

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/10/2016 09:58 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Harmony Public Schools (U374A160039)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	45	45
<b>Selection Criterion</b>		
<b>Professional Development Systems</b>		
1. Development Systems	15	15
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	15
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Adequacy of Resources	5	5
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Supporting High-Need Students</b>		
1. CPP 1	2	0
<b>Improving Teacher Effectiveness</b>		
1. CPP 2	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>105</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Teacher Incentive Fund - 8: 84.374A

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

Applicant: Harmony Public Schools (U374A160039)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. We will consider 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.

**General:**

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a well-developed and existing plan to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services. The LEA has transformed the way students especially in traditionally poverty stricken districts engage in learning. The applicant has adopted the philosophy that each child is an individual with unique interests, needs and abilities. (pg. 1) The LEA has invested in developing and refining a Human Capital Management System. (Pg. 2) The core component of the HCMS is performance development for educator's evaluations and support. (pg. 3) The LEA will address the key challenges which are supporting the large number of teachers to become more effective. (pg. 3) The key ingredient to the LEA's philosophy is that educators cannot do it alone they have to be supported in every way whether that through compensation or a mentoring program. (pg. 4-7)

Weakness:

No weakness found

Reader's Score: 20

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, we will consider the following factors

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Reader's Score: 45

#### Sub Question

1. (1) 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.

**General:**

Strengths:

The applicant has established partnerships with Gallup and the Haberman Educational foundation to improve research based practices and teacher instruction (pg. 13). The LEA has adopted training models to train teachers, mentor, coach and administration on rigorous support systems (pg. 13) In addition to aligning more partnership with other organization and LEA's they are developing teacher emergency trainings for educational leadership across disciplines (pg. 14). The director has geared his thoughts and plans to deepen content by building math and science instructional training which will focus on professional development to emerge teacher leadership (pg. 16).

**Sub Question**

Weakness:

No weakness found

**Reader's Score:**

2. **(2) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.**

**General:**

Strengths:

The LEA has a thorough and precise plan that has partnered with (NMSI) and Lead4ward organizations to provide intense PD's and to evaluate teacher performance. (Pg. 13) The applicant has participated by collaborating The Buck Institute of Education that allows them to have a researched based support system to maximize instructional strategies. (Pg. 13) They will also be expanding their relationship with an organization which will help to provide principal evaluation training. (pg. 14) The LEA sees educator effectiveness as the most important school-related factor affecting student's outcomes. (pg. 15)

Weakness:

No weakness found

**Reader's Score:**

3. **(3) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by a strong theory.**

**General:**

Strengths:

The applicant did not elaborate on the amount of supported ideas, which teachers and administration will produce great efforts to differentiate instruction (pg. 17). The LEA will improve instructional quality, support career progression and enhance consistency for professional development for administration practices. The director supports improving educator effectiveness and with the TIF grant will enable them to take ownership in teachers and students educational careers ( pg. 19)

Weakness:

No weakness found

**Reader's Score:**

4. **(4) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve the relevant outcomes (as defined in 34 C.F.R. 77.1(c)), using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State and Federal resources.**

**General:**

Strength:

The applicant was given an existing RTT-D grant in 2013 and established different learning pathways throughout the school system. (pg. 20) The LEA wants to use the funds along with the existing funds to build a world class tech data base that powers information sharing for students, parents, teachers and administrators. (Pg. 20) The feedback will develop significant investments in educators' professional development. (pg. 21) The applicant points out that the previous grant they received have laid out the ground work for this particular TIF project. (pg. 21) The RTT-D grant has given them the vision for data driven, differentiate learning to the next level. (pg. 21)

Weakness:

No weakness found

**Reader's Score:**

## Selection Criterion - Professional Development Systems

1. In determining the quality of the professional development systems to support the needs of teachers and principals identified through the evaluation process, we will consider the extent to which--

Reader's Score: 15

### Sub Question

1. (1) Each participating LEA has a high-quality plan for professional development to help all educators located in high-need schools, listed in response to Requirement 2(a), to improve their effectiveness.

#### General:

##### Strengths:

The applicant has implemented a highly effective rigorous professional development model that builds content knowledge to drive effective teaching pedagogy (pg. 25). The LEA has piloted its own (H-TESS) system to link with high selective high need schools to support their curriculum, assessments, instruction and professional learning collaborative (pg. 26). The director of Harmony schools will promote leadership advancements through TIF grant to improve their teacher and administrative effectiveness by initiating leadership summits for aspiring new principals and assistant principals (pg. 27).

##### Weakness:

No weakness found

Reader's Score:

2. (2) The plan describes how the participating LEA will use the disaggregated information generated by the proposed educator Evaluation and Support System to identify the professional development needs of individual Educators and schools.

#### General:

##### Strengths:

The applicant's plan is to prioritize implementing quality professional development that impacts students' achievements. (pg. 27) The program is designed to help educators address needs through coaching and support. (pg. 27) The LEA has partnered up with a Tech Company to provide online instructional and self-pace instructions. (pg. 27) The LEA has proven that implementing these programs has led to improved performances data in the last 5 years. (pg. 28)

##### Weakness:

No weakness found

Reader's Score:

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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.

#### General:

##### Strengths:

The LEA has an executive team with extensive experience in managing large capital projects. (Pg. 29) Once the funds are received the director of the project who also serves as a director on another project will take over and implement the

changes in the TIF project. (pg. 30) Other Executives will help oversee the project from being to end. (pg. 30) The executives have set a program to that has proven over the past decade through its responsive organizational structure. (pg. 32) The program will work simultaneously with the existing proven programs that have provided positive results. (pg. 32)

Weakness:

No weakness found

**Reader's Score: 15**

### **Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

- 1. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, we will consider the extent to which--**

**Reader's Score: 5**

#### **Sub Question**

- 1. (1) The applicant demonstrates that Performance-based Compensation Systems are developed with the input of teachers and schools in the schools and local educational agencies to be served by the grant.**

#### **General:**

Strengths:

The applicant has a strong belief that demonstrates teacher and leaders' ability to become effective and highly effective, however, based around performance-based compensations systems (pg. 36). The LEA has chosen to implement teacher salaries increases based on the TIF grand funded proposal through system wide surveys (pg. 36). The director has put tier systems in place for teachers to earn higher compensation for each fiscal year until 2020 (pg. 36).

Weakness:

No weakness found

**Reader's Score:**

- 2. (2) The applicant demonstrates a plan to sustain financially the activities conducted and systems developed under the grant once the grant period has expired.**

#### **General:**

Strengths:

The applicant committed to input a successful performance-based compensation system that describes the LEA budget (pg.36). They have two major proposals to extend their current compensation initiatives for teachers (pg. 37). The LEA has demonstrated a robust amount of proposed money towards student growth, educator effectiveness and retention (pg.35). The director will strive to poor monies into teacher retention by setting more specific quantitative targets (pg. 36).

Weakness:

No weakness found

**Reader's Score:**

## Priority Questions

### Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students

1. (1) Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes for students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.

**General:**

Applicant did not address priority.

**Reader's Score:** 0

### Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Teacher Effectiveness

1. We will consider projects that are designed to address promoting equitable access to effective teachers for students from low-income families and minority students across and within schools and districts.

To meet this priority, teacher effectiveness must be measured using an Evaluation and Support System. We are particularly interested in applications that address the following invitational priority:

**Invitational Priority-Promoting Equitable Access Through State Plans To Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators:** Applications that include a description of how the applicant's project promotes equitable access to effective Educators for students from low-income families and for minority students across and within districts, consistent with approved State Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educator.

**General:**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides significant ways and strategies for data collection (pg. 39). The LEA has some successful and consistent outcomes that have led to highly effective student achievements (pg. 39). The director of Harmony has taken great strides to align state funds and private entities, however, still projects TIF grant funding to support educational sustainable efforts (pg. 38).

**Weakness:**

No weakness found

**Reader's Score:** 5

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/10/2016 09:58 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/10/2016 10:39 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Harmony Public Schools (U374A160039)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	45	45
<b>Selection Criterion</b>		
<b>Professional Development Systems</b>		
1. Development Systems	15	15
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	15
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Adequacy of Resources	5	5
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Supporting High-Need Students</b>		
1. CPP 1	2	0
<b>Improving Teacher Effectiveness</b>		
1. CPP 2	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>105</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Teacher Incentive Fund - 8: 84.374A

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

Applicant: Harmony Public Schools (U374A160039)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. We will consider 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.

#### General:

#### Strengths:

Applicant has clearly defined an effective project to build local capacity to provide services that address the needs of the target population. A list of high need schools supported through documentation shows FRL program percentages range from 50.5%-86.7% for an average of 62% in the seven school districts served by the Charter Management Organization, Harmony Public Schools. (p.e1, e61) Harmony operated 46 schools in 2015-2016 with a student population of 50% Hispanic/Latino, 20% African-American, and 22% English Language Learners in the seven school districts. (p. e57) HCMS will provide base salary, benefits, bonuses related to student achievement, and stipends for additional commitments of career growth, mentorships or curriculum development. (p. e2) Administration will effectively support the teaching staff through feedback, supporting the instructional model and professional development. Harmony Teacher Evaluation and Support System evaluates teachers on instructional quality, student achievement and professional roles and responsibilities. (p. e5) Significant support services to help teachers differentiate instruction are used to attract and retain teachers in the priority schools program to help them meet State standards as well as stipends and bonuses. (p. e9) Eight high priority schools are ranked with state accountability results. (p. e9)

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, we will consider the following factors

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Reader's Score: 45

#### Sub Question

1. (1) 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.

#### General:

#### Strengths:

Applicant has clearly developed a strong Strategic Plan based on a needs assessment that shows professional

**Sub Question**

development, compensation and staffing practices that need to be revised to improve student achievement. Development of a comprehensive teacher evaluation and professional development plan, retention of effective teachers and increasing administrator development and evaluation are the strategies that are effectively addressed. (p. e27-e29) To identify student needs, student assessment data is analyzed to determine how educators can specifically address those academic needs. (p. e44)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

2. **(2) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.**

**General:**

Strengths:

Collaboration of partners that will maximize the effectiveness of project services is comprehensively addressed through partnering with Gallup, Haberman Educational Foundation, The Danielson Group, Teachscape, National Math and Science Initiative and Lead4ward. Harmony partnered with Teachscape to develop an online management platform for teacher professional development. Partnering with National Math and Science Initiative and Lead4ward will provide intense professional development training for teacher-leaders. Numerous partnering organizations are specifically described that will provide support and enhancement to the existing project services, e.g., BloomBoard, Digital Promise, The Buck Institute for Education, Getting Smart, Rice University STEM Center, Project-Based Learning World and Leadership Academies, (p. e30-e31)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

3. **(3) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by a strong theory.**

**General:**

Strengths:

The proposed project is significantly supported by strong theory, e.g., Charlotte Danielson's research-supported Framework for Teaching. Harmony collaborated with The Danielson Group, a group of education consultants, to implement components of identifying good practices, determining areas of need, and providing tools to address those areas (p. e22) The strong theory of action is effectively illustrated through the logic model of factors of current situation/need, HCMS levers, intended impact, effective educators, and ultimate impact. The basis for the TIF project is that teacher effectiveness is the most significant contributing factor to student achievement resulting in human capital needs of improving instructional quality of educators and supporting career progression of effective teachers. (p. e32)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

4. **(4) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve the relevant outcomes (as defined in 34 C.F.R. 77.1(c)), using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State and Federal resources.**

**Sub Question**

**General:**

Strengths:

Integration with other programs and funding from community, state and federal resources to improve outcomes is extensively described. Using existing funds of \$30 million from the Race to the TOP-D grant, Harmony has aligned the evaluation process with learning approaches, included frequent feedback and multiple measures of student achievement. Harmony proposes to collaborate with Dini Spheris, a fundraising consultancy, to bring local communities into supporting its performance-based bonus system, supporting excellent educators in all eligible schools and retaining strong educators in highest-need schools through the Priority Schools system. (p. e24)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Selection Criterion - Professional Development Systems**

- 1. In determining the quality of the professional development systems to support the needs of teachers and principals identified through the evaluation process, we will consider the extent to which--**

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Sub Question**

- 1. (1) Each participating LEA has a high-quality plan for professional development to help all educators located in high-need schools, listed in response to Requirement 2(a), to improve their effectiveness.**

**General:**

Strengths:

Harmony has effectively developed a professional development plan with input from teachers and administrators based on the needs of the priority and high need schools. (p. e 38-e39) Modules for professional development are content driven supported by the Harmony teacher Evaluation and Support System and provide links between curriculum, assessment, instructional and professional learning. (p. e42)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

- 2. (2) The plan describes how the participating LEA will use the disaggregated information generated by the proposed educator Evaluation and Support System to identify the professional development needs of individual Educators and schools.**

**General:**

Strengths:

An effective professional development plan is comprehensively addressed through use of the data from the Evaluation and Support System to identify specific needs of educators. The Harmony Teacher Evaluation and Support System evaluates teachers based on instructional quality, student growth and achievement, and professional roles and responsibilities. (p. e22) Partnering with Teachscape that provides online, self-paced

**Sub Question**

supports connected to Harmony’s Instructional Quality rubric will result in training of instructional leaders for quality observations and evaluations. A needs assessment of professional development showed a need for stronger connection between development, evaluation, career pathways, and rewards to promote continuous improvement. H-TESS evaluation data is used to identify student academic needs that are correlated to provision of relevant professional development. (p. e44-e46)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 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.**

**General:**

Strengths:

The management plan will effectively provide for efficient implementation and administration of the proposed project on time and within budget. Key personnel are detailed with responsibilities and experience related to project implementation specifically described. (p. e47-e49) Resumes are included in the appendices. An organizational chart shows the roles of instructional management, human resources management, and external relations related to the TIF project. (p. e158-e160, e164) A detailed timeline with major activities and milestones, responsible personnel, and time of initiation and completion succinctly describes the proposed project. (p. e51-e52) The comprehensive budget narrative illustrates how the TIF project will specifically address implementation through the five year period. In-kind funding will support 31% of the cost of the project. (p. e166-e202)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

- 1. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, we will consider the extent to which--**

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Sub Question**

- 1. (1) The applicant demonstrates that Performance-based Compensation Systems are developed with the input of teachers and schools in the schools and local educational agencies to be served by the grant.**

**General:**

Strengths:

Performance-based Compensation Systems are effectively developed with Input from teachers and school leaders. Surveys, focus groups, interviews, and district meetings were implemented in planning the 2020 strategic initiative

**Sub Question**

that is the basis of the proposed project. Feedback was solicited from staff members on compensation, bonuses, career options, and needs. An overview of the TIF project was sent to all educators over the summer break; 43 campus educators and District Superintendents reviewed details of the proposed project and provided feedback. Documentation of support from Principals of the 36 schools is included in the appendices. (p. e54

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

- 2. **(2) The applicant demonstrates a plan to sustain financially the activities conducted and systems developed under the grant once the grant period has expired.**

**General:**

Strengths:

Sustainability of the project activities and services after federal funding ends is significantly addressed. With the possibility of unreliability of state funding, Harmony does not elect to set aside bonus pools to sustain the PCBS that allows the capped bonuses of \$1,750 for effective educators. Harmony is planning to partner with [REDACTED], a funding consultant, to build community support for all eligible schools and retain highly effective teachers in the high need schools. A systematic plan for how the plan would direct existing state and federal funds into supporting the PCBS in the high need school is specifically described. (p. e41) Harmony will fund the project from Texas State education sources on per-pupil basis for Harmony LEAs. Private philanthropy is instrumental in funding, e.g., \$14.5 million dollars from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Michael and Susan Dell Foundation in the T-STEM initiative. (p. e54-55)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students**

- 1. **(1) Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes for students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.**

**General:**

The applicant was not awarded points under competitive preference priority 1 because it is not seeking eligibility under this priority.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Teacher Effectiveness**

- 1. **We will consider projects that are designed to address promoting equitable access to effective teachers for students from low-income families and minority students across and within schools and districts.**

**To meet this priority, teacher effectiveness must be measured using an Evaluation and Support System. We are particularly interested in applications that address the following invitational priority:**

**Invitational Priority-Promoting Equitable Access Through State Plans To Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: Applications that include a description of how the applicant's project promotes equitable access to effective Educators for students from low-income families and for minority students across and within districts, consistent with approved State Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent**

**Educator.**

**General:**

Strengths:

Harmony has effectively provided equal access to low-income and minority students through the PCBS process of financially compensating effective teachers in the high need and priority schools. Harmony operated 46 schools in 2015-2016 with a student population of 50% Hispanic/Latino, 20% African-American, and 22% English Language Learners with an average of 62% FRL program in the seven school districts. In response to the state plan to ensure equitable access to excellent educators, Harmony identified two factors, e.g., insufficient training and support for teachers and campus leadership challengers. Harmony is participating in the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System for administrator development. The state is providing Creating Turnaround Educators Pipelines initiative that promotes career pathways for teachers. Harmony will partner with the state initiative to increase the retention of effective teachers in the high need and priority schools. (p. e57)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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**Last Updated:** 08/10/2016 10:39 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/10/2016 10:42 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Harmony Public Schools (U374A160039)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	45	45
<b>Selection Criterion</b>		
<b>Professional Development Systems</b>		
1. Development Systems	15	15
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	15
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Adequacy of Resources	5	5
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Supporting High-Need Students</b>		
1. CPP 1	2	0
<b>Improving Teacher Effectiveness</b>		
1. CPP 2	5	5
<b>Total</b>	107	105

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Teacher Incentive Fund - 8: 84.374A

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

Applicant: Harmony Public Schools (U374A160039)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

1. We will consider 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.

#### General:

##### Strengths

The applicant presents a fully developed response to the criteria which clearly demonstrates the significance of the proposed program and a clear understanding of the criterion requirements, precisely aligns the proposed initiative with implementation, evaluation programs, sustainability and its subsequent impact in building local capacity to provide and expand services that address the needs of the target population. This is well described in concisely detailing the initiative as building on and expanding the services, resources and programs of the federal Race to the Top District grant which enabled a diverse group of teachers to engage in extensive professional development to advance the effective delivery of 21st century instruction to students in the target population. It is clearly delineated that the proposed program builds on two centerpieces of the 2012 Race to the Top District grant continuing to implement interdisciplinary project based learning that ties together students work across all subject areas and beyond basic classroom management and data driven instruction, to ensure quality instruction across the schools. Pages 2-4

A well-developed proposal positions the fact that it is very likely that capacity will continue to be built through the proposed program focused on professional development, with educator's evaluation serving to information differentiated professional development and supports. This capacity is highly likely to be built as the program develops effective procedures to scale the key challenge to design and implement effective supports for a large number of educators to become more effective and to remain in the Harmony Public School. Recognizing the varying levels of experience and skills of current staff and serving the 700 new teachers who annually enter the system. Pages 2, 3

A fully developed response details the proposed program as continuing to build on and expand the Race to the Top District services in redesigning evaluation and support systems to better align with personalized learning approaches, which includes feedback at frequent intervals and incorporates multiple measures of student achievement. The program builds capacity in advancing services which are clearly referenced as research -based delineating components produced in the Charlotte Danielson's research -supported Framework for Teaching. This model is noted as being adopted and adapted in 29 states. In addition to a well-developed narrative, Appendix F concisely delineates tools which addresses priority instructional quality through identifying best practices and evaluation strategies. Page 4, 5, Appendix F

It is noteworthy that the three domains of the Harmony Teacher Evaluation and Support System major components are copiously detailed. For example, principals' professional development is effectively described specifying using Teachscape Focus and Teachscape Reflect that collaborates research based strategies for staff training and administrative decision making and teacher placement. Page 5

##### Weaknesses

None are noted.

Reader's Score: 20

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, we will consider the following factors

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Reader's Score: 45

#### Sub Question

1. (1) 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.

#### General:

##### Strengths

The applicant presents a fully developed articulation of the project design specifying it as part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. This is evidenced in defining program goals which encompass the aim to maximize students' academic achievement and recruitment and development of a talented workforce. Four strategies and nine sub –initiatives are well detailed indicating a deep level of stakeholders input on the direction of the program. Two years of success are clearly summarized. For example in 2014, the district hired a Chief Talent Officer who has continued to lead the shift from compliance toward more strategic, talent-centered performance orientation. The Officer is identified as working in partnership with the Academic Team who continues to lead needs assessments to enable strategic revisions to professional development and compensation plans and system. Each of the nine strategies are adequately described. While the applicant clearly describes a high level of progress achieved over the past few years, they also specify that they are committed to continue to work to build on past success. Two needs are identified to be served in the proposed program. These encompass the need to improve instructional needs of all educators in building foundations of skills and to support career progress. Pages 10-12

##### Weaknesses

None are noted.

#### Reader's Score:

2. (2) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

#### General:

##### Strengths

The applicant develops a comprehensive program design which specifically involves the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing effectiveness of project services. This is evidenced in an assertion of an excellent track record which is clearly described as including collaboration with Gallup and Haberman Educational Foundations. It is noted that the Haberman Foundation serves to train principals on teacher selection through the Star Teacher Interview process. In addition, the Gallup Teacher Insight Assessment is also identified. A partnership with Teachscape is identified as aligned to supporting professional development and also to developing an online managerial platform serving various realms of professional development. It is further detailed that leveraging partnerships have enabled differentiated approach to professional development. For example, the applicant clearly

### Sub Question

identifies a partnership with the National Math and Science Initiative and Lead4ward which facilitates professional development for 180 teachers across disciplines which is completed in a 14 day program. Pages 13, 14

It is noteworthy that the applicant identifies the intention to expand relationships with the Texas Education Agency's Education Service enters which provides professional element an coaching services and with the Association for Supervisors and Curriculum Development in support of the programs' leadership initiative which include the Aspiring Teachers Academy and summer professional development and collaboration with local universities for coaching. It is specified that that collaboration exists with the University of Huston-Clear Lake and Lamar University for coaching support for educators in high need schools. Page 14

Weaknesses

None are noted.

### Reader's Score:

#### 3. (3) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by a strong theory.

##### General:

##### Strengths

The applicant effectively details a fully development program design which is supported by strong theory. This is evidenced in a detailed description of the four key levers which drive the system wide change. Levers 1-3 are well developed and effectively described as focused to continually enable educators to improve teacher and leading and Lever 4 is described as focused on recognizing and rewarding the efforts of educators. Pages 16-19

The four levers which comprise strong theory are well detailed to serves as an effective foundation for the program in strengthening and sustaining program approaches to human capital development. The end product of this action is delineated to results in a more effective educators and in the retention of highly qualified staff across all eligible high needs schools. Pages 18-20

The Logic Model is presented aligned to most of the components described in the narrative. Components are focused on increasing educator's effectiveness and reduce the gap in outcomes between higher and lower poverty schools. Appendix C Page 1

Weaknesses

None are noted.

### Reader's Score:

#### 4. (4) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve the relevant outcomes (as defined in 34 C.F.R. 77.1(c)), using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State and Federal resources.

##### General:

##### Strengths

It is well articulated that the proposed program integrates with and builds on similar efforts in the high need schools, serving to improve student and educators outcomes, using existing funding streams from other programs which are supported by community, State and Federal resources. Specifically, the proposed initiative guild on a \$30 million Race to the Top District grant. This federal grant is specified to have served to expand project-based learning and differentiated learning and career pathways. It is evidenced that the model has successfully served the district as noting the fact that initially the model served middle and high school and has currently expanded into the

**Sub Question**

elementary schools. The Race To the Top grant and district commitment are clearly specified to a lay the groundwork for the proposed program and has informed the vision for taking data driven differentiated learning to the next level focused on serving educators and students. Pages 20, 21

Weaknesses

None are noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Selection Criterion - Professional Development Systems**

- 1. In determining the quality of the professional development systems to support the needs of teachers and principals identified through the evaluation process, we will consider the extent to which--**

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Sub Question**

- 1. (1) Each participating LEA has a high-quality plan for professional development to help all educators located in high-need schools, listed in response to Requirement 2(a), to improve their effectiveness.**

**General:**

Strengths

The applicant presents a fully developed response to the criteria is describing a comprehensive and high-quality plan for professional development focused to improve the effectiveness of all educators located in high need schools served in the program. This is evidenced in a copious description of the Educators Support Framework which emphasizes in providing comprehensive and ongoing support for teachers and administrators. For example, all teachers currently participate in eight days of in- service before school and four days throughout the school year. The proposed program builds on this and provides time and resources to enable teachers to engage in hands-on practice with new technologies s and to rehearse new strategies prior to returning to the classroom. In addition, all teacher are provided access to support from campus based coaches and data analysts who model high quality learner-centered instructional practices, as a focus point of the proposed program. The modules are well articulated as subject-specific and also to provide links between curriculum, assessment, instruction and professional learning in the context of each specific content area. It is further noted that the needs of special populations are met in the activities and service of the proposed program achieved though collaboration between the content areas a special programs departments in the development of professional development modules. Special population are aptly identified as English Language Learner and gifted student populations. Pages 24, 25

It is noteworthy that professional development is noted for educators through an emerging career pathways system that links stronger teacher-leaders with new and novice teachers and offers opportunities for expanded services and financial rewards. Page 26

Weaknesses

None are noted

**Reader's Score:**

## Sub Question

2. (2) **The plan describes how the participating LEA will use the disaggregated information generated by the proposed educator Evaluation and Support System to identify the professional development needs of individual Educators and schools.**

### General:

#### Strengths

The applicant presents a fully developed response to describes how the participating LEA will use the disaggregated information generated by the proposed educator Evaluation and Support System to identify the professional development needs of individual Educators and schools. This is evidenced and substantiates in the implementation of the Harmony Teacher Evaluation and Support System (H-H-TESS.) This system is identified and described as developed and implemented in partnership with Teachscape in an on-line, self-paced program connected to the Harmony Instructional Quality rubric. The system is described to train and instructional leaders for better calibrated observation and evaluations. Examples of the current use of this system are noted. For example, the system was used in the Harmony Science Academy-Dallas which identified trends in low score in Questioning and Discussion Techniques. In response the district developed and provided a training module for staff for this topic on a professional development day. Pages 26, 27

#### Weaknesses

None are noted.

### Reader's Score:

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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.**

### General:

#### Strengths

The applicant presents a fully developed response in effectively describing a well-developed management plan which demonstrates a clear understanding of the requirements and details alignment between what is proposed, how it will be carried out, and subsequent impact on organizational effectiveness and accomplishments of program tasks. This is evidenced in a comprehensive chart identifying major activities and milestones, the person/position responsible for each and the timeline. Each major activity is categorized and framed to reach the proposed program benchmarks. For example, it is noteworthy that one benchmark and outcome is to "adjust non-tested bonus approaches for scale across the Harmony Schools." This is well articulated in activities to analyze internal areas and research and other systems approaches to STAAR and NWES-MAP goal setting. It is the designated responsibility for this activity as assigned to the Director of Accountability. Timelines are well defined as October-May for the first year and accordingly for the next year. Pages 34, 35

The program chart clearly specified activities to ensure the plan will achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. This is evidenced in hiring a Budget management person in the position of the Project Director. It is specified his team worked on the grant proposal and has an understanding of large scale budget management. Page 32.

Each project staff position is noted, a person identified to serve in the position and a brief description of the experience and expertise of the person selected relevant to the proposed program. For example, the Director of Development is specified for her strong relationship to local Texas funders and her understanding of the unique value of the schools to the community. Her background in development is specified as working with other community organizations including the Asia Society Texas Center and Habitat for Humanity for his philanthropic goals Pages 30, 31

Weaknesses

None are noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**

**1. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, we will consider the extent to which--**

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Sub Question**

**1. (1) The applicant demonstrates that Performance-based Compensation Systems are developed with the input of teachers and schools in the schools and local educational agencies to be served by the grant.**

**General:**

Strengths:

The applicant fully demonstrates that Performance-based Compensation Systems have been developed with the input of teachers and schools in the schools and local educational agencies to be served by the grant. This is evidenced in noting "significant educator input" from the beginning of the grant proposal design. It is clearly noted that in the planning process a 100% response rate was attained in survey distributed system wide. Interviews, focus groups and district meetings were also conducted. It is specified that 625 Harmony Public School staff members shared their feedback related to areas of; compensation, bonuses, career options and needs. Page 36

The applicant clearly identifies that during the summer educators were invited to opt in and provide input and feedback in the design of the program and the logic model noting that 43 campus educators and all 36 school principals reviewed the proposal. Page 37

Weaknesses

None are noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**2. (2) The applicant demonstrates a plan to sustain financially the activities conducted and systems developed under the grant once the grant period has expired.**

**General:**

Strengths:

Overall, the applicant presents a well-developed excellent response detailing and demonstrating a plan to sustain financially the activities conducted in the proposed program once the grant period has expired. It is well described that the compensation prom include TIF grant funds and state allocated per pupil funds. It is stated that the LEAs are all operated as open enrollment to the public and derive the majority of funding front the Texas State Education Agency. The district is identified as having an excellent Standard & Poor's financial reports with a strong status.

**Sub Question**

Page 36

The applicant offers a general statement asserting that the program will utilize State funds to continue the program after TIF funds expire. Private philanthropy is well described and notes grant funds from foundations. It is well noted that grant funds have been received by the district from the Michal and Susan Dell Foundation and the Gates Foundation. Page 40

Weaknesses

None are noted.

**Reader's Score:**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students**

- 1. (1) Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes for students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies.**

**General:**

Strengths

None are noted

Weaknesses

The applicant is not awarded points under competitive Preference priority 1 because it is not seeking eligibility under this priority.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Teacher Effectiveness**

- 1. We will consider projects that are designed to address promoting equitable access to effective teachers for students from low-income families and minority students across and within schools and districts.**

**To meet this priority, teacher effectiveness must be measured using an Evaluation and Support System. We are particularly interested in applications that address the following invitational priority:**

**Invitational Priority-Promoting Equitable Access Through State Plans To Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: Applications that include a description of how the applicant's project promotes equitable access to effective Educators for students from low-income families and for minority students across and within districts, consistent with approved State Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educator.**

**General:**

Strengths

The applicant adequately specifies that the Harmony HCMS is designed to equitably support, grow and reward educators across the system. This is noted to serve as a critical enabler of excellent teaching and excellent outcomes. Page 41

It is well detailed that the applicant is a high performing nonprofit Charter Management Organization with a network of 46 schools serving k-12. It is adequately identified that 36 of the schools are high needs and eligible to be served by the program with effectiveness and equity. The schools operate as open enrollment in public schools manner with a management system designed to equitably support, grow and reward educators across the system. Weakness The applicant fails to identify procedures or strategies to demonstrate that their operation is consistent with approved State Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators.

Weaknesses

None are noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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