

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/10/2017 12:33 PM

Technical Review

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	15
Sub Total	20	15
Total	20	15

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR - Early Phase - Evaluation - 1: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

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 proposed external evaluator for the project has extensive expertise and experience (Appendix G) to be able to effectively conduct an evaluation for a project of this scope and magnitude. In addition, the dedicated resources in the proposed budget (p. e169) are sufficient to comprehensively complete the proposed evaluation tasks.

The proposed quasi-experimental comparative interrupted time series and difference-in-differences design with matched treatment and comparison groups designs (p. 21-24) could produce evidence of the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations. Assurances are given that baseline equivalency will be established within the samples.

The proposed evaluation includes benchmarks for measurable key thresholds for acceptable implementation (p. 9) of the four project goals of the grant-supported intervention and includes appropriate estimates of minimum detectable effect sizes (p. 26).

The proposed data measures (p.22-23 and additional information in appendices, e.g., p. e164-165) could provide valid and reliable performance data for each of the four research questions through comprehensive qualitative and quantitative data collection, e.g., Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education Survey.

Weaknesses:

The narrative clearly articulates a plan to recruit and rigorously screen participant prospective principals. It is unclear how selecting the best and brightest (so to speak) who already seek principalship, providing them with the intervention, and then comparing them to schools with non-participating teachers and principals is a legitimate way to assess the effectiveness of the proposed intervention.

The evaluation narrative lacks clear articulation of key components and mediators of the proposed study. An inclusion in the narrative identifying the key components and mediators would strengthen the application.

The proposed evaluation does not directly address how guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings will be established. In addition, the evaluation includes a "scaling phase" (p. 21), but it is unclear

from the application how specifically that will include an expansion to additional schools.

The evaluation plan includes details on how research questions 2 and 4 will be assessed, but no details are provided for research questions 1 and 3.

Reader's Score: 15

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Technical Review

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
Sub Total	20	17
Total	20	17

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR - Early Phase - Evaluation - 1: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Teach For America (U411C170167)

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 presents a satisfactory evaluation plan which is supported by a rigorous quasi-experimental, comparative interrupted time series research design. Propensity score matching will be used at the school-level to create the comparison groups (pg. 25). Sample sizes for the intervention and comparison groups are reasonable, and effect sizes are within acceptable ranges (pgs. 21, 26). As a means to provide technical assistance to others interested in replication, the applicant intends to share what was learned from the evaluation (pg. 20); this assistance will be in the form of a mentorship. The evaluation methods are clearly related to addressing the project goals and research questions, and should produce informative data on outcomes (pgs. 22-23). For example, principal workforce reports, VAL-ED survey results, and district retention data will be used to assess project impact on educator retention. Reasonable thresholds have been set for each year of the project to evaluate progress toward meeting goals (pg. 9).

Weaknesses:

To have the potential to fully meet What Works Clearinghouse Standards with reservations, baseline equivalence should be established at the student-level. However, in this research design, equivalence was only discussed at the school-level. The applicant also fails to address the key components and mediators of the intervention.

Reader's Score: 17

Status: Submitted

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