

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/14/2017 09:46 AM

Technical Review

Applicant: Center for Supportive Schools (CSS) (U411C170020)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	19
Sub Total	20	19
Total	20	19

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - EIR - Early Phase - Evaluation - 7: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Center for Supportive Schools (CSS) (U411C170020)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components, mediators, and outcomes of the grant-supported intervention, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a convincing explanation of how the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that will meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations. For example, the applicant proposes a strong model that will randomize sixth grade students at the individual level (pg. 23) within an intent-to-treat framework so that the investigated contrast is the effect of the offer to participate in the treatment program as compared to the offer to participate in the control program (pg. 21). The applicant clearly specifies three objective, measureable primary research questions related to the proposed treatment: student attendance, number of suspensions, and number of course failures (pg. 21). The applicant proposes acceptable minimal detectable effect sizes of .25 as a benchmark, which meets What Works Clearinghouse's criterion of a substantially important benchmark (pg. 22).

The evaluation proposes a comprehensive plan to provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings. For example, the applicant will conduct an implementation evaluation that examines how the proposed treatment works in practice, the efficacy of the intervention, and features and conditions necessary for sustainability and replication (pg. 21). Importantly, the applicant will conduct exploratory research to determine who the project works for and under what circumstances it is most effective (pg. 22), which will be helpful for others considering testing the treatment in their own settings.

The application proposes methods of evaluation that will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes. For example, all items and scales used for outcome measurement have previously been used and validated in public research (pg. 23) or are student-level administrative data readily available from the participating schools (pg. 23). The evaluation design includes comprehensive fidelity of implementation measures including program dosage, observations of the implementation of the treatment, monitoring logs, faculty and student feedback forms and focus groups, and assessments of relationship quality of the peer leaders (pg. 19). The applicant includes a detailed list of data sources, data collection methods, timeline, and analytic approach aligned with each research question (Appendix G-3, G-4).

The evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components, mediators, and outcomes of the grant-supported intervention. For example, demonstrates that each project goal is measured by at least one objective and outcome, and at least one measure is proposed to evaluate each objective/outcome (pg. 11, Appendix G-4).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not propose specific measurable thresholds for acceptable implementation based on the proposed fidelity of implementation measures (pg. 19), stating that “annual thresholds will be set” (pg. 25). It is unclear why these thresholds were not estimated in the proposal, or what criteria will be used to set these thresholds.

Reader's Score: 19

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Technical Review

Applicant: Center for Supportive Schools (CSS) (U411C170020)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	20	20

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - EIR - Early Phase - Evaluation - 7: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Center for Supportive Schools (CSS) (U411C170020)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.
- (2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components, mediators, and outcomes of the grant-supported intervention, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a randomized control trial (pg. 22). The applicant clearly explains that baseline equivalency will be established, as well as how attrition will be addressed (pg. 24). The applicant provides a solid rationale of the proposed minimum detectable effect size (MDES) and significance level for the sample size (pg. 22). Based on this information, the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

Research questions are appropriate to determine implementation fidelity, progress toward achieving goals, and program improvement; data collection methods for implementation and study is appropriate, and a timeline is provided (pgs. 11, 19-20, and 25). Based on this information, the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

The proposal includes a logic model with clear mediators (pg. 12), project goals, objectives and measurable outcomes (pg. 11). Research questions on pages 21-22 are also aligned with objectives. The data and data sources for each research question is clearly explained and aligned (Appendix 3-G). Data collection instruments and variables for analysis are clearly explained; the timeline shows when and what data will be collected; and the data analysis plan for each outcome will adequately produce valid data (Appendix G-3).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found

Reader's Score: 20

Status: Submitted

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