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

Applicant: Georgia State University Research Foundation, Inc. (U423A170027)
Reader #1: **********

Questions

Selection Criteria

Quality of Project Design
1. Project Design 40 40

Significance
1. Significance 15 15

Quality of the Management Plan
1. Management Plan 25 23

Quality of the Project Evaluation
1. Project Evaluation 20 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority

Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce
1. CPP 1 5 5

Support for Personalized Learning Environments
1. CPP 2 3 3

Total 108 106
Questions

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 proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities
established for the competition.

   (2) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed
project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients
of those services.

   (3) 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.

   (4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest
needs.

   (5) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the
needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

The proposal states that this work builds on work that is already underway, but extends it in several meaningful ways. The
project aims to recruit a diverse group of teacher candidates, support currently practicing teachers and create a third
space for school reform (p. 2). The principles that guide the program are research-based, which suggests that they are of
high quality. These include the selection of highly qualified individuals, and intensive pre-service training and mentoring (p.
2). In addition, the proposal provides research to support the duration and intensity of the program they will be providing
for teacher candidates. (p. 3-10). The proposal lists the partners for the project, including Atlanta Public Schools and
Emory University, which combines different sets of expertise to support the overall goals of the project. (p. 13-16). In
partnering with Atlanta Public Schools, the project will work with schools with a high percentage of students living in
poverty as well as schools that are underperforming on state tests, insuring that the teacher candidates will be preparing
to work with high needs students. (p. 16-17). The learning experiences of the teacher candidates and the recruitment of
teacher candidates are geared toward working with and supporting the learning of these high needs schools (p. 3-10).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader’s Score: 40

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 importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project,
especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.

   (2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the
anticipated results and benefits.

(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant.

(4) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:
The proposal states that the evaluation will be focused on teacher retention as well as student performance and teacher instructional practices (p. 20). Based on the number of teachers served and the subsequent number of students served (p. 18; p. 22-23), the costs are reasonable for the project. The proposal describes a multi-faceted strategy of overlaying the work of this project with the teacher training that the organization already carries out to ultimately sustain this work beyond the term of the grant. (p. 23-24). The proposal describes dissemination efforts, in collaboration with the evaluation team, that reach both internal and external audiences as well as policy, research and practitioner audiences. (p. 25-26).

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.

Reader’s Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for 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 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 adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:
The proposal describes the goals, objectives and outcomes for the project. (p. 26-27). The measurable outcomes are aligned to the objectives and goals. The management plan in the proposal includes milestones to indicate when an activity will be completed, the person responsible for carrying out the activity and the timeline to show the sequence in which activities will be carried out. (p. 29-30). Also, the proposal lists several mechanisms for providing formative feedback and continuous improvement. These include the administrative team meeting weekly and debriefing the project work, the advisory group that will meet monthly to plan and analyze data, the IOC groups that meet monthly and engage in collaborative inquiry, and an annual retreat for all members of the project evaluate performance and make adjustments. (p. 30-31).

Weaknesses:
In setting the goals for the project, the applicant's management plan does not make clear the amount of increase they anticipate having on teaching and learning.

Reader’s Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation
1. The Secretary considers the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on Relevant Outcomes.

(3) 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.


Strengths:

The proposal states that the project will work with an experienced evaluator with whom the lead organization has worked with before. (p. 31-32). The evaluation will carry out formative and summative assessment of the project as well as monitor the implementation of the services to be provided (p. 32-35). The feedback will ensure that the project is reaching toward the intended outcome. The proposal lists a variety of instruments that will be used to address the research and evaluation questions. The instruments are aligned with the project’s goals and have been used previously to demonstrate validity (p. 35-37). In necessary cases, like edTPA, levels of interrater reliability are provided from previous work to make the case that the analyses can be reliable. (p. 37). The evaluation plan notes that the evaluation will employ a non-equivalent comparison group design with matched samples to meet the standards of WWC with reservations. (p. 38-40).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader’s Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to address both of the following priority areas:

   (a) Providing educator development activities designed to improve cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture; and

   (b) Improving the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds.

Applicants must respond to both of the priority areas in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The proposal states that the program will leverage the highly diverse pool of teacher candidates who already attend Georgia State (p. 4). In addition, the applicant notes that the program courses will focus on culturally responsive pedagogy and issues of race and class in schools. (p. 4). This suggests that the program aims to improve the cultural competence of the teacher candidates.
Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority - Support for Personalized Learning Environments

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to support teachers, principals, or other School Leaders implementing personalized learning environments in their classrooms or in classrooms in their schools, using data to inform their instruction, and increasing students' engagement, voice, and choice in their learning. Projects may support educators' implementation of college and career ready strategies such as project based learning, competency based education, or blended learning.

Strengths:
The proposal states that in year one, the teacher candidates will be taught instructional strategies such as project-based learning (p. 4). In addition, the summer training that the teacher candidates will experience will involve teaching them the design of responsive and personalized classroom spaces. (p. 5). These instructional strategies and designs will be reinforced through mentoring in year 2 (p. 7).

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/07/2017 01:35 PM
**Technical Review**

**Applicant:** Georgia State University Research Foundation, Inc. (U423A170027)

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

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**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority**

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**Total** 108 106
Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Supporting Effective Educator Development - 7: 84.423A

Reader #2: **********
Applicant: Georgia State University Research Foundation, Inc. (U423A170027)

Questions

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 proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

   (2) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

   (3) 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.

   (4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs.

   (5) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

The project provides an exceptional approach by merging programming of both new and experience teachers (p.1), and enhancing the Teach for America model (p. 3). Table 1 provides an overview of the three-year residency program that shows the intensity and duration of the services provided to the participants (p.11) and provides evidence that the program would lead to improvements in practice. That strong collaboration exists is most evident in an induction organization collaborative which includes all partners to make adjustments and determine futures possibilities (p. 10). Evidence is provided to show that the design is appropriate to the needs of the target population (e.g., career and college readiness scores, below average school scores, and percentile ranks (p. 16-17). Recruitment, professional development, collaboration, and potential impact figures show that the project will successfully address the needs of the population (p. 18).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 40

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 importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and Student Achievement.

   (2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.
(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of
the agency or organization at the end of the grant.

(4) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable
others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:
Not only will the project have an impact on teachers, educators, school leaders, candidates, it will focus on project
learning, service learning and personalized supports for learning which shows the magnitude of the project and that
improvements in teaching and student achievement are likely (pp. 18-19) attainable. The provision in the project for new
teacher and experienced teacher professional development, and the number of people served makes the costs
reasonable (pp. 21-22). Gradually reducing roles and including partners in the project activities provides for the ease and
ability of incorporating the activities and purposes into the ongoing program of the agency (pp. 23 - 24). The research
team will submit proposals to share results of their work as related to new and experienced teachers' overall experiences
with the project and impacts on developing cultural competencies to the International Conference on Urban Education
(ICUE), AERA, and to state-level conferences. The university team will continue to publish research articles in journals
targeted to teacher practitioners, teacher educators, and educational policy makers (p. 25).

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality
of the management plan for 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 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 adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the
       proposed project.

Strengths:
The project applicant provides a comprehensive and successful management plan that includes goals, objectives, and
outcomes (pp. 26-27). Milestones, the responsible parties for the milestones, and timelines are provided (p. 29). To
insure the use of feedback and continuous improvement of the project, there are four mechanisms in place: two
administrative teams, IOC, and the annual implementation retreat. The administrative teams and IOC will meet to discuss
the strengths and needs which will be discussed in the implementation retreat (pp. 30-31).

Weaknesses:
Although the objectives imply measurement, the criterion for measurement is not explicitly stated.

Reader's Score: 23
Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

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

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on Relevant Outcomes.

(3) 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.


Strengths:

The project collects formative data for providing timely feedback using a "Plan-Study-Act-Do" rapid feedback approach regarding planned outcomes (p. 32). The evaluation employs several sources of data collected from instruments which are reliable and validated (p. 36 - 37). The non-equivalent compare group design is evidence for the project meeting the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservation (pp. 38-44).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to address both of the following priority areas:

(a) Providing educator development activities designed to improve cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture; and

(b) Improving the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds.

Applicants must respond to both of the priority areas in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

Throughout the project, there is emphasis on cultural competency. A sample of the issues addressed are race, and power in schools (p. 4), and politics, equity/race (p.5). Participants are recruited from the M-DCPS for which the demographics show diversity (p. 14, 17).
Weaknesses:
None were noted.

Reader’s Score:  5

Competitive Preference Priority - Support for Personalized Learning Environments

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to support teachers, principals, or other School Leaders implementing personalized learning environments in their classrooms or in classrooms in their schools, using data to inform their instruction, and increasing students’ engagement, voice, and choice in their learning. Projects may support educators’ implementation of college and career ready strategies such as project based learning, competency based education, or blended learning.

Strengths:
The project includes instruction in personalized learning environment throughout the program. Some examples are as follow: Residents are engaged in readings dealing with personalized learning environments (p. 4); Residents are taught to design responsive and personalized classrooms, and are required to plan and implement two personalized learning approaches with their mentor (p.6).

Weaknesses:
None were noted.

Reader’s Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/07/2017 12:58 PM
Technical Review

Applicant: Georgia State University Research Foundation, Inc. (U423A170027)

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| Priority Questions                              |                 |               |
| Competitive Preference Priority                 |                 |               |
| Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce  | 5               | 5             |
| Support for Personalized Learning Environments | 3               | 3             |

Total: 108 105
Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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   (3) 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.

   (4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs.

   (5) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

This project is an enhancement of an Investing in Innovation (i3) development grant. SEED provides the next-stage of opportunity for evaluating and validating the CREATE program which had positive results (p12).

The project is exceptional because it merges an innovative 3-year, new teacher residency model with extensive within-school and cross-school opportunities for teacher and school leader collaboration, reflection, and professional learning (p1).

The professional learning community formed includes cohorts and mentors collaborating during summer programing and University coursework (p6.7).

The project will serve K-8 students of greatest need on 12-16 campuses in the Atlanta Public Schools (APS), a district that serves 84% students of color and 75% students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (p17).

Weaknesses:

Most of the APS schools in the project averaged below the 50th percentile in ELA, with similar examples for math. The actual scores are a more important measure, since half of the schools will always be below the 50th percentile. (p17).

Reader's Score: 39
anticipated results and benefits.

(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of the grant.

(4) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

One result the project seeks is to recruit and retain 54 new teachers in high-needs schools and provide PD to 610 experienced educators, including 45 school leaders, in these same schools (p19).

Teacher retention is the key factor in student achievement, so the project also seeks to keep effective teachers teaching in high-needs schools with a potential to impact 500 CEHD teacher candidates, 80-90 new APS teachers, and hundreds of experienced APS teachers each year, ultimately resulting in positive impacts for thousands of students (p19).

A Noguera study suggests that “deep learning” is essential for closing the achievement gap and serving all students equitably. Project-based learning, service learning, and personalized supports for learning are examples of this (p20).

The costs are reasonable, especially since financial support for some parts of the project are already in place, in transition from the i3 program (Budget).

The proposal also makes the case that the hire-and-replace cycle, with a cost of $17000 per teacher, in high-needs schools can be broken by following several steps to generate the greatest return on investment (p23).

To disseminate the results, the external evaluator, who has previously done research on the project, will publish at least one WWC-standards research article to AERJ and present its research at the AERA conference. (p26).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader’s Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for 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 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 adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The original project has been operating successful for five years and Leaders at all 12 schools reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with CREATE programming, and intend to continue with the project (p28).

The results of the project fall into 3 categories: numbers of teachers and students impacted; how the outcomes would affect high needs students' well-being; and the effectiveness of CREATE which would allow others to replicate its work (p19).

The Goals of the project are to prepare and support new teachers; support effectiveness and social capital of experienced teachers; and to develop a “third space” aimed at organizational reform. Each of these goals list objectives and measureable outcomes (p27 Table 2).

Because this is an ongoing project, project staff has used previous results to make changes with a full time instructor/mentor instead of teacher mentors (p28).

The timeline includes responsibilities and milestones that will includes project activities for 2017-18 and beyond to
enhance the i3-funded CREATE model (p29, Table 3).

**Weaknesses:**
For dissemination, Empirical, the external evaluator, will present at national conferences, but it is also important to include the project team or residents (p26).
Measurable objectives are defined as being measured by collected data after the evaluation, such as student scores or surveys, rather than set quantitative goals (p.27).

**Strengths:**
Four CREATE teams (administrative, advisory, IOC, and combined), will work to consider feedback on programming and analyze preliminary data to ensure continuous improvement. In these teams, administrators, GSU faculty, teachers, and others will meet, weekly, monthly, or annually to evaluate and adjust performance. (p31).
The confirmatory and exploratory research questions are addressed by study of comparison groups of students, and teachers (p 37).
The comparison group design was used to meet WWC evidence standards with reservations in the impact study of i3, and will be used for future study of program impact for this grant (p40).
Evaluation reports are done quarterly by an external evaluator and will be reviewed by the Implementation team (p31, Table 3).

**Weaknesses:**
No noted weaknesses.
Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity in the Educator Workforce

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to address both of the following priority areas:

   (a) Providing educator development activities designed to improve cultural competency and responsiveness skills that contribute to an inclusive school culture; and

   (b) Improving the recruitment, support, and retention of educators from diverse backgrounds.

Applicants must respond to both of the priority areas in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The selection of residents from the GSU CEHD’s highly diverse teacher candidate pool, which are schools that are approximately 68% non-White, is an exceptional approach to diversifying the teacher workforce in high-needs areas (p5). The project uses development opportunities aimed at increasing their effectiveness, connectedness/social capital, and retention in high-needs schools. (p7). This supports the development of school-wide and cross-school communities in which teachers and principals engage in activities designed to increase collaborative and reflective practices and contribute to the development of inclusive and welcoming whole-school cultures (p9).

Weaknesses:

No noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority - Support for Personalized Learning Environments

1. Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to support teachers, principals, or other School Leaders implementing personalized learning environments in their classrooms or in classrooms in their schools, using data to inform their instruction, and increasing students’ engagement, voice, and choice in their learning. Projects may support educators’ implementation of college and career ready strategies such as project based learning, competency based education, or blended learning.

Strengths:

A report from the Center for Public Education says “the effect of teaching on student learning is greater than student ethnicity or family income, schools attended by student, or class size”. (p20). GSU faculty used this basis to promote personalized, “deeper learning” curricula (Noguera, et al, 2015) and classrooms and schools that feature project based learning, service learning, and personalized supports for learning (p20).

Weaknesses:

No noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 3