to increase the number of staff members who increase SEL skills by 20% annually . . . as measured by the Resilience and Youth Development Model. These goals, objectives, and outcomes are clearly measurable with the measurement tool included along with the expected percent increase/decrease in the measurement. These clearly defined goals, objectives, and outcomes will increase the likelihood of a successful implementation. (p. e 27 – e 29)

2)		The Conceptual Framework fully explains YEES' 3 research questions which will drive this project. These research questions incorporate the fidelity with which the project is implemented, the two-year impact of the project on high needs students' perception of school climate, SEL competencies, and progression in school, and the two-year impact on exclusionary discipline rates and disparities. These questions are comprehensive in nature and establish the big picture for the project thereby increasing the likelihood of a successful implementation. In addition, the logic model includes the proposed activities, outputs, short-term, medium-term, and long-term outcomes for the project. The Logic Model shows how all the components will work together to improve outcomes for the school climate and culture as well as academic achievement. (e 30, e 31, e 82)

3)		Throughout both Phase I and Phase II, the evaluator will conduct regular formative assessments at all implementation sites to adapt practices based on site performance. This will ensure effective implementation among all the sites and standardization of practices. The Advisory Council will also provide feedback and identify areas needing improvement. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be reported to the implementation team on a monthly basis. The Feedback and Continuous Improvement Plan details the different teams and groups who will be involved and specifically what that involvement will entail. The evaluator will take a key role. The frequency of meetings for each team is included and those are appropriate. In addition, feedback loops will be utilized at each school with the SEL/RP team meeting twice a month to identify challenges, analyze root causes, and test hypotheses. (p. e 31 – e 33)

Weaknesses:

1)		There was no mention of which key position is ultimately responsible to ensure the Feedback and Continuous Improvement Plan is successfully implemented. This will create confusion in the implementation of the project. (e 31- e 33)

**Reader's Score:		33**

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the

management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) 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.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(3) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

Strengths:

1)   The management plan clearly states the key milestones which align with the goals and objectives of the project. The start and end dates are provided for each milestone. The responsible party is named for each milestone. The timeline includes activities through 2023 (the end of the grant) and is reasonable and doable considering the plan for the application. In addition, the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) has vast experience managing large state and federal grants which further supports the adequacy of the management plan to fully implement this project with fidelity and successfully.
(p. e 33)

2)   All project staff have the necessary qualifications and training for successful implementation of this proposal. Many of these staff hold doctorate degrees and/or have experiences with research or managing large grants. In addition, Dr. Sahakian, Project Director, is a certified trainer in several evidence-based interventions including Behavior RtI. Ms. Choulikian, Project Coordinator, is a licensed social worker. Dr. James, Principal Investigator, has experience in research and data collection. Therefore, the key project staff will significantly contribute to the management and successful implementation of YEES. (p. e 33 – e 35 and Appendix B)

3)   There is a plan to write a Sustainability Plan. PUSD plans to create financial models that integrate YEES with predictable and reliable funding streams; diversify funding sources and seek new sources of funding for sustaining the program

Weaknesses:

1)   The timeline is difficult to follow. There is an explanation at the top about the two phases of this project. Phase I is the Implementation Pilot in two schools in Years 1 and 2. Phase 2 includes 4 experimental schools in Years 3 and 4. However, these phases are not labeled within the timeline so this will be confusing to implement. (Appendix N)

2)   If the Sustainability Plan had been previously written, it would have strengthened the likelihood of sustaining the project since a plan would have allowed the focus to be on implementation. (p. e 35)

Reader's Score: 17

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority

1. Within Absolute Priority 3, we give competitive preference to applications that address the following priority:

Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in the notice). These projects must address the following priority area:

Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science (as defined in the notice) coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in the notice), or low-income

individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

Note: Projects addressing this priority must be administered in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/14/2019 07:26 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Pasadena Unified School District (U411C190282)
Reader #3: **********

		Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Significance			
1. Significance		25	25
Quality of Project Design			
1. Project Design		35	35
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan			
1. Resources/Management Plan		20	20
	Sub Total	80	80
Priority Questions			
Competitive Preference Priority			
Competitive Preference Priority			
1. Absolute Priority 3		5	0
	Sub Total	5	0
	Total	85	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - EIR Early Phase Tier 1 - 4: 84.411C

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

Applicant: Pasadena Unified School District (U411C190282)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

    (1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

    (2) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

    Strengths:

    Criterion 1.
    The projects aim of YEES is to increased knowledge of issue of disproportionate discipline and discipline practices and to implement the remedies of Behavioral Response to Intervention (RtI), Restorative Practices (RP) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). A better method of addressing discipline in the schools are needed to address the long-range negative impact of academic disengagement, lack of academic achievement, school dropout, and increased involvement with the juvenile justice system. The project plans to increase the knowledge of methods to address this ongoing educational problem. (P. e19)
    Criterion 2.
    The project is a promising new strategy that involves the development of strategies that builds on the existing school program of discipline, the addition of Saturday School, Pull Out Student Supports, and the Social and Emotional Learning will be implemented, and their progress measured to determine the success of the approach. This program takes existing strategies and adds new approaches to strengthen the effectiveness of the existing program. The program takes a new approach to discipline by using additions to address student issues through a new combination. (P. e20)

    Weaknesses:

    None Noted

Reader's Score: 25

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:**

    (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

    (2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

    (3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the

operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

Criterion 1.

The four program Goals are 1: Build the capacity of 4 high-needs elementary and middle schools to implement Project YEES. Goal 2: Improve student outcomes in academic, behavior, and pro-social skills. Goal 3: Improve school outcomes for academic, behavior, and pro-social skills. Goal 4: Improve teacher attitudes and perception of student misbehavior and working conditions. Project goals are achievable and are listed in the chart. For example, the milestone of conducting a focus groups in the 2 schools; analyze data from the survey and fidelity measure and findings issue that require improvement using the RtI, RP and SEL model has a definite time frame and person responsible for the task. The evaluation activities are aligned with the outcomes and support projects goals. (P. e27-28, 36, 85, 88)

Criterion 2.

The conceptual framework is based on two studies that found that students who participated in a restorative conference had a lower likelihood of suspensions than students who experienced other consequences. The studies were based on a low-income school which had increased referrals for students with ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities. The RtI, RP, and SEL programs each demonstrated promising results in addressing the challenges of school discipline and academic underperformance in high-needs schools. The logic model explains the project framework and links the programs' activities, and outputs and intended outcomes of improving school climate. For example, the Response to Intervention, and Restorative Practices along with implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports each are described as to how they support project outcomes. (P. e30, 44, 82)

Criterion 3.

The plan for feedback and continuous project improvement is that the team will meet every two weeks to analyze data which will include discipline incidents, disciplinary interventions, and suspensions. The team will then identify challenges, analyze root causes, and test hypotheses about how to make positive changes by the continuous examination of data. During teams' meetings data will be categorized into incidents analyzing who is involved when and where the incidents occur to plan remedies. Teams will analyze data from evaluators as it becomes available to them. (P. e32)

Weaknesses:

None Noted

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

1. **The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

   (1) 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.

   (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

   (3) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

   Strengths:

   Criterion 1.
   The budget and budget narrative are specific and break down the cost of salaries and the cost of program supplies needed for project completion. The narrative for the budget explains the total for the four-year grant is $4,860,395, with

$3,993,142 (82%) in Federal grant funds and $867,253 (18%) in matching funds. The narrative lists the matching funds as being provided by the Pasadena Unified School District and Pasadena Educational Foundation. Project goal is to have an outcome of the decreasing the number of students in schools who report feelings of
bias in discipline at school by 10% annually, for a total decrease of 40%, as measured by the Implicit Assessment Test. This goal was measurable and achievable within the timeframe. Each of the four goals had tasks relevant to milestone and task completion. (P. e92-107)
Criterion 2.
The project outlines responsibilities and training for each position and there was adequate staffing to support project completion. The resumes of the staff reflect qualifications needed for key positions. For example, the Project Director who will oversee the grant project and supervise program staff and the Local Evaluator, has a Doctorate in Education. (P. e33, 51-81)
Criterion 3.
The plan for continued support after funding ends is that planning for sustainability will begin on the first day of the grant with the creation of financial models that integrate YEES in the school system with reliable funding sources and diversify funding. The project leaders will also seek new sources of funding in the school systems internal resources and budget allocations that will support sustainability of the YEES program. (P. e35)

Weaknesses:

None Noted

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority

1. **Within Absolute Priority 3, we give competitive preference to applications that address the following priority:**

   Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in the notice). These projects must address the following priority area:

   Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science (as defined in the notice) coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in the notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

   Note: Projects addressing this priority must be administered in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

   Strengths:

   NA

   Weaknesses:

   NA

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/13/2019 11:20 PM