

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2023 04:31 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Auburn University (S422B230054)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	30
Sub Total	100	100
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Student Access to Resources and Opportunities		
1. Promoting Equity	7	3
Sub Total	7	3
Total	112	108

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - AHC-NA - 4: 84.422B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Auburn University (S422B230054)

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:

- (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

Strengths:

The applicant's project is grounded in and based on the premise of authentic pedagogy, specifically Disciplined Civic Inquiry (DCI) and Lesson Study development. DCI is supported by research and is an innovative approach to teaching and enhancing students critical thinking skills and due to this, has the potential to greatly impact students in under-resourced areas and ultimately may enhance student academic outcomes (pages e13 – e16).

The goals of the proposed project are clearly specified (pages e40 - e41) and the goals and objectives are tied to the evaluation of the project and will drive its implementation (pages e41 – e43). This level of cohesiveness is indicative of a well – designed and well- thought out plan of action which underscores the rationale for the project and will lend itself to and has great potential of meeting the needs of the target population (both teachers and students in under-resourced areas).

This proposed virtual professional development project targets the challenges teachers within under-resourced schools encounter (e.g., need for student engagement and support for authentic investigation, page e14) and aligns succinctly to the goals of the project, supports inclusion of project activities and demonstrates how outcome achievement is envisioned.

Another strong component of the design is collaboration. The collaborative efforts of partners and key personnel who have extensive expertise in professional development and constitutional law will enable the PD to effectively meet the needs of the teachers and equip them with tools to efficiently implement the evidenced-based DCI strategy with their students (page e15; e24; e29).

The applicant proposes intensive (sustained, rather than one-time) teacher training and development and represents an exceptional approach in that engendering a sense of empathy within their students so that they are respectful of views other than their own will enhance civic discourse (page e28).

In addition, focusing on application of abstract concepts to specific situations will indeed meet goals and objectives (page e15) and achieve intended outcomes as described in the project's logic model (i.e., increase in teacher proficiency in planning, implementing, and reflecting upon the pedagogical principles of DCI; higher student performance on high-stakes, standardized tests; increase in students' civic reasoning knowledge and abilities, pages e28 & e58).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i. The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)
 - ii. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)
 - iii. The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)

Strengths:

The applicant includes NAEP data and other support to substantiate need (pages e25 –e28). The identification of needs specific to the target population, underscores and supports the rationale for the provision of proposed project activities. For instance, as pointed out, too few low-income students get to experience quality DCI instruction. The applicant aims to mediate this by training teachers to effectively incorporate these strategies in their classes (page e28).

Providing detail to show the sheer necessity of the proposed intervention, indicates that the applicant has given ample consideration to what is needed to improve the current situation. Moreover, due to the evidence based, teacher focused nature of the planned PD that addresses pressing needs, there is indeed a great likelihood of success (page e29 – e32).

The summer PD workshops will be facilitated by persons with extensive expertise in the content area. PD that is discipline specific rather than general in nature has been shown to be effective – particularly with teachers of students in under-resourced schools and will likely increase the ability of teachers to enhance students' knowledge and critical thinking skills (page e30).

The offering of virtual PD will effectively address the access barrier for teachers in under-resourced districts in that costs to the district will be greatly reduced with the elimination of travel expenses associated with PD attendance (page e27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:
 - i. 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. (13 points)
 - ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)

Strengths:

The applicant's management plan includes the collaborative efforts of various project partners. The applicant's timeline (pages e33-e34) provides a clear and comprehensive view of project tasks and delineates when milestones will be achieved and persons responsible for various tasks. Project staff have been recruited for their areas of expertise relevant to the planned professional development activities which will ensure that the proposed intervention is responsive to expressed and identified needs. The inclusion of a constitutional scholar and social studies teacher educator with extensive experience in promoting DCI through Lesson Study and mentoring is a method that ensures the proposed PD is relevant and discipline specific.

The applicant boasts a very qualified management team with key personnel, specifically the co-directors, Drs. Brown and Kohlmeier have worked together on successful projects that are similar to the proposed and further demonstrates the likelihood that the teachers will be taught content specific materials with methods modeled by experts in the field (pages e34-e42).

Having personnel who are extensively experienced in Constitutional law, ensures that the model lessons of content themes of civil rights and liberties, Landmark Supreme Court cases, etc., will be facilitated with fidelity and adequate support to meet teachers' professional development needs (pages e29 – e48)

The collection and use of formative evaluation for each activity and shared with personnel and stakeholders throughout the life of the project and will provide critical assessment information to ensure that proposed activities are implemented as planned. The feedback provided can be used to make programmatic changes to ensure improvement (page e42).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. (6 points)
 - ii. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)
 - iii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)
 - iv. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)

Strengths:

The applicant is recognized as an institution of high academic quality and currently manages several federally funded projects. This indicates the presence of more than adequate resources to effectively manage a project of this magnitude (pages e32 – e34).

Providing access to technology resources such as the LMS, Canvas, Panopto for video recording asynchronous

presentations, Zoom for videoconferencing, and Box for easy data storage of lesson materials and video will ensure that target are teachers have access to materials in a virtual form at no cost (page e49). This is important in districts that have limited professional development funds because provision of these in-kind resources clearly demonstrates that the lead applicant organization pledges to provide strong support for the project and will ensure that the project is carried out in the manner intended.

Applicant faculty and staff are committed to supporting the teacher participants as they and will model the scaffolded DCI pedagogy and Lesson Study strategies. This strong level of commitment to project will ensure that goals are met and successful project components are sustained (page e52).

The use grant funding for additional technology resources (e.g., to build a robust website and purchase Swivl camera technology (swivl.com) and iPads to fully provide virtual DCI Lesson Study to teachers in remote locations) is a reasonable expense and will help achieve intended outcomes (page e49).

Moreover, along with support from donors, rebuilding the Persistent Issues in History Network website will provide a clearinghouse and repository of exemplar DCI unit models that can be used for the summer lesson development – as well as the development of teacher leaders who can continue the work in districts, are examples of strategies to continue successful activities well beyond the period of federal assistance (page e33; e49 – e50).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 30

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Strengths:

The applicant successfully meets the requirements of this priority via the evidenced based strategies of the proposed project (page e22). As the applicant asserts that the current lack of civic reasoning in secondary social studies courses has precipitated Lower Order Thinking and lack of preparation for civic life in a liberal democracy, building capacity in teachers to effectively provide quality instruction using Disciplined Civic Inquiry (DCI), will meet this pressing need (e58).

In addition, proposed activities are designed to provide teachers with the opportunity to apply skills and implement model lessons, specifically about the Constitution, using DCI to impact students' civic reasoning (page e14).

The summer PD (Constitutional Law Lesson study PD) effectively provides teachers with tools and knowledge to provide strategic instruction about the constitution (page e30-e31).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)**

Under this priority, and applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students—

a) in one or more of the following educational settings: (1) Early learning programs (2) Elementary school (3) Middle school (4) High school (5) Career and technical education programs (6) Out-of-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) Rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

Strengths:

a., b. The applicant partially addresses this priority in that the expressed purpose of the proposed project is grounded in providing services for under-resourced schools. The applicant indicates that it has analyzed needs and selected districts for inclusion that have greatest deficiency with regard to financial and other resources. These under-resourced districts will be targeted in the proposed project. (page e15 and e16).

In addition, the project will provide discipline-specific, classroom context PD to forty teachers in under-resourced districts around the nation to support this premise (page 58).

Weaknesses:

c., d. The applicant does not include details that would indicate that it intends to focus on the engagement of underserved community members.

Moreover, the applicant does not include clear details that it will provide resources or PD aimed at enabling teachers to be culturally responsive or to create inclusive classroom environments.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2023 04:31 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2023 04:47 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Auburn University (S422B230054)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	28
Sub Total	100	93
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Student Access to Resources and Opportunities		
1. Promoting Equity	7	5
Sub Total	7	5
Total	112	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - AHC-NA - 4: 84.422B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Auburn University (S422B230054)

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:
 - (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)
 - (ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

Strengths:

Developing CLEAR Thinking uses an umbrella of civic reasoning while combining disciplinary thinking in areas such as legal/constitutional, historical, geographic, and economic reasoning to prepare citizens to tackle issues of fairness and justice. (e14).

CLEAR seeks to develop instructional leaders who will be positioned to mentor other teachers in DCI and the Lesson Study professional development within their respective districts. (e 16).

The applicant will recruit teachers in under resourced districts geographically far from the entity providing more equitable access to evidence-based, longitudinal professional development in districts that rarely participate in these professional opportunities. (e22).

The project is innovative because it will use distance technology to conduct Lesson Study. (e21).

The project seeks to recruit early career teachers in under resourced districts or who are teaching large numbers of under-served students. (e23).

The applicant will develop a robust website to maintain and grow a professional community of practice to keep participating teachers engaged over the life of their career. (e24).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i. The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)
 - ii. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or

opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)

iii. The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)

Strengths:

C.L.E.A.R. seeks to address and impact the outcomes of marginalized groups in the study of US History and Civics. (e25).

C.L.E.A.R. will develop a collaborative network of teachers seeking support to create learning experiences that engage their students in civic reasoning to enable their full participation in our democracy. (e27).

The applicant seeks to address the lack of access to deep learning and Higher Order Thinking Skills encountered by under-served students by training teachers to implement DCI instruction and Lesson study. (e28).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not fully focus on, establish an extent, or anchor a community of students or teachers it would serve to address their greatest identified needs. (e10). Thus, the proposal appears to have missed opportunities to provide a clear proposal with identified weaknesses or gaps addressing those with the greatest needs.

Reader's Score: 20

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:

i. 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. (13 points)

ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)

Strengths:

CLEAR provides a semester-by-semester breakdown of the work to be done in the project and the personnel responsible for each task. (e33-e34).

The names, roles, and short bio of key staff members who will participate in the proposed project were provided. (e34-e40).

The applicant will collect both formative and summative evaluation data every semester for the duration of the project to continuously improve the professional development experience for the teachers. (e41).

Forty Grade 7-12 teachers will participate each year and will receive 80 hours of virtual professional development each year. (e30).

A Lesson Study Cycle Task and time allotment was provided. (e32).

Throughout the school year live mentoring and online collaboration and support will be provided via Zoom and Canvas. (e33).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. (6 points)
 - ii. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)
 - iii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)
 - iv. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)

Strengths:

The entity will provide full access to Canvas, Panopto, Zoom, and Box. (e49).

The CLEAR project team has experience with using Swivl technology on past and current projects. (e41).

CLEAR has secured funding from donors to continue to support the website beyond the life of the grant project. (e52).

Weaknesses:

The project did include letters of support from local school districts. However, the letters of support did not fully address or specify the level of support they would provide as participating partners. Although the applicant stated they have secured funding from donors to support the website beyond the life of the grant project. It should be noted, they will have to create a new and improved website to house model DCI units and virtual lesson study guidance. (e52).

Reader's Score: 28

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement****1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)**

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or

both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Strengths:

DCI is an innovative approach to civic instruction because it introduces topics that are personally relevant to students (e22).

Students are asked to communicate a personal position on the central question to an appropriate public outlet. (e23).

All lessons developed will be modeled on a framework utilizing authentic pedagogy and DCI. (e23).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)

Under this priority, and applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students—

a) in one or more of the following educational settings: (1) Early learning programs (2) Elementary school (3) Middle school (4) High school (5) Career and technical education programs (6) Out-of-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) Rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

Strengths:

The collaboratively developed DCI units will require students to analyze multiple perspectives and bias in primary source documents. (e25).

By providing virtual professional development the CLEAR project will provide a low-cost model to districts. (e27).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address or indicate how it would improve the engagement of under-served students in making decisions that influence policy and practice at their school or provide opportunities for student leadership. (e28).

Reader's Score: **5**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/04/2023 04:47 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/07/2023 02:06 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Auburn University (S422B230054)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	24
Sub Total	100	94
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Student Access to Resources and Opportunities		
1. Promoting Equity	7	5
Sub Total	7	5
Total	112	104

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - AHC-NA - 4: 84.422B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Auburn University (S422B230054)

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:

- (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

Strengths:

- i. The project's rationales clearly noted Developing C.L.E.A.R. Thinking: Civic, Legal, Ethical, and Analogous Reasoning (CLEAR) because it uses the umbrella of civic reasoning (or the question of "What should we do?" as Stitzlein et al. put it (2021) while combining disciplinary thinking in such areas as legal/constitutional, historical, geographic, and economic with ethical and analogous reasoning to prepare citizens to tackle complex self-governance problems of fairness and justice. There are two challenges to DCI teaching that must be met for deep learning to occur: (1) the lesson must be designed to engage and support students in an authentic investigation and (2) the implementation must maintain intellectual demand (Kohlmeier, 2023; Kohlmeier & Saye, 2019; Kohlmeier et al., 2020). This project represents an exceptional approach to quality professional development because it will address both challenges with teachers through a collaborative, sustained, content focused, and evidence-based model using Lesson Study and responsive teaching video reflection. (e13-e14, e58, Logic Model Attached)
- ii. The applicant stated that The Center for Public Education has argued that most professional development is ineffective because it neither changes teacher practice nor improves student learning (Gulamhussein, 2013). Reasons for these disappointing results have been attributed to teacher beliefs and dispositions, the cognitive load associated with rigorous research-based instruction, inadequate content and pedagogical knowledge, the pressures of high stakes testing and risk aversion (Duplass & Cruz, 2010; Grant, 2004; Kohlmeier et al., 2020; Le Fevre, 2014; Meuwissen, 2017; Onosko, 1991; Windschitl, 2002). Teacher change is difficult because people tend to incorporate new learning in ways that reinforce what they already know and believe (Hart et al., 2009; National Academy of Sciences, 2004 & 2018) and there is a psychological cost in giving up one's previously held ideas, even if they are shown to be faulty (Timperley & Robinson, 2002). However, Desimone et al. (2002) found in a review of professional development that successful professional development is longitudinal, subject-specific, learning- focused, and provides participants opportunities to try out teaching practices in an intellectually nourishing environment. (e15)

Weaknesses:

- i. None noted.
- ii. None noted.

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i. The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)
 - ii. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)
 - iii. The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)

Strengths:

i. The recently released NAEP scores in U.S. History and Civics (Belsha, 2023) revealed a five-point drop in U.S. History and a two-point drop in Civics. Scores dropped in Civics for the first time since the test was first given in 1998. Students of color scored an average of 20-25 points below White students, indicating a particular issue in engaging marginalized groups in the study of U.S. History and Civics. More concerning than the recent drop in scores, is the fact that only 20% of 8th grade students scored in the proficient range of the exam. Many factors contributed to this result, but the data indicates the urgent need to support teachers' efforts to create and implement more authentic and engaging lessons in social studies that prepare students for civic life. Walter Parker (2023) argued that democracy is in a crisis of two components: legitimacy and epistemic. Many voters believe the political system is unfair or illegitimate (Rigged, racist, etc.) and Americans have lost a standard of truth. Parker and the National Academy of Education (Lee et al., 2021) argue that civic reasoning is required to address both concerns of the democracy. Civic reasoning involves students examining and analyzing factual claims, disciplinary concepts, and democratic value conflicts (e.g., individual liberty versus the general welfare). The Social Studies classroom is the ideal environment to foster civic reasoning as Parker (2023) argues, because the components of healthy deliberation are present: diverse public (students), a skilled facilitator (teacher), and rich content (curriculum). (e25-e26)

ii. The National Academy of Sciences (2004, 2018) consistently argues that professional development for teachers needs to be discipline-specific, long-term, context specific, and encourage reflection. The K-12 Social Studies Specialist for the state of Alabama, Dr. Blake Busbin, reported that Alabama provides no financial support to him to conduct professional development in social studies. If he offers any professional development for teachers, the districts must cover the costs for teachers missing classes, transportation, or any stipends. In his research, he found there were no cases of social studies specific professional development offered by the Alabama Department of Education from 2020-2022. School districts in Alabama are some of the lowest resourced in the nation. Alabama ranks 40th out of 50 states in per-pupil expenditures. Further exacerbating this issue, is the wide resource disparity between districts. Local school districts are allowed to supplement state funding apportionment through local taxes leaving the most vulnerable students and districts with far fewer resources than wealthier districts. (e26-e27)

iii. The applicant clearly stated that far too few students experience DCI in their learning environments that would encourage the deep learning and Higher Order Thinking skills required of citizens in a liberal democracy (Saye & SSIRC, 2013; Saye et al., 2018; Kahne, Rodriguez, Smith, & Thiede, 2000). This leaves them inadequately prepared to actively participate in civic life. (e27)

The lack of access to deep learning is particularly the case with low-income and underserved students (Kohlmeier, et al., 2011; Rossi & Pace, 1998). An additional barrier to DCI instruction is that teachers often believe that only advanced level students are capable of complex reasoning and critical analysis, therefore students perceived as underserved typically receive rote, low-level instruction (Maddox & Saye, 2017; Onosko, 1991; Saye & SSIRC, 2013; Saye et al., 2018). Fortunately, a national study of DCI classrooms compared to traditional classrooms Lesson Study has been suggested as a promising professional development model to promote DCI instruction (Conklin et al., 2021). (e27)

By conducting Lesson Study virtually, the project will recruit forty teachers from low-resourced districts or who are teaching large numbers of underserved students to develop their capacity to sustain DCI instruction. By using a virtual professional development model and a robust website, they will develop a network of teachers committed to DCI and prepare them to become teacher leaders in their districts to sustain the work of the project beyond the life of the grant. Each teacher will reach over 125 students per year, reaching 5000 students per year for potentially 25,000 underserved students over the course of a 5-year grant. (e28)

Weaknesses:

- i. None noted.
- ii. None noted.
- iii. None noted.

Reader's Score: **25**

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:

- i. 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. (13 points)**
- ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)**

Strengths:

- i. The applicant provides a comprehensive description of key staff roles and responsibilities qualifications, experience, training and detailed timeline to ensure tasks are within budget and timely. For example, the Co-Project Director is a Humana-Germany-Sherman Endowed Distinguished Professor of social science education at AU. A leading scholar on Lesson Study in social studies. Co-directed an annual Lesson Study project at Auburn Junior High for eighteen years; co-directed a Teaching American History Grant from 2010-2013 working with 30 teachers (Kohlmeier et al., 2020), and recently piloted a two-year LS project with two US Government teachers adding the component of video-case reflection to increase responsive teaching (Kohlmeier, 2003). Project staff have been recruited for their areas of expertise relevant to the planned professional development activities. They include a constitutional scholar and social studies teacher educator with extensive experience in promoting DCI through Lesson Study and mentoring. The largest university in Alabama, Auburn (AU) is recognized as an institution of high academic quality. The Co-Project Directors have worked together on a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute in 2021 Citizens Fighting for Civil Rights. (e34-e39, Roles and responsibilities, e29-e34, Timeline)
- ii. The applicant will collect formative and summative evaluation data every semester for the duration of the project to continuously improve the professional development experience for the teachers and DCI lessons produced to maximize student learning. Table 3 gives a summary of the entire project, and the narrative provides a description of the formative and summative data collected at each phase of the project. Formative evaluation data will be gathered for each activity throughout the project to ensure that the activities are implemented as planned and to obtain feedback that will be used for improvement. These data include attendance rosters, number of hours of professional development, teacher workshop

satisfaction surveys, and products from project activities. Summative evaluation data will be gathered annually. These data will the teachers' ability to apply their pedagogical content knowledge to DCI teaching. (e40-e43)

Weaknesses:

i. None noted.

ii. None noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- i. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. (6 points)
- ii. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)
- iii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)
- iv. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)

Strengths:

i. The final technology tool will allow virtual Lesson Study and enhanced teacher reflection. Swivl (swivl.com) is a technology designed to allow a teacher to film their own lesson using a telescoping lens attached to a compatible device (iPad) and microphones. The teacher can view the video, isolate any microphone they wish for clear audio, and annotate the video with comments, impressions, and questions. We will use the Swivl C-series robot which allows a teacher to wear a sensor, so the video camera follows their movement and a wireless microphone. It also provides up to four microphones to capture student voices in small group or whole-class discussions. The teacher can listen to the entire class or isolate the small group audio for reflection. The video is uploaded to the Swivl web site in a secure, cloud storage. The teacher can share the link to the video/audio with others in their Lesson Study team so they and their teammates can use Swivl tools to annotate the video with comments, impressions, questions, and reflections about the strengths and areas for improvement in the lesson. We will also use the video to conduct the responsive teaching interview protocol (Appendix H4) to gauge what teachers are noticing and responding to when teaching their lessons. (e51-e52)

ii. The cost is reasonable for the proposed project. For example, Swivl Cameras and Software. (40 @ \$1,500) Multimedia supplies include 40 Swivl cameras and associated software (@\$1,500). These supplies record their lessons without the need for all lesson study team members to travel to the site to observe the lessons. It will also allow every teacher the team allowing us to score every teacher in the project with the AIW rubrics. The software with the Swivl cameras allows teachers to annotate is our intention to introduce the power of this technology to these teachers for them to see the possibility of leading Lesson Study professional development own schools and districts, using this technology, after the project concludes. (e146)

iii. By creating a new and improved Persistent Issues in History Network website that features model DCI units and virtual Lesson Study guidance, Auburn University will be poised to become a virtual institute for Disciplined Civic Inquiry and DCI Lesson Study. We have secured funding from donors to continue to support the website beyond the life of the grant project. Auburn faculty and Lesson Study leaders remain committed to supporting the teacher

participants as they become teacher leaders in their districts ready to model and scaffold DCI pedagogy and Lesson Study. (e52)

iv. None noted.

Weaknesses:

i. None noted

ii. None noted.

iii. The applicant does not clearly demonstrate that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence.

iv. The applicant does not clearly demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. The applicant did not provide letters of support from partners. No detail what each partner would commit to the project to ensure the success.

Reader's Score: **24**

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly noted that the programs will educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights. (e22-e23, e58)

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)

Under this priority, and applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students—

a) in one or more of the following educational settings: (1) Early learning programs (2) Elementary school (3) Middle school (4) High school (5) Career and technical education programs (6) Out-of-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) Rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students. (e15-16, e23)

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not clearly demonstrate how expanding or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation. (e15-e16)

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/07/2023 02:06 PM