

**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: Building Responsible Intelligent Creative Kids (U282E180015)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	14
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	27
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
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	87
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	0
Sub Total	2	0
Total	104	89

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Building Responsible Intelligent Creative Kids (U282E180015)

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 serves a higher percentage of educationally disadvantaged students compared to the state average (BRICK Avon=85%; BRICK Peshine=83%; ACCS=92%; State=38%) (e22).

Educationally disadvantaged students receive support for success, including Individualized Learning Time, adaptive technology, and small group or one-on-one instruction as needed (e27). School offers social-emotional learning, collaboration with families, transportation, individualized learning time, dual certified teachers (e26-27)

School serves an average of more than 20% Students with Disabilities across the three schools it operates and manages (e25), which is above all comparative averages (BRICK=21%; District=16%; State=17%; National=13%) (e25).

Weaknesses:

The new charter school, Achieve Community Charter School (ACCS), operated by this organization only serves 7.9% SWD, which is much lower than the 17% state average (e22). School serves a lower percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs), (BRICK Avon=1%; BRICK Peshine=3%; ACCS=0%; State=6%) (e22).

Reader's Score: 14

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: 27

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

Sub Question

Strengths:

School provides a detailed plan for increasing enrollment across multiple campuses. School plans to add a total of 1,275 seats in Newark, 1,125 seats in Bronx, and 225 seats in Connecticut over the term of the grant, for a grand total of 2,625 new seats (e29). School plans to serve 4,050 students at all schools when at full capacity (e17).

School has established specific and measurable goals for all schools included in the expansion project, such as “80% Teacher Retention”, “90% Student Retention”, and “90% Parent Satisfaction”. Startup schools are measured by higher goals than the turnaround schools in academics and attendance (for example, goal for students meeting NWEA MAP goals at startups is 90% and at turnaround schools it is 80%) (e30).

Weaknesses:

School has not identified facilities for new schools (e55). Charter applications have not been approved (e56). Logic model does not match the level of detail that is provided throughout the rest of the narrative (e137).

Reader's Score: 14

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 ambitious and has the potential for significant impact on students and families in the region. School has demonstrated success in serving educationally disadvantaged students. School “meets” or “exceeds” targets in nearly all subgroups, as measured by the School Performance Reports for BRICK Avon and BRICK Peshine (e58).

School provides a thorough description of educational model and its appropriateness for the target population. School is designed to meet the needs of its target population with “two-generational supports” in place to increase access to high-quality education choice for high needs students in Newark, NJ, Bronx, NY, and Connecticut (e24). School provides additional support in Math and ELA, adaptive technology, and social support systems for those who need it (e27).

Weaknesses:

SWD students at BRICK Peshine did not meet target goals in 2016-17 (e60). SWD is a significant target population listed in Competitive Preference Priority 1 and Selection Criteria 2.

The accelerated pace of growth may make it difficult to maintain the culture and academic expectations that have been established at the original schools (e29). It is not clear how the successes of current BRICK schools will translate to new regions and new target populations. The school has only identified general regions for the new schools which are to be located across three states and no evidence of needs analysis or marketing research has been provided (e29).

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: 10

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:

School expresses its commitment to hiring staff members of underrepresented groups and seeks to have its staff mirror the demographics of its students (e50). Staff demographics reflect success in recruiting and hiring a diverse staff, with 73% Black/African American, 7% Hispanic, and 20% white (e50).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

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

Strengths:

School leadership has prior experience in school start-up and takeovers. CAO will oversee the grant project and has served at the school since 2010 (e75). He has experience with Teach for America and has a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and NJ School Building Leader certification. He has been recognized with several awards, such as the Governor's Teacher Recognition Award (2009) and Land's End Teachers Light the Way Award (2008) (e76). School is also led by the Founder & Executive Director, who has been with the organization since 2009 (e77), an award-winning educator with a Master's in Educational Leadership and a School Business Administrator license (e77). Additional leadership is provided by the Chief of Staff, Accountability Officer, and various instructional leaders (e82-e92).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

Project plan describes the leadership agenda for managing the project, including annual data analysis, action plans and budget priorities adjusted to meet current needs (e30-e31). Plan lists project goals that cover major areas of activities related to school startup and takeover: Finalize the academic model, build operational capacity, provide strong leadership, replicate current model, improve organizational performance across the network (e32-e32).

Narrative describes decision-making process to be completed through three phases of the development of all the planned campuses (e55).

School has provided a chart of "Major Launch Activities", which covers May of Year 1 through Launch in September 2 and one half years later (e56). Chart includes details such as "New region approved", "Philanthropy confirmed", and "Charter application submitted".

Detailed budget for the project is provided (e144-e148). School plans for Years 0-6, indicating proposed grant expenses and non-grant expenses related to the expansion. Total project is nearly \$6 million, focused primarily on Personnel costs and Supplies to furnish new classrooms (e6). Budget is specific and measurable, to the number of Document Cameras requested and the cost of staff laptops.

School states that it has experience managing large grant projects, such as the South Ward Children's Alliance, which was awarded \$29.6 million in the 2017 Promise Neighborhoods grant (e57).

Weaknesses:

Three-phase process indicates that key questions have not yet been answered, such as location of new campuses, stakeholder support, and recruitment plan (e55). The scope of this project is massive, with only one year of charter school experience behind the team at ACCS (e17).

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:

School has demonstrated improved academic achievement at the two turn-around schools, with an increase in the number of students succeeding on PARCC assessments from 2014-15 to 2016-17 of between 89% to 130% across ELA and Math tests (e23). Academic achievement trends are consistently positive for both schools in both subject areas, moving from 12% to 20% to 26% over the course of three years at BRICK Peshine on ELA assessments, for example (e23).

School has significantly reduced rates for Chronic Absenteeism for African American students, the majority of its student population (BRICK Avon=28.9%; BRICK Peshine=29.9%; District=37.8%) (e64).

Charter school has reported no evidence of issues or concerns with compliance and audit. No charters have been revoked or terminated.

Weaknesses:

School has not yet had its charter renewed by the authorizer for the charter school (ACCS). ACCS served grades K-1 in 2017-18, and no School Performance Report or other authorizer review is yet available.

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 provided a well-developed continuation plan (e67-e69). School has planned for sustainability through five approaches, including recruitment, training and support of personnel, a strong central office, careful stewardship of public funds, strategic partnerships, and effective oversight and governance. School has provided letters of support from key stakeholders, such as the Newark Trust for Education, New Jersey Charter School Association, and the Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation (e94-e104).

Weaknesses:

Charter applications have not yet been approved by authorizer.

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 offers a "cradle to college" approach that is designed to improve academic achievement for the target population of students with disabilities and all educationally disadvantaged students (e21). School serves a higher percentage of students with disabilities (SWD) than the state average at its two turn-around schools (BRICK Avon=18.4%; BRICK Peshine=23.8%; State=17%) (e22). School provides SWD with support in behavior management, social-emotional learning, interventions and referrals, and transportation, and the school works to connect families with external services to support their mental and physical health (e26).

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:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

This criterion is not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
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Last Updated: 06/20/2018 07:29 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Building Responsible Intelligent Creative Kids (U282E180015)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	15
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	30
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
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	12
Sub Total	100	90
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	0
Sub Total	2	0
Total	104	92

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Building Responsible Intelligent Creative Kids (U282E180015)

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:

The applicant notes on page e25 that the combined schools operated by the charter holder serve a higher proportion of educationally disadvantaged students (21%) than the state (17%) as well as the local school district (16%). The applicant describes supports for educationally disadvantaged students including regular-interval reevaluation of behavior management, social-emotional learning, intervention, and referral programs; close collaboration with families and with students in the design of their IEP; providing all necessary transportation to and from school; connecting families with external services to support mental and physical health; working with parents on strategies to use with their children at home; recruiting and hiring highly-qualified experienced educators with a track record of raising achievement levels for students with disabilities; and providing all staff with professional development in special education instructional strategies and accommodations (p. e27). In addition, the applicant describes additional supports for educationally disadvantaged students including individualized learning time where students rotate between teacher-led instruction and adaptive technology, small-group instruction by dual-certified regular and a special education certified teacher. Students also receive pull-out support as needed (p. e27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted in the applicant's response.

Reader's Score: 15

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

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant presents five measurable goals and 22 objectives in regards to annual enrollment targets for seat creation at the ACCS campus as well as the anticipated expansion campuses in the Bronx, NYC and Connecticut (p. e29); organizational goals for both turnaround and startup campuses with measurable student achievement targets for NWEA MAP performance, student growth percentiles, STEP Assessment goals, and high school-choice matriculation goals (p. e 30) as well as goals for teacher retention, leadership and student retention, and parent and student satisfaction (p. e30).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted in the applicant's response.

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 applicant describes a detailed project design intended to meet the needs of the target student population, including an ELA and literacy program that stresses critical thinking as measured by the STEP assessment (p. e36); literacy strategies including guided reading for K-2 classrooms as part of a 90 minute rotational block that includes teacher-led and small group instruction and time for independent reading practice, as well as leveled book instruction, strategic read-alouds, skill strands that emphasize the reading-writing connection, word walls, student-led progress monitoring, and a workshop-based writing approach (p. e37-38). Math instruction focused on problem solving in real-life experiences (p. e40) as well as a variety of math programs designed to broaden conceptual understanding of math concepts (p. e40) including calendar math, math journals, demonstrations of learning to facilitate student-led progress monitoring in math, daily oral math, think-alouds, and assessments designed to monitor interim progress towards mastery of state standards including PARCC and Edulastic (p. e41-42). Teaching strategies for English language learners are considered as are response to intervention activities to indicate problems appropriate for struggling learners, ELL students, and students on-level and advanced (p. e40). Additional supports described include hands-on science and social studies instruction as well as cross-curricular connections using the expeditionary learning time that is part of the ELA instructional block (p. e 44-45). Community and parent partnerships to ensure that students stay in school and graduate from high school including the South Ward Children's Alliance (SWAC) which addresses not only student needs but also family needs including health care, hunger, housing, as well as parenting issues that affect academic performance (p. e47-48). BRICK also provides parenting education classes for children ages 0-3 and assistance for families in crisis (p. e49-50). Community partnerships are established with a number of local and state organizations (p. e50).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted in the applicant's response.

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: 10

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:

The applicant describes the goal of having its staff mirror that of the population of students it serves (p. e50) and notes that the school does not discriminate in its hiring practices or discourage applications from any group or disability category. The current demographics of the staff are described as 73% Black, 7% Hispanic, and 20% White (p. e50). The applicant also addresses the creation and maintenance of a talent pool as part of the management plan (p. e55) and notes in the plan for sustainability (p. e68) that recruiting, hiring, training, supporting and retaining high-quality teachers for all leadership, instructional, and operational roles is paramount to its success as an organization.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted in the applicant's response.

Reader's Score: 1

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

Strengths:

The applicant describes in detail the role that key project personnel will play in the management of grant activities and provides resumes for those individuals (p. e75-92), including the chief academic officer and his responsibilities for teacher training and support and his oversight of the academic program and the growth of student academic performance for all students and students in each subgroup (p. e51); the executive director who will oversee the replication program and the management of the project director to see that grant activities are executed on-time and within budget (p. e52); the chief of staff who will identify additional funding sources as needed to support network expansion as well as maintaining existing community partnerships and creating new partnerships (p. e53); the talent/performance officer who will ensure network capacity through data analysis and application and will work to ensure that staffing needs are met (p. e53). The school also identifies other project personnel who will contribute to the success of the plan (p. e53-54).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are indicated in the applicant's response.

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 management plan (p. e54-56), combined with the budget narrative (p. e144-148), provides information regarding major launch activities for expansion and the team responsible for implementation of the activity. A timeline is provided that lists activities farthest out from the launch date of the campus and progresses towards the opening date of the school.

Weaknesses:

The management plan lacks specificity in regards to milestones that will indicate if the activity has been successfully accomplished, specific personnel responsible for completion of the plan activities. Activities listed are overly broad in some cases and are not consistently tied directly to the budget narrative, which should be an integral part of the management plan considering the \$5.9 million requested grant award.

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:

The applicant notes that for the new charter (BRICK Achieve) the school met its organization benchmark on the NWEA MAP assessment with over 35% of students in math and literacy achieving in the top percentile (p. e24). Using the STEP literacy assessment, the applicant reports that 90% of students are reading on grade level at Achieve in its first year of operation, 2016-17 (p. e24). In 2016-17 the two BRICK turnaround schools met all math achievement targets, both for all students and for each subgroup (p. e62). Peshine students identified as ELL exceeded state and district averages in math in 2017, and Avon students in the Black and two or more races subgroups outperformed the district averages in math (p. e62). Chronic absenteeism rates for Avon and Peshine were less for Black students than the surrounding district (p. e64). ESSA accountability targets for both schools in 2016-17 were met for all students and all student groups and each school's median SGP was higher than that of the surrounding district and the state for both schools (p. e64-65). The SGP indicators (2nd in ELA and 6th in math) place Peshine in the top 10 of all schools in the Newark district (p. e67). The applicant notes that there have been no issues of closure, revocation, termination, or financial or operational management issues (p. e67).

Weaknesses:

No comparative performance data is available for BRICK Achieve as only students in grades K-1 were tested and no comparative state data is available (p. e58) In regards to schools operated by the applicant, in 2017 BRICK Avon did not meet the growth target for students with disabilities in the area of mathematics, and BRICK Peshine did not meet the growth target for students with disabilities in the area of English language arts (p. e58). BRICK Peshine also did not meet the 2016-17 annual target for students with disabilities in the area of English language arts (p. e58).

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 provides a continuation plan with five approaches to sustainability, including teacher and leader hiring, onboarding, recruitment, training, support and retention, providing ongoing academic, financial, and operational support, careful stewardship of public and private funds, establishing, nurturing and expanding strategic community and business partnerships, and ensuring effective governance and oversight (p. e68-69). The school has a number of letters of support (p. e93-104) including several organizations that indicate interest in providing for BRICK's expansion efforts.

Weaknesses:

The scope of the plan (adding at least two additional campuses) and the size of the requested grant award (\$5,999,982) will demand significant planning during the project period to ensure continuation of activities after the grant project has ended. Because of the lack of specificity in the management plan described earlier in regards to milestones and personnel responsible (p. e54-56), it is reasonable to assume that the applicant may have some difficulties in ensuring that grant activities will continue to the fullest extent after the grant period has ended.

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 serves a higher percentage of students with disabilities than the state (17%) at its turnaround campuses, Avon (18.4%) and Peshine (23.8%) (p. e22) and estimates that at ACCS the school will serve a students with disabilities population of approximately 18% (p. e24).The applicant notes that students with disabilities receive additional supports, including regular-interval reevaluation of behavior management, social-emotional learning, intervention, and referral programs; close collaboration with families and with students in the design of their IEP; providing all necessary transportation to and from school; connecting families with external services to support mental and physical health; and working with parents on strategies to use with their children at home (p. e26).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted in the applicant's response.

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:

The applicant did not respond to this priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not respond to this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/20/2018 07:29 AM

Status: Submitted

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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Building Responsible Intelligent Creative Kids (U282E180015)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	13
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	25
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	7
Quality of the Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	17
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	11
Sub Total	100	83
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	0
Sub Total	2	0
Total	104	85

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Building Responsible Intelligent Creative Kids (U282E180015)

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:

As stated in CPP #1, BRICK serves a highly disadvantaged student population – 98.4% Black students, 92% economically disadvantaged, and 7.9% students with disabilities (e22). BRICK’s population of students with disabilities across all three schools exceeds 20%, which is higher than the nation, state, and district averages (e25).

BRICK has an extensive history of serving the needs of all students and has honed its Special Education instructional approach through seven years of turnaround work (e25-26). It provides the least-restrictive environment for students, which is supplemented with personal aides and other individualized services according to each student’s areas of need. BRICK does not isolate or stigmatize students, but operates a meaningful inclusion model that ensures all students with disabilities have daily access to the general education environment. BRICK provides more detail on its supports for students with disabilities on e26-27.

Educationally disadvantaged students, including those with disabilities, receive additional support in Math and English during individualized learning time (ILT), where students use adaptive technology and participate in small groups and one-on-one pull-out support. The number and duration of these sessions are limited so that educationally disadvantaged students still have access to elective offerings (e27).

BRICK’s model of academic plus social service supports and wraparound services has resulted in each of its turnaround campuses meeting or exceeding all targets schoolwide, by race/ethnicity, and by special population with only one exception per campus (e27-28).

Weaknesses:

Looking at the charter school alone, BRICK’s percentage of students with disabilities (7.9%) is far lower than at the two turnaround schools or the state average of 17% (e22).

Regarding the “one exception per campus” stated above, BRICK Avon’s students with disabilities did not meet the Math growth target and BRICK Peshine’s students with disabilities did not meet ELA proficiency targets in 2016-17 (e28).

Reader's Score: 13

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: 25

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:

BRICK seeks CSP funding to expand its single-school charter and replicate the model by growing the network to six schools in three cities and states – Newark, NJ; Bronx, NYC; and Bridgeport or New Haven, CT (e17). The applicant includes a graphic on page e24 showing how it proposes to grow during the project period. It will add three schools in year 1, one school in year 2, one school in year 3, and two schools in year 4 to reach a total of seven in the network. This growth plan is very ambitious.

BRICK's model is that each new charter will open with K-1 and add students each year through a five-year enrollment progression. A graphic is provided on page e29. BRICK aims to serve 2,625 students by the end of the CSP funding period and 4,050 by the time it reaches full enrollment across sites (e17).

Another graphic is provided on e29 that shows each school by year and the number of new seats added with CSP funding support. The graphic provides the foundational assumptions for the CSP budget by school, year of operation, and CSP grant year (e29).

BRICK sets ambitious academic, enrollment, staff recruitment, teacher and leader retention, student attendance, student retention, and parent/staff satisfaction goals. A graphic on page e30 shows the organizational benchmarks the network strives to achieve by campus type.

BRICK provides a thorough description of its organizational goal setting and progress monitoring processes, as well as the five goals and 22 related objectives and outcomes it hopes to achieve during the five year project period (e31-33). The five goals are very ambitious and the objectives are specific and aligned.

The application includes a basic logic model in Appendix G (e137) that accounts for organizational inputs, how the BRICK model and/or CSP funding will support these inputs, and short and long-term outcomes.

Weaknesses:

The logic model (e137) lacks significant detail, especially given the ambitious nature of BRICK's growth plan, and does not include measurable outputs or outcomes.

Reader's Score: 14

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 growth plan is specific and well laid-out in the application narrative (e28-29) and has significant potential for impact on students in the regions in which BRICK intends to grow.

BRICK provides a thorough description of its unique instructional model and its appropriateness for the target population on pages e33-e50. Their model includes two-generation family supports, individualized college preparatory instruction, a values-driven school culture, a pedagogy focused on innovation, and student centered education, health care, and family services data to support individualized learning (e34-35).

Sub Question

The BRICK core content curriculum is described on pages e35-e50 and includes descriptions of ELA and Literacy, mathematics, science and social studies, enrichment and electives, and the two-generation cradle-to-career educational pipeline. Through the two-generation cradle-to-career program, BRICK schools enjoy community partnerships with many organizations (named on e50).

To guide their work, BRICK has developed BRICK Roads to Success (BRtS), an integrated system for creating optimal learning environments in schools that proactively identifies the academic and developmental needs of every student and matches them with tailored interventions and supports. BRtS is described in Appendix G (e130-e136).

Weaknesses:

Although the program design is highly ambitious, the design does not account for why the new regions were chosen and how BRICK expects to find success there. It is concerning that they are aiming to open this many schools in such short succession, and in regions in which they may be unfamiliar. It is not clear how this project design and the success of BRICK's three schools in Newark will translate to brand new regions in which the same types of partnerships and preceding reputation do not yet exist. The application lacks detail on how the new regions were chosen and how those populations may be similar or different to the populations they serve now in Newark. The design is strong, but has potential to vary significantly when you take regional differences and the rapidity of the overall growth plan into account.

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: 10

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:

BRICK understands the importance of staff diversity and makes a point to identify, recruit, select, hire, onboard, and support staff at all levels who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups. It also seeks to have its staff demographics mirror that of the student population (e50).

Current demographics for BRICK's charter school are 73% Black, 7% Hispanic, and 20% White (e50).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 1

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

Sub Question

Strengths:

BRICK has a dedicated and highly qualified staff for its overall operations, several of whom will provide direct leadership, oversight and management to the CSP project (e50). These staff include the Chief Academic Officer, who will ensure the BRICK academic program is faithfully replicated and that the network maintains and improves student growth and overall academic achievement results (e51), the Founder and Executive Director, the Chief of Staff, the Chief Talent/Performance Officer, the Director of 3-8 ELA, the Director of 3-8 Math, the Director of Finance, and the Chief Program Officer and Executive Director of the South Ward Children's Alliance (e50-54). The descriptions of these staff in the narrative reflect thoughtful planning and specific project roles and responsibilities either within or alongside their permanent roles at the organization.

The Achieve charter school team brings a combined 60+ years of experience turning around chronically underperforming schools. Team members' skills and strengths include: academic and education programming, operations and finance, parent and community engagement, performance management, talent recruitment and human resources, fundraising, and change management. Their experience also includes positions in corporate, district, or charter school and nonprofit/philanthropic settings. Most members of the team were founders of BRICK's innovative model (e54).

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:

To show that it will achieve the proposed project on time and within budget, the applicant provides a three-phase launch timeline and process (e55) that includes assessment of community needs and support, political environment, health services, talent pool, local financial environment, community development corporations, and land or facilities. The process allows BRICK to analyze the potential risks and opportunities of establishing a charter school in a specific region.

BRICK's process for launching a new charter school and the major launch activities by month prior to launch (and by team responsible) is provided in a table on page e56.

To facilitate internal evaluation, the Project Director will work closely with project staff to gather, analyze, and report on data to measure progress toward project goals, objectives, and outcomes. The application provides a table of data types, instruments and systems, and frequency of data collection and analysis on page e57.

The budget narrative (e144-e148) is detailed and shows the CSP request per school and by year of operation (year 0-6). It aggregates total requests per school by grant year, and also by budget category across schools and years.

Weaknesses:

The overall management plan (e55-56) does not include milestones or personnel responsible for key activities, just overall teams, and given the nature of the massive expansion, more detail is needed.

The three-phase school launch process (e55) is strong, but it does not provide the results of the assessments to indicate

why Bronx, NY and Connecticut were chosen.

The table featuring school launch activities (e56) is detailed and specific, but it would be strengthened if it accounted for possible differences across regions.

The table featuring data types and instruments (e57) does not provide measurable benchmarks or milestones for assessment. The overall management plan would be strengthened if it included at least a high level overview of major benchmarks for student achievement.

The budget narrative and the application narrative do not clearly align with one another. The application narrative would have been significantly strengthened if it included specific reference to budget requests and needs for each school launch.

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:

BRICK is unique because it's a turnaround operator, and has turned around the performance of two traditional public Pre-K through 8th schools in Newark Public Schools. In 2017, it launched its own charter, Achieve Community Charter School, which has been recognized for its unique combination of academic and support services (e17). Central to the wraparound support BRICK provides, they also operate the South Ward Children's Alliance, which focuses on early intervention and family-focused outreach programs (e17).

BRICK has dedicated and experienced leadership, a proven track record of community and family partnership, and an established base of external, high-quality, charter network mentorship to replicate its success and expand its impact to additional regions (e21).

BRICK's charter students at Achieve have shown high growth on NWEA MAP assessments in only one year of operation and the two turnaround schools show high growth on PARC assessments (e23-24). Also, within one year of operation, Achieve will have met its organization benchmark on NWEA/MAP with over 35% of students in Math and Literacy achieving in the top percentile over their nationwide peers. In addition, according to the STEP exam, 90% of students at Achieve are reading on grade level (e24).

BRICK's model of academic plus social service supports and wraparound services has resulted in each campus meeting or exceeding all targets schoolwide, by race/ethnicity, and by special population with only one exception (e58).

BRICK Peshine and Avon met all 2016-17 annual ELA/Literacy targets, both schoolwide and for all races/ethnicities and special populations with exception of students with disabilities (e60). At BRICK Avon, students with disabilities outperformed on the ELA/Literacy PARCC relative to the district. And at BRICK Peshine, Hispanic students and those of Two of More Races outperformed the district, while English learners outperformed both the district and the state (e60). BRICK data shows continued growth in ELA/Literacy at each grade level, so when data is viewed as student progression, BRICK clearly increase student ELA/Literacy achievement for students within the academic year and year-over-year (e61).

In Math, each BRICK turnaround school met all 2016-17 annual achievement targets, both schoolwide and for all student races/ethnicities with no exceptions (e62). BRICK Avon's Black students and those of Two or More Races outperformed their district peers in Math, and at Peshine, English learners outperformed their district and state peers (e62). As with ELA, BRICK students demonstrate high growth in Math from the previous school year almost across the board and year over year (e63).

Overall, BRICK students met or exceeded ESSA accountability targets for ELA and Math for each school and each subgroup in 2016-17, and each school's Student Growth Percentile was higher than that of the district and state medians in both subjects for both schools (e64-65). The data demonstrates that BRICK's model is strong and that the complement of wraparound services is supporting above-average academic growth.

BRICK's success on the Student Growth Percentile nears the tops of all traditional public and charter elementary schools in the district, representing record-setting scores for the two turnaround schools and the first time a South Ward school has been ranked at the top (e67).

In the context of many economic, academic, social, emotional, physical and behavioral health obstacles negatively impacting daily attendance, BRICK schools have significantly less chronic absenteeism among Black students (the majority of its enrollment) than does the Newark district. And at Achieve Charter, the overall attendance rate is 92% (e64). Student retention at the two turnaround campuses is 78% and 81%. The charter does not yet have retention data since it's in its first year of operation (e64).

BRICK has had no issues with school closure or revocation or financial or operational management, compliance, or student safety. BRICK has never failed an audit (e67).

Weaknesses:

Students with disabilities at BRICK Peshine did not meet the annual ELA/Literacy target in 2016-17 (e60). On ELA/Literacy, BRICK students in 2016-17 did not outperform the district and state averages for all students or for most subgroups, with a few exceptions as noted above under strengths (e60).

Reader's Score: 17

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:

BRICK has proven capacity to organize, implement, and manage large multi-year federal grant projects. In 2017, BRICK's South Ward Children's Alliance (SWCA) was awarded a \$29.6 million Promise Neighborhoods grant (e57). BRICK's Chief Program Officer and Executive Director of SWCA serves as the Project Director, so her experience will be invaluable to this new CSP project.

BRICK intends to support, maintain, and continue to operate all its charter schools at a high level of rigor, expectation, and results throughout the project period and after grant funds from CSP are no longer available (e68). The quality of the project personnel undergirds their capacity to do this work effectively.

As detailed in the budget narrative, BRICK's financial model is based on a replicable plan to establish staffing, supplies, operational infrastructure, and other supports for each school as it phases in enrollment. BRICK has formulated a CSP funding plan for each school from year 0 through year 6 and the plan for continuation is supported by five approaches to sustainability, described on pages e68-e69.

Weaknesses:

Because of lack of specificity in the management plan, it is not clear how BRICK will be able to continue to operate its new charter schools at the same level of rigor and results as its current three schools, or how it will sustain performance at the current schools once organizational resources are stretched elsewhere. Ensuring fidelity of implementation for BRICK's proven model while simultaneously maintaining strong supports across the network will be a very challenging task. And as the network expands into new regions, there is multiplied risk to the challenge.

The application would have been strengthened with some evidence of fundraising efforts previously or currently undertaken by the school. This would demonstrate additional capacity for continuation not solely reliant on CSP funds or public revenues.

Reader's Score: 11

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:

BRICK serves children and families exposed to significant adverse childhood experiences and toxic stress through a two-generation, comprehensive network of education, social services, and community building programs. BRICK's long term strategy is to follow students from cradle to college and career to be a transformative force in the neighborhood (e21).

BRICK's approach has demonstrated success supporting high-need students through its turnaround of two traditional

public schools – Peshine and Avon Academy (e22).

Demographics for BRICK’s three schools are provided in a table on e22. The charter school serves 98.4% Black students, 92% economically disadvantaged, and 7.9% students with disabilities. Looking at all three schools, BRICK serves more educationally disadvantaged students than does the state as a whole – as much as 6.26 times the percent of Black students, and as much as 2.4 times the percent of economically disadvantaged students. Also, BRICK serves a larger percentage of students with disabilities, homeless students, and students in foster care than does the state overall (e22).

BRICK aims to serve a much larger number of students and thereby increase access to high-quality educational K-8 schools of choice by growing from one school in one region to seven schools in three regions (e24-25).

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:

No strengths identified.

Weaknesses:

This CPP was not addressed in the application as BRICK only operates K-8 schools.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
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