*Discussion:* The Secretary agrees with the commenters.

*Changes:* Section 645.31 has been revised to address the suggested reordering. The Secretary has also revised several of the subsections to assure that each subsection is clear.

*Comments:* Several commenters suggested that the numerical score for each individual subsection under the "need" and "plan of operation" criteria in § 645.31 should be included in the regulations. The commenters feared that without a score, the peer reviewers would not properly score the applications.

*Discussion:* The Secretary does not agree that the inclusion of subsection scores would greatly assist the peer reviewers in properly scoring applications. The Secretary acknowledges that in these cases the weighting for each subsection is roughly equal.

Changes: None.

*Comments:* Several commenters suggested that reference to performance on aptitude tests should not be included in § 645.31(a)(2)(i). One commenter suggested that the inclusion of scores from aptitude tests as part of the need criteria may suggest that Upward Bound Math and Science projects are designed to serve only students who are performing at the highest level in their secondary education program. Other commenters suggested that "aptitude" testing is too politically sensitive and the term should be avoided.

*Discussion:* The Secretary disagrees with the commenters. The Secretary does not believe that the inclusion of "aptitude tests" in these regulations would in any way suggest that the Math and Science Upward Bound Centers are designed to serve students who are performing at the highest level in their secondary education program. As used in this criterion, the Secretary sought to give greater priority to projects that were serving students who were attending high schools that had relatively low average scores on standardized tests.

*Changes:* The Secretary has modified the criteria to more fully describe the use of tests in measuring differences in school environments.

*Comments:* Several commenters suggested that § 645.31(c)(3) should be revised to require a follow-up plan for tracking the academic accomplishments of participants only after they have completed the Upward Bound project. The commenters stated that the proposed regulations would require the project to follow up on all persons who participated in the project. The commenters also felt that requiring the project to follow up on all participants would be extremely costly and place a considerable collection burden on projects.

Discussion: The Secretary agrees that mandatory postsecondary tracking of all persons participating in a project may be cumbersome.

*Changes:* Section 645.31(c)(3) has been reordered to § 645.31(c)(10) and has been changed to require a follow-up plan for tracking only those participants who are graduates of the Upward Bound project.

*Comments:* One commenter suggested that "applicant community" in § 645.31(c)(4) be

changed to "target area community." The commenter felt that the phrase "applicant community" left the reader of the regulations confused as to the specific community that needed to be informed, i.e., university target area community, or any other self-described community identified by the applicant.

*Discussion:* The Secretary agrees that this phrase may be confusing.

*Changes:* The Secretary has revised the criterion to describe more specifically the applicant's institutional community and the individuals and groups that should be informed throughout the target area.

*Comments:* One commenter suggested that the word "appropriate" as a modifier of "timelines" in § 645.31(c)(6) should be deleted because varied and different interpretations can be inferred by the applicant and the peer reviewers.

*Discussion:* The Secretary agrees with this commenter. The Secretary believes that it is the applicant's responsibility to present a clear and concise plan that contains timelines that cover all of the major services to be provided. The criterion will be amended to make this clarification.

*Changes:* The Secretary has revised the criterion to read—assessing the quality of the planned timelines for accomplishing critical elements of the project.

*Comments:* Several commenters suggested that the word "quality" be deleted from the applicant's plan in § 645.31(c)(9). The commenters suggest deleting the word "quality" because it is redundant and can be interpreted in different ways by the readers.

Discussion: The Secretary agrees with the commenters that use of the term is redundant but at the same time all of the sub-criteria in the Plan of Operation sub-section are about "quality" plans which will produce intended project outcomes. The Secretary believes that the evaluation of the quality of all parts of the plan of operation is at the heart of the peer review process.

*Changes:* Because the word quality is a part of the opening sentence in § 645.31(c), the word quality has been deleted from this section because it is redundant.

*Comments:* One commenter suggested that the phrase "quality control" be deleted from § 645.31(c)(8). The commenter felt that this term was not normally used to define an educational process or procedure. The commenter also indicated that the term could be misinterpreted since no definition is provided.

*Discussion:* The Secretary disagrees with the commenter. "Quality control" is a term used to define processes that lead to improved service delivery and better outcomes. It is not unfamiliar to educators but is probably more associated with the business sector. However, the Secretary will delete the words "quality control" from this criterion since the criterion requires that the applicant present an effective and efficient plan for the administrative oversight of the project, which would imply a measure of quality control.

*Changes:* The criterion has been revised for purposes of greater clarity.

*Comments:* One commenter noted that the regulations do not include a request for a plan to recruit underrepresented students.

The commenter stated that by not including a provision that would require applicants to submit such a plan it might imply that an Upward Bound project would not focus on providing underrepresented students with an opportunity to be successful in postsecondary education.

*Discussion*: The Secretary disagrees with the commenter. The Secretary believes that the Upward Bound program has and will continue to provide services to exclusively underrepresented populations. Thus a plan to do this is unnecessary.

Changes: None.

*Comments:* Several commenters felt that § 645.31(e)(1) would prevent projects from considering the work experience of individuals when hiring the project director. Another commenter felt that the requirement that directors have formal training in fields related to the objectives of the projects was too restrictive and would require all Upward Bound Math and Science directors to have formal education degrees in the fields of math and science.

*Discussion:* The Secretary agrees with the commenters that work experience should be considered when evaluating and determining the suitability of a project director.

*Changes:* The Secretary has revised this section to include work experience. The inclusion of work experience in this section will allow persons to substitute for formal training in fields related to the objectives of the project.

*Comments:* Several commenters suggested that clarity of § 645.31(g)(2) could be

improved by combining the two subsections. *Discussion:* The Secretary agrees with the commenters.

*Changes:* The two subsections have been combined into one statement.

How Does the Secretary Evaluate Prior Experience? (§ 645.32)

*Comments:* Several commenters suggested that the word "consistently" in § 645.32(b)(1) be deleted. The commenters felt that the word "consistently" was not defined and would have to be interpreted by each project.

*Discussion:* The Secretary agrees with the commenter.

*Changes:* The word "consistently" has been deleted from the section.

Comments: Many commenters suggested that aptitude and motivation as stated in §645.32(b)(2) are difficult to measure. The commenters further suggested that this section of the regulations should emphasize the achievement levels and academic progress of participants. Several commenters suggested new wording for the section; some asked for the deletion of aptitude and motivation while others suggested that motivation remain a part of the section. One commenter further suggested that project retention, high school graduation, postsecondary enrollment and success in postsecondary education are better indicators of academic growth.

*Discussion:* The Secretary agrees with the commenters who suggested that improvements in motivation and aptitude are difficult to measure. The Secretary, however, believes that the project must be held accountable for assisting participants in the