**DQ-ER-CDE-14-015**

**ASSESSMENT COST & IMPLEMENTATION STUDY**

**Strength & Weaknesses**

**APA**

**STRENGTHS**

* The previous work done by the company is impressive and directly on point.
* Significant advantages to using APA due to its experience with the Colorado education system and its assessment and accountability framework.
* The employees' resumes seem adequate.
* APA appears to have broad experience in this specialized area of cost analyses for school operations and policy implementations.
* Previous experience with assessment cost analyses for Colorado and similar statewide assessment programs in other states is a plus.
* The offeror shows clear experience in conducting cost analyses.

**WEAKNESSES**

* Proposed APA methodology relies too heavily on self-reporting from school and district personnel through surveys and focus groups, and too heavily on the perceptions/opinions about impacts on instruction. The study would be stronger if it balanced data gathering methodologies to incorporate more quantitative research around actual school and district budgets and expenditures, and analysis on policy documents around school and district testing time.  **During the oral interview the sub-committee address this concern and APA stated, if awarded, they would incorporate more quantitative research in their study.**
* Lacked detail about how the questions, research instruments, and protocols would be developed for use with focus group and interviews in order to validate how well the proposed process will yield the data the State of Colorado is seeking.  **This concern was addressed at the oral interview and APA agreed, if awarded, they would work with the Task Force to assure the questions, research instruments, as well as the protocols are more robust when used with focus groups and interviews**
* Did not provide enough detail about how some metrics required by the RFP would be measured, such as Impact on Instruction.
* Number of hours budgeted for the assigned staff to do preparatory work and analysis seems inadequate for the scale of the work needed. **APA stated at the oral interview that they would work with the Task Force to identify how the timeline should be revised.**
* Use of past research as a reference point could slant the focus and, consequently, the results of the HB1202 study. Second, the use of survey and interview as the sole research methodology is concerning, without an accompanying research analysis of actual financial cost analyses.