

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/15/2018 11:31 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: American Heritage Charter School (U282E180027)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	12
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	7
Quality of the Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	16
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	13
Sub Total	100	86
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Access to High-Quality Educational Choice		
1. Increasing Access	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs		
1. Enrollment Programs	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Total	104	90

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - CSP Developers (84.282E) - 2: 84.282E

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: American Heritage Charter School (U282E180027)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

- 1. The significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational Opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make, the Secretary considers the quality of the plan to ensure that the charter school the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students and serve those students at rates comparable to surrounding public schools.**

Strengths:

School is serving a rural population and is a Title I school. The school has proposed efforts to recruit and enroll English Language Learners through marketing in English and Spanish (e60). The school conducts "child find" to identify students with disabilities among currently enrolled students (e61) and is currently serving 10% students with disabilities, a rate that is comparable to the local district (e26). The school partners with local colleges and technical schools to provide student access to higher education and vocational training opportunities, and plans to purchase two 15-passenger vans to facilitate transportation to and from these off-campus opportunities (e42).

Weaknesses:

Current demographics are not provided, beyond the statement that 5% are non-white (e26). Specific enrollment projections for the full K-12 program are not provided; the school states it will "double K-6 capacity" (e39). The school currently serves a significantly smaller percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch than the local district (10% AHCS vs. 42% district) (e25), which may indicate the school has not been yet successful in recruiting economically disadvantaged students.

Reader's Score: 12

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:**

Reader's Score: 30

Sub Question

- 1. (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable**

Strengths:

Goals, objectives, and outcomes are clearly stated and measurable. The school provides a narrative for each of the five years covered in the proposal, describing the significant activities and budget priorities needed through an "activities roadmap." Timelines for these activities are included in the narrative (e40-e48). The school provides metrics for each budget priority (e48-e49). Duties and responsibilities for major activities are listed for key

Sub Question

personnel in the "project personnel" section (e32-e36).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

2. (2) 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:

Proposed project is appropriate to meet the needs of the target population of rural students (e24-e25) because the plan increases access to a rigorous college-prep curriculum and dual enrollment/early college opportunities (e12-e13). The school has demonstrated success in achieving goals with current students through Annual Performance Report and assessment data (e65-e69). Current students in grades K-3 have consistently outperformed local district and state averages on the IRI reading assessment (e65) and students in grades 3 – 11 demonstrated significantly higher achievement on the state ELA assessment (e66) compared to state averages. AHCS scores from economically disadvantaged students matched the state average at 40% proficient on the 2016 ELA ISATS (e67). AHCS scores from the same subgroup significantly outperformed the state and district on the 2016 Math ISATS (e69). These assessment results demonstrate success in working with this target population.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 8

Sub Question

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

Data is not provided regarding the key staff members for race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. No plan for actively recruiting employees in underrepresented groups has been provided.

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel

Sub Question

Strengths:

Key personnel are qualified and experience in education and charter school leadership (e32-e36, e76-e81). Key members of the leadership team have remained consistent over the course of the school's charter. Majority of key personnel have advanced degrees in education or related fields.

Weaknesses:

Resumes for some key personnel have not been provided. (Hurst, J Dalton, Infanger, yes; Rose, L Dalton, no) (e74-e81)

Reader's Score: 8

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 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.**

Strengths:

Plan includes specific responsibilities assigned to individual key staff members, as well as demonstrating board oversight responsibilities (e32-e36). Priorities for budget expenditures are clearly defined (e40). Plan includes benchmarks and deliverables that are reasonable and appropriate (e433-e449).

Weaknesses:

Overall plan is logical but not detailed. Objective metrics (e48-e49) indicate goals for the end of the grant term but do not include intermediate benchmarks.

Reader's Score: 7

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

- 1. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the charter school to be replicated or expanded is a high-quality charter school, including:**

(1) The degree to which the applicant has demonstrated success in increasing academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students and for each of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the ESEA, attending the charter schools the applicant operates or manages. These subgroups of students include: Economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, children with disabilities, and students who are ELs.

(2) The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates, and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students in the State.

(3) The extent to which charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have been closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation; have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management; have experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and have had any significant issues with respect to student safety.

Strengths:

Overall results for the school were higher than the state for grades 3 – 11 and reading assessments on IRI for K-3 (e66-e69). The school has demonstrated success in serving economically disadvantaged students in a rural region. The 2016 ELA ISATS scores for educationally disadvantaged students matched the state average and outperformed the district by 7 points. The 2016 Math ISATS scores for educationally disadvantaged students outperformed the state by 37%, and the district by 41% (e67 and e69).

There are no significant concerns with authorizer, and the school has received an “honors” ranking for academic performance, operational outcomes, and financial outcomes on the 2017 Annual Performance Report (e141-e160).

Weaknesses:

No racial data is provided.

Reader's Score: 16

Selection Criteria - Continuation Plan

- 1. The extent to which the eligible applicant is prepared to continue to operate charter schools that would receive grant funds in a manner consistent with the eligible applicant’s application once the grant funds under this program are no longer available.**

Strengths:

School has established budget priorities (e40) that are associated primarily with up front and one-time costs related to the expansion to be included in the grant request (e50-e51). The school plans to use grant funds to purchase curriculum materials and classroom furniture for the expanded classrooms, to cover some training and travel expenses, and stipends for teacher-leaders. Grant funds will be used to purchase computers to support the business program (e44) and to employ a Mastery Teacher Trainer and Advanced Opportunity Coordinator (e44-e45).

The school has kept ongoing expenses as part of the school’s operating budget so that the budget will be sustainable based on the associated increased enrollment funding. The school projects an increase in enrollment of 180 students over the course of the grant (e51). The school has included plans to improve student retention into the middle and high school program through greater support structures (e56-e59), and has calculated that the increased enrollment combined with improved student retention rates will be sufficient to fund the school program (e51).

Weaknesses:

The plan does not give details for the purchase of an expanded facility to accommodate the enrollment growth. There is no discussion of efforts to seek private funding or grants to support public finances.

Reader's Score: 13

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Access to High-Quality Educational Choice

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1—Supporting High-Need Students by Increasing Access to High-Quality Educational Choice**

This priority is for projects that are designed to increase access to educational choice and improve academic outcomes and learning environments for one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students in communities served by rural local educational agencies
- (ii) Children with disabilities
- (iii) English learners
- (iv) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

School is serving a rural population and is a Title I school. 40% of current AHCS students live in agricultural or small rural communities (e24). School plans to increase outreach to economically disadvantaged students and other at-risk subgroups with marketing and advertising in English and Spanish, and networking and community presentations (e26-e27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2—Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs and Early College High Schools

The extent to which the proposed project is designed to increase student access to, participation in, and completion of dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high schools.

Strengths:

School is expanding access to dual enrollment and AP courses, primarily through online courses provided by the state. School is planning to hire an Advanced Opportunities Coordinator to facilitate student access and participation in dual credit, AP, career-technical training, and other advanced opportunities (e42). School plans to purchase two passenger vans to provide transportation to local colleges, to enable students to take college classes or earn technical certifications (e27-29)

School enrolls students beginning after 6th grade to take summer and high school courses through the state digital learning opportunity, which enables these students to accelerate their learning (e29). In 2017-18, 92% of the school's eighth grade students earned at least one high school credit (e29). This proposal will increase the number of students able to participate, as they will double the capacity to enroll students in grades K-6, who will then advance into the middle school and high school programs (e39).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: American Heritage Charter School (U282E180027)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	5
Quality of the Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	14
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	13
Sub Total	100	76
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Access to High-Quality Educational Choice		
1. Increasing Access	2	1
Sub Total	2	1
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs		
1. Enrollment Programs	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Total	104	79

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - CSP Developers (84.282E) - 2: 84.282E

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: American Heritage Charter School (U282E180027)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

1. **The significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational Opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make, the Secretary considers the quality of the plan to ensure that the charter school the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students and serve those students at rates comparable to surrounding public schools.**

Strengths:

This applicant identifies a goal of increasing lottery applications to 40% (p. e48). The applicant describes recruitment strategies (p. e60) designed to increase participation in the lottery for all students. A tiered instructional approach to meet the educational needs of all students is described on pages e56-59. The applicant notes that the school will provide regular intervention to special needs, low performing, ELL, and homeless students in reading and math as they fall behind (p. e62).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not identify a target goal for the enrollment of educationally disadvantaged students, only a goal of increasing applications, even though the current rate of 10% economically disadvantaged students is well below the rate of 42% for the surrounding district (p. e25). The school indicates that it has developed ELL strategies "that it will implement as needed to accommodate ELL students who might enroll at AHCS" which seems to indicate that no ELL students are currently served at AHCS.

Reader's Score: 10

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:**

Reader's Score: 26

Sub Question

1. **(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable**

Strengths:

The applicant lists measurable objectives and outcomes for grant activities on p. e48-49. These are divided into four categories (Double K-6th capacity/enrollment, Increase Advanced Opportunities, Create Business, Entrepreneurism and CTE Opportunities, and Expand Mastery and Project-Based Learning) with a number of measurable outcomes under each priority. Objectives detailing the priorities are listed on pages e40-47.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

There are no measures or strategies indicated by the applicant to reformulate priorities or outcomes if the original outcomes are not met

Reader's Score: 13

2. (2) 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 applicant's plan design lists detailed strategies for accomplishing the operational components of the project as well as specific instructional strategies for meeting the needs of the target population including increasing access to advanced academic opportunities (p. e42), increased access to instructional technology (p e42-46), professional development for teachers to improve instruction (p. e43), and mastery learning opportunities (p. e47).

Weaknesses:

Beginning with the 5th grade expansion, the school has not determined the source of funds to double classroom space, a major consideration in the expansion effort (p e45-46). The project design is presented primarily in narrative form, so it is difficult to determine timelines, personnel responsible, and budget considerations of the project plan.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 8

Sub Question

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

No evidence exist in the application that the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant notes qualifications of key project personnel that indicate relevant experience in public education, charter school management, and knowledge of the local community as described on p. e50 and in the resumes listed on pages e74-82.

Weaknesses:

Resumes are not included for Shawn Rose and Lisa Dalton, who are described on page e35 as playing "important, but supporting roles in implementing (the) Charter expansion".

Reader's Score: 8

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 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.**

Strengths:

The management plan as described on p. e50 describes budgetary controls for complying with purchasing policies, record keeping for audit purposes, and preparing and submitting financial reports.

Weaknesses:

The management plan as described on p. e50 omits timelines for task completion and milestones and benchmarks for accomplishing project tasks. This lack of a specific management timeline is significant as well in that the applicant states on page e39 that \$1.25 million is being requested over five years to implement the project.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

- 1. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the charter school to be replicated or expanded is a high-quality charter school, including:**

(1) The degree to which the applicant has demonstrated success in increasing academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students and for each of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the ESEA, attending the charter schools the applicant operates or manages. These subgroups of students include: Economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, children with disabilities, and students who are ELs.

(2) The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates, and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students in the State.

(3) The extent to which charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have been closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation; have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management; have experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and have had any significant issues with respect to student safety.

Strengths:

The applicant notes overall performance exceeding the state of Idaho as well as local district performance on the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) in Spring, 2017 (p. e65); overall performance on the ISATS ELA exam in 2015 and 2016 exceeding state and local averages (p. e67); overall Mathematics performance on the ISAT exceeding state and local averages for 2014-2016 (p. e69); and the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students exceeding state and local averages on the 2016 Mathematics ISATS (p. e69). The applicant reports a 2016-17 daily attendance rate of 98% and a retention rate of 87% The applicant notes that there were no significant compliance or management issues within the past three years.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear how educationally disadvantaged students in different racial groups and student groups including students with disabilities and English Language Learners performed as they were not reported in the assessment results due to small number of students in each group (p. e68). The percentage of economically disadvantaged students proficient on the 2016 ELA ISATS was the same (40%) as the state average (p. e67).

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Continuation Plan

- 1. The extent to which the eligible applicant is prepared to continue to operate charter schools that would receive grant funds in a manner consistent with the eligible applicant's application once the grant funds under this program are no longer available.**

Strengths:

The applicant notes that on-going payroll expenses are not included in the grant. The applicant projects 180 additional students enrolling in the school over the grant period, which the note will add commensurate state support units that will provide adequate capacity to carry on program and training stipends which will expire at the end of the grant period (p. e50-51).

Weaknesses:

A major focus of the project, expanding existing grade levels to serve additional students, is complicated by the need to purchase or construct classroom space in year five using non-grant funds as noted on p. e46.

Reader's Score: 13

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Access to High-Quality Educational Choice

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1—Supporting High-Need Students by Increasing Access to High-Quality Educational Choice**

This priority is for projects that are designed to increase access to educational choice and improve academic outcomes and learning environments for one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students in communities served by rural local educational agencies**
- (ii) Children with disabilities**
- (iii) English learners**
- (iv) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian Tribes.**

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that grant funds will be used to expand outreach to rural, economically disadvantaged, special needs, and minority students to increase participation in the enrollment lottery through various means (p . e27).

Weaknesses:

The applicant reports the current population of economically disadvantaged students as 10%, compared to 42% for the schools in the primary attendance area (p. e25), which may indicate the current attempts to enroll economically disadvantaged students are not effective.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2—Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs and Early College High Schools

The extent to which the proposed project is designed to increase student access to, participation in, and completion of dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high schools.

Strengths:

The applicant lists strategies to increase access to and participation in dual enrollment programs, including hiring an Advanced Opportunity coordinator to create personal education plans for each student, the purchase of vans to provide transportation to local colleges, providing incentives for teachers to be able to teach dual credit classes, and implementing a mastery learning on-line platform (p. e27-30). The applicant provides specific targets for dual enrollment as part of the management plan (p. e48).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses evident in the plan to increase dual enrollment.

Reader's Score: 2

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Last Updated: 06/16/2018 02:30 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: American Heritage Charter School (U282E180027)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	9
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	6
Quality of the Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	14
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	13
Sub Total	100	77
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Access to High-Quality Educational Choice		
1. Increasing Access	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs		
1. Enrollment Programs	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Total	104	81

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - CSP Developers (84.282E) - 2: 84.282E

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: American Heritage Charter School (U282E180027)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

1. **The significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational Opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make, the Secretary considers the quality of the plan to ensure that the charter school the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students and serve those students at rates comparable to surrounding public schools.**

Strengths:

Doubling K-6 capacity will increase likelihood that additional high need children will be selected for enrollment through lottery and middle and high schools students can achieve greater access to and participation in early college and advanced opportunities like dual credit (e39).

With the grade expansion, AHCS will enhance and expand its mastery and project-based learning (PBL) program, including addition of a focused business and entrepreneurship program and career technical education (e39).

AHCS supports all students to promote retention through a three-tiered Response to Intervention (RTI) plan (e56).

Beginning in fall 2018, AHCS will be a Title I program (e58).

As AHCS enrollment grows, it will grow its supplemental services for students with special needs, including low performing students, ELL students, and homeless or unaccompanied youth to ensure they receive assistance to demonstrate proficiency on State tests (e62).

Weaknesses:

The applicant describes the current student population as 40% rural students, 10% students with disabilities, and 10% students who qualify for FRL. The enrollment of economically disadvantaged (FRL) students does not mirror the district, which enrolls 42% students who qualify for FRL (e25). Furthermore, beyond general assurance, the application does not meaningful describe efforts to recruit and enroll a higher population of FRL students to get closer to the district average.

As described further in criteria #2, the application does not paint a clear picture of what the student population looks like. Few mentions of racial/ethnic demographics are included, and the reviewer only gets quick snapshots scattered throughout narrative (i.e. 10% students on FRL).

While the application states that it will grow its supplemental services for students with special needs, including low performing students, ELL students, and homeless or unaccompanied youth commensurate with the overall expansion, no meaningful detail (beyond general assurance) is provided on what those supplemental services are or how the Advanced Opportunities, Mastery/PBL, and other programming will be adapted to support students with disabilities, English Language Learners, etc.

Reader's Score: 9

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:**

Reader's Score: 26

Sub Question

1. **(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable**

Strengths:

The project narrative is broken down by year, and addresses how all program components (i.e. Advanced Opportunities, Mastery Based Learning) will be built upon year over year, what AHCS hopes to accomplish, and what specifically will be funded to support those project goals (e40-47). General expense items are also described, beginning on pg. e47.

The applicant provides a breakdown of what % of funds will be spent on key activities (table on page e48).

Objective metrics by project priority are included beginning on pg. e48. Metrics are aligned to project priorities and are specific and measurable (i.e. for the Double K-6 capacity priority, one metric = "Improve 6th and 8th grade retention rates to 75% during grant period"). Each of the 5 priorities has several rigorous metrics attached to it.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 15

2. **(2) 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 entire grade span will double in capacity by year 5 of the grant, and core programming will be expanded (Business & Entrepreneurism, Advanced Opportunity, Mastery Based Learning, etc.). In addition to using funds for curricula, materials, equipment, and teacher stipends, new hires will also be made to support expanded programming (i.e. a new business teacher will be hired to support at the high school level (e41) and a new Advanced Opportunity Coordinator will be hired to plan, organize and facilitate increased access to dual credit and other advanced opportunities for 7-12 (e42).

This project design seems broadly appropriate given the need for more students to graduate ready for high school and college, and the fact that the dual credit program at AHCS does not seem fully leveraged yet (only 6% of high school students have participated in a dual credit or AP courses through 2018) (e28).

Weaknesses:

It is difficult to truly assess whether the project is appropriate for and will successfully address needs of all students, mostly because the application does not paint a clear picture of what the student population looks like. Few mentions of racial/ethnic demographics are included, and the reviewer only gets quick snapshots scattered throughout narrative (i.e. 10% students on FRL – e25).

No detail is provided on how the Advanced Opportunities and other programming will be adapted to support students with disabilities or English Language Learners.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 11

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 9

Sub Question

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability

Strengths:

No strengths identified.

Weaknesses:

Nowhere in the application does AHCS name employees who are members of underrepresented groups, nor does it describe a focus on hiring any new staff from underrepresented groups.

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel

Strengths:

Executive Director (and Principal Founder of school) will be Project Manager; Federal Programs Director will be Grant Administrator (18 years experience); and Board will ensure faithful implementation, oversight and accountability (e32-35).

Resumes of 4 key project personnel are included in Appendix B, and narrative describes the deep experience in teaching and administration that these personnel bring to the project. Together, the 4 key project personnel bring years of experience in academics, accounting, marketing/PR, legal, compliance and reporting, etc. Supporting the key project team is a secondary principal and the IT director (e32-35).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 9

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 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.

Strengths:

The budget summary and "activities roadmap" beginning on pg. e40 provides a concise accounting of the activities (and broader milestones) that will be funded in each year of the grant and who will lead activities (i.e year 1 will have a 2nd

grade expansion led by Mrs. Hurst). Detail is provided on what will be purchased with grant funds (i.e. curricula, desk, chairs, teacher mentor stipends, marketing materials) and how expansion will roll out each year across the core programs (Business and Entrepreneurism, Advanced Opportunities, Mastery & PBL, etc.).

The Federal Programs Director will originate all purchase requisitions and ensure the expense is allowable under the grant (e50), and two other staff (Executive Director included) will approved all purchase orders.

Weaknesses:

The management plan provided in the narrative is cohesive and logical, but it is not detailed and does not include a timeline or benchmarks beyond describing general activities to occur in each year of the grant.

Reader's Score: 6

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

1. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the charter school to be replicated or expanded is a high-quality charter school, including:

(1) The degree to which the applicant has demonstrated success in increasing academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students and for each of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the ESEA, attending the charter schools the applicant operates or manages. These subgroups of students include: Economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, children with disabilities, and students who are ELs.

(2) The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates, and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students in the State.

(3) The extent to which charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have been closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation; have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management; have experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and have had any significant issues with respect to student safety.

Strengths:

During most recent authorizer evaluation, AHCS earned Honors designation in each area – Academic, Operational, and Financial (e37, with performance certificate provided in Appendix G).

AHCS' ADA for 2016-17 was 98%; student retention rate was 87% (e70).

The applicant demonstrates academic achievement results that exceed (in most years) the average academic results for students in the state: AHCS has seen consistent year over year growth on the IRI exam for K through 3rd graders, with 78% proficiency in 2013 and 87% in 2016 (e65). AHCS students have also consistently outperformed their peers in the local district 91 and the state average on the IRI (Idaho Reading Indicator Test).

On the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) in ELA, AHCS outpaced the state average in most grades ever year (e66). In 2016, AHCS' proficiency rate exceeded both the local district and the state (e67). On the Math ISAT, AHCS exceeded the state's proficiency average in almost every grade for the past three years (e68). Overall scores were above the local district as well (e69), with the biggest positive margin in 2016 (62% for AHCS vs. 42% state vs. 39% local).

Economically disadvantaged students perform the same or better on the ELA ISAT compared to the state and local district, respectively - 40% of AHCS' economically disadvantaged students were proficient in the ELA ISAT in 2016, equal to the state and above the local district percentages (e67). On the Math ISAT, 67% of economically disadvantaged

students were proficient in 2016, exceeding state and local averages (e69) by a large amount (67% vs 30% state vs. 26% local).

No significant compliance and management issues within last three years; in 2017, IPCSC designated AHCS with honor's ranking for academic performance, operational outcomes, and financial outcomes (e70).

Weaknesses:

The bar graph on pg. e66 (ELA ISATs compared to state average) is confusing and hard to decipher. While the narrative stipulates that AHCS outpaced the state in most grades every year, you can't tell which grades or which year. Similarly, Figure 8 on pg. e68 is all but impossible to decipher so the reader cannot see clearly how AHCS performs relative to state and local averages.

AHCS does not report test results for each subgroup due to small number of students in each subgroup. It is concerning that no subgroup data is provided, even informally. The reviewer cannot assess whether AHCS is meeting goals and increasing academic achievement for subgroups (i.e. students with disabilities).

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Continuation Plan

- 1. The extent to which the eligible applicant is prepared to continue to operate charter schools that would receive grant funds in a manner consistent with the eligible applicant's application once the grant funds under this program are no longer available.**

Strengths:

Applicant describes type of costs, and how the proposed grant expenditures emphasize up front and one-time costs and ongoing expenses like payroll/salaries are intentionally not included (e50). Detail given on how stipends included in grant expenditures will either terminate upon conclusion of grant period or be sustained on state revenues (e51). AHCS estimates that additional enrollment capacity will ensure sufficient state funding to maintain these stipends.

As included under criteria #5, the school reported no significant compliance and management issues "within last three years"; in 2017, IPCSC designated AHCS with honor's ranking for academic performance, operational outcomes, and financial outcomes (e70).

Weaknesses:

Given that the school opened in 2013, it is curious that they would specify no significant compliance/management issues within last three years – were there issues before that?

The applicant does not mention any sources of private fundraising revenue that could support program costs ongoing once CSP grant funds are no longer available.

Reader's Score: 13

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Access to High-Quality Educational Choice

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1—Supporting High-Need Students by Increasing Access to High-Quality Educational Choice**

This priority is for projects that are designed to increase access to educational choice and improve academic outcomes and learning environments for one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students in communities served by rural local educational agencies
- (ii) Children with disabilities
- (iii) English learners
- (iv) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

AHCS seeks a grant of \$1.25 million over five years to facilitate an increase in capacity and expansion of core programming to enhance lives of all students – including rural and underserved student populations (e21).

AHCS' primary target population is students living in rural Idaho, and meets the eligibility criteria for Small Rural School Achievement Program (SRSA). Approximately 40% of current students live in unincorporated, agricultural areas or in neighboring rural communities (e24).

Approximately 10% of current students are students with disabilities and special needs; this is “nearly equivalent” to the local Idaho Falls SD 91. AHCS has grown its special education population each year and engages in “child find” (e26).

Using grant funds, AHCS will expand outreach to rural and economically disadvantaged students, students with special needs, and minority students (e27). AHCS will employ printed and online material in English and Spanish, targeted radio and newspaper ads, public presentations, and networking with community leaders, groups, and agencies to expand outreach (e27).

While this is not a requirement of the CPP, the enrollment of economically disadvantaged students does not mirror the primary attendance area: only 10% of current AHCS students have applied for and qualify for FRL, compared to 42% for district schools (e25).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2—Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs and Early College High Schools

The extent to which the proposed project is designed to increase student access to, participation in, and completion of dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high schools.

Strengths:

AHCS' expansion seeks to graduate more college-ready students who have taken advantage of dual credit and other advanced opportunities at local and regional colleges (e21-22). There is evidence that AHCS already has dual credit and advanced programming in place from which to build upon.

The school encourages middle school students to take summer courses to earn high school credit, which opens door for them to graduate early. In 2017-18, 92% of 8th graders earned at least one high school credit toward graduation, and 18% will have earned at least three credits (e29). AHCS allows middle school students to get a jump start on high school classes and high school students opportunities to earn college credit and take career tech classes at no cost, via the Idaho Digital Learning Academy (e27). Through 2018, 6% of high school students have participated in a dual credit or AP courses (e28). Mastery-based education in grades 7-12 allows advanced students to rapidly progress and earn more credits toward graduation than they otherwise would (e29).

The applicant is specific about how it will use grant funds to increase student access to dual credit/early college programming. They plan to hire an Advanced Opportunities Coordinator to market and facilitate student participation (e28); they will purchase 15-passenger vans to transport students to local colleges and partnering area high schools (e28); and they will allocate resources to incentivize teachers to become endorsed to teach dual credit and/or AP courses (e28-29).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: **2**

Status: Submitted
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