

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/04/2017 03:56 PM

Technical Review

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	30	30
Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Management	50	50
Sub Total	80	80
Total	80	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #18 - EIR - Early Phase - Content - 18: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

- (1) The national significance of the proposed project.
- (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.
- (3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

Strengths:

Teach for America's RSLA seeks to have broad significance by including multiple states (ID, LA, NC, TX), along with alumni from 13 other regions; this wide scope allows for the organization to cast a wider net (page e25)

A goal of TFA's RSLA is not only to put 260 emerging leaders through its program, but also to retain these same individuals in their rural communities, gaining the long-term impact of teacher/leader retention (page e25).

RSLA seeks to develop a pool of participants whose diversity more closely mirrors its student body (pages e25 – e26); supported by benefits of increased academic and emotional components of student achievement.

Absolute Priority 5 is particularly strong, with numerous approaches throughout the project aimed at increasing the effectiveness of school leaders in unique and research-based approaches. With sessions based on both "theories of adult learning and focused on understanding of self, context, and the interactions between the two" (page e27), TFA's RSLA is well-equipped to prepare principals for leadership roles within the schools they serve.

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.
- (2) 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.
- (3) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.
- (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support

development or replication.

Strengths:

Project goals/metrics are clear/quantifiable and are outlined for the five years of implementation of the project (page e30).

Teach for America's proposal describes the explicit efforts that will be made in order to recruit participants at both a regional level, as well as by building upon recommendations from current and former RSLA participants (pages e30 – e31). Furthermore, the proposal outlines the application requirements and competencies assessed (pages e31 – e32).

Program design and implementation will be regularly evaluated by setting targets and collecting data, self-reported assessments, retention in rural areas, and more (page e40).

Key project personnel and responsibilities (page e38) are outlined, with all four members having extensive experience (one as many as 20 years) in the area of school leadership, leaving them well-equipped to work on the execution of this program.

The management plan is well-defined, with a clear owner for each component, and responsibilities, the timeline, and milestones all being explicitly spelled out (page e38), leaving no room for error in what is happening, by when, and under whose direction/leadership within TFA.

The RSLA will be disseminated to others via various methods including but not limited to posting on AIR's website, TFA's Quarterly publication, TFA's One Day magazine, and through a Supporting Effective Educator Development Mentoring Partnership through the Department of Education (page e41).

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 50

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/04/2017 03:56 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2017 09:40 PM

Technical Review

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	30	30
Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Management	50	50
Sub Total	80	80
Total	80	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #18 - EIR - Early Phase - Content - 18: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

- (1) The national significance of the proposed project.
- (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.
- (3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a response to the project's national significance by citing the fact that the availability of principal training programs are lacking in rural school divisions in comparison to urban districts (page e24) and the lack of principal training in rural schools contributes to high rates of principal turnover rates that are higher than the national average. The applicant details a well-developed Rural Schools Leadership Academy that will span across four states and over the five year period will put 260 emerging leaders on the pathway towards a rural principalship as a means to accomplishing the project's tasks (page e25). The applicant's innovative program is designed to combine teachers and leaders from rural contexts across the country and expose them to leadership professional development (page e26). This program will offer two different leadership streams, one for teachers with little or no leadership experience; and two, existing teacher leaders or midlevel leaders (page e26). The exceptional approaches to priorities #1 and #6 (pages e28 – e29) are clearly articulated and specifically demonstrate how the project will improve student achievement and it specifically demonstrates how the project will improve principal effectiveness.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.
- (2) 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.
- (3) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.
- (4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths:

The applicant's project design & management plan provides project goals, targets and outcomes that are directly aligned to accomplishing the overall project goals. (pages e29-e30). The applicant provides a clearly articulated plan for responses to feedback and continuous improvement of the project implementation as well as a well-developed plan to disseminate project information for further development and/or replication (pages e-34-35).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 50

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/06/2017 09:40 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2017 09:41 AM

Technical Review

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	30	30
Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Management	50	47
Sub Total	80	77
Total	80	77

Technical Review Form

Panel #18 - EIR - Early Phase - Content - 18: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

- (1) The national significance of the proposed project.
- (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.
- (3) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

Strengths:

This project targets a four state area: ID, LA, NC and TX. It states that a principal's quality accounts for 25% of a school's total impact on achievement. Marzano, Waters and McNully compute this to account for between 2-7 months of learning. The lack of principal training in rural areas is a national dilemma. Only 14% of rural areas have PD. This is a sound plan for assistance that could serve rural needs nationwide. with an immediate pipeline to 24 rural LEA's. The TFA pipeline of alumni are in 13 states and has a broad reach for impact.

This plan is to strengthen, expand and evaluate the Rural School Leadership Academy. This will expand on a former program by adding a retreat, scaling up and adding a capstone project to every year of programming. This grant points to how it builds on existing literature as it developed a very thorough PD design. The concept of two leadership streams also came from literature that suggests sound leaders are connected to leadership opportunities early. The idea to differentiate the training for new teachers and teachers with more experience is very detailed and wise.

The approach is exceptional because it creates 2 streams for different level of participant readiness. There is a rigorous identification process in place and there are plans to build a network of leaders from across the country who will learn and be able to continue their work together.

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.
- (2) 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.

(3) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

Strengths:

Goals, metrics and timelines are very clear. Per the chart, this proposal has large impact as it will affect learning for over 86,000 students. This plan will actually measure the increase of retention rate for teachers who complete this program. The training sessions and retreat content is fully developed and offer the full variety of coursework that is relevant to effective leadership in schools: team building, leadership skills, cultural responsiveness, managing people, data driven instruction, coaching teachers, many on-site rural school visits and much more. Table 1 on page e30 has developed target percentages for each of the project goals for each of the five years of the project.

Currently more than 760 TFA alumni teach in rural schools. They will comprise the primary recruitment base. This will expand to non-TFA teachers in the 17 targeted LEA's. The selection process is multifaceted.

In the management plan there are instruments in place to measure the impact on Instructional Leadership and Student Achievement. The TFA oversight staff are all charging part time amounts to manage this program. There are contractors hired to design and deliver the PD programming, which after development can be used again. The teachers are paid training stipends to travel to retreats for P.D. This travel is necessary as the teachers come from rural locations. The model of this training is one that other rural districts can use for future. It is impossible to bring quality training to every remote location, but rural sites can plan similar retreats.

PLC's are developed for monthly feedback via telephone calls. Self assessments and action plans are conducted through-out the program. Four annual retreats are designed to provide site visits to excellent rural schools. The newly designed Capstone Project will be developed by each participant for a presentation each April. Every session is reviewed and mid-course corrections are made. The feedback process allows for all stakeholders to get frequent and pertinent information.

Learnings will be shared by:

AIR publishing an evaluation report

Reports in TFA Quarterly and alumni magazine

Supporting Effective Educator Developing Mentoring Partner-Dept. of Ed.

This plan is quarterly, annual and national at the Department of ED. The time sequences are frequent and they do not wait the full course of a year to provide reporting.

Weaknesses:

TFA has so much to offer with this model. It may consider also reaching out to those who are not part of the TFA alumni system. The rural problem for lack of P.D. is so large that this could help beyond the confines of the TFA alumni states. The management plan doesn't include sustainability for this project after the five year timeframe.

All of the paid staff come from outside the school districts that they serve. The teachers who participate get stipends which help with their travel. The proposal didn't specify this, but it would be great if a district staff from each location could be part of the PLC community for sharing of information.

The dissemination of information could be expanded to include a program manual, sharing via national conferences, mainstream education journals and other publications. It seems like the sharing is developed for those inside the TFA network. A manual or playbook developed for those outside of TFA could be helpful to many other rural locations.

Reader's Score: 47

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/06/2017 09:41 AM