

**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: Christopher House (U282E180005)

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	12
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	26
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	6
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	12
<b>Continuation Plan</b>		
1. Continuation Plan	15	15
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	80
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Access to High-Quality Educational Choice</b>		
1. Increasing Access	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs</b>		
1. Enrollment Programs	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	0
<b>Total</b>	104	82

# Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Christopher House (U282E180005)

## 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 school's mission and educational program are designed to serve students and families that meet this criterion. The requested expansion would serve an additional 210 students over the term of the grant (e16). The school currently serves educationally disadvantaged students, including 100% students who qualify for free lunch. The school currently serves a much higher percentage of English Learners than local schools (school=46.6%, district=18.0%, state=10.7%) (e.19). The school currently serves much higher percentages of Hispanic students than local schools and the state (school=95.2%, neighborhood=80.0%, state=46.8%) (e22).

The program has been demonstrated to be successful, with the highest school rating from the authorizer, a L1+ on the School Quality Rating Report for 2017-18 (e165e166)., The school earned high growth scores on NWEA assessments, scoring in the 99th (Reading) and 97th (Math) percentile (e167). Based on 2017 scores, the school has produced assessments results for grades K-5 that are higher than the state and district averages . On 2017 PARCC tests, 38.3% students at the school met expectations while the state average was 37.4% and the district score was 24.1% (e62).

#### Weaknesses:

Specific details on plans for expanding enrollment into the middle school program are not provided. Details on the curriculum for middle school and how this program will support this target population are not given.

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: 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**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

Goals are specified and most are measurable. The school has analyzed the selection requirements of local high schools and aligned goals to provide access to the most selective schools (e37-e39). The school outlines expected outcomes for students, including NWEA MAP benchmarks, GPA scores, and attendance levels (e38). The school has established a goal for 100% students to meet expectations on PARCC tests (level 4) in reading and math (e39). The school provides goals for grades 6 – 8 on reading assessments, and literacy goals that all students are expected to meet by the end of 8th grade (e40).

**Weaknesses:**

Goals for social emotional learning are not quantifiable. Disaggregated data from PARCC tests is not provided. Some confusion on goals (i.e. the 6th grade chart, p. e50, includes goals for high school application workshop).

**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 expansion project is designed to expand the educational opportunity from K-5 to K-8 for the targeted at-risk population they serve. Services will expand to meet the needs of a middle school-age population, including social services and family support (e16).

**Weaknesses:**

No information is provided on the proficiency rate of current students in grades 3-5 on PARCC tests to understand the level of growth needed to achieve 100% proficiency in middle school.

No information is provided on how this program is specifically designed to meet the needs of middle school students in the target population. There is very little information on the planning needed to prepare for opening 6th grade in the upcoming year; charts provided (e50) begin with October-December 2018.

**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: 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:**

School serves 95% Latino students. School expresses a commitment to hiring a diverse staff (e42). School currently employs bilingual faculty, with at least one bilingual teacher in each class (e25).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

Specific demographics of current employees are not provided. No specific plan is offered for recruiting and retaining employees in underrepresented groups.

**Reader's Score:** 1

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

**Strengths:**

Key personnel have appropriate degrees and prior experience that match their roles in the organization. The CEO has led the school since 2002, providing leadership through the expansion from preschool to elementary program and new facility (e43). The principal has prior experience teaching middle school (e44) and serving English Language Learners (e45).

**Weaknesses:**

The school does not describe how roles of the key personnel may shift as the school program expands and new staff members are added.

**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:**

Detailed list of some tasks and responsibilities is planned through end of grant term (e50-e59). Responsibilities are assigned to a variety of key personnel for a clear division of duties, with oversight by CEO. General tasks are assigned and repeated throughout the grant term, such as "hold high school application workshop" (e51) and "write Q2 benchmark assessments" (e50).

**Weaknesses:**

The proposed plan lacks coherence. The plan on e50-e59 is a generalized task list for school operations, and includes tasks that are not specific to the expansion project, such as "Approve calendar and benefits package" (e52) and "Lead annual audit data collection" (e52). Facilities plan is unclear: Facility Director will "continue to monitor construction," p. e51, but construction plan has not been outlined. No timelines or benchmarks for construction are provided. Proposed budget and plan seem disjointed; there is a significant increase in personnel costs in year 2 (e214), which is not explained in the plan.

**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**

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 serves an educationally disadvantaged student population, with 100% receiving free lunch (e16) and 95% Hispanic (e22). School was rated in the top 1% of district schools for growth for K-5 for the past 3 years. School ranked at the 99th percentile for growth in reading and 97th percentile for growth in math on the 2018 NWEA MAP assessments. The percentile for the Hispanic and English Language Learner subgroups matched those numbers (e165).

**Weaknesses:**

Specific data for referenced sub-groups is not available. Growth data compares 2016 to 2017 (e163-e167), but prior years data is not available. School recorded a "significant deficiency" (e204) in the FY2017 Audit, regarding the review of multi-year grants. The charter renewal dated January 23, 2018 (e161) includes the stipulation that the school will "correct governance deficiencies pursuant to the annual compliance calendar for the remainder of FY2018 and beyond" and "all outstanding OMA trainings for current members must be completed and evidence of trainings submitted to CPS".

**Reader's Score: 12**

**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 is supported by extensive private revenues and board-approved bank funds. FY2018 budget includes over \$2,000,000 in contributions to the foundation supporting the charter school (e168).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**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 serves a population that significantly high-needs, with 95% English language learners and 23% students with disabilities in the current charter school, grades K-5. The school provides personalized learning combined with family support, and has been rated a Level 1+ School (highest rating) by the local district (e16). The school plan is designed to support and prepare students for access to the most selective high schools in the area on 8th grade graduation (e16).

**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:**

Criterion requirements were not addressed in the application.

**Reader's Score:** 0

---

**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/15/2018 11:31 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/20/2018 07:27 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Christopher House (U282E180005)

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	13
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	25
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	5
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	15
<b>Continuation Plan</b>		
1. Continuation Plan	15	15
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	82
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Access to High-Quality Educational Choice</b>		
1. Increasing Access	2	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	1
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs</b>		
1. Enrollment Programs	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	0
<b>Total</b>	104	83

# Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Christopher House (U282E180005)

## 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 school reports for the most recent school year (17-18) higher percentages of English Language Learners, Diverse Learners, Low Income, and Hispanic students than the surrounding district (Chicago Public Schools) and the state of Illinois (p. e31). The school reports student achievement for the three years since opening (2011) in the top 1% of Chicago Public Schools in growth measurements and has been rated at the highest possible rating for CPS, Level 1+ (p. e34), and significant growth on NWEA MAP indicators from 2016-17 to 2017-18 (p. e163-165).

#### Weaknesses:

The percentage of African American students served in 2017-18 (2.7%) is below the percentage for Chicago Public Schools (37%) (p. e22)

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:

P. e34 describes the number of students in the proposed expansion (234), with intended academic outcomes described in general on p. e35 and specific measurable outcomes for NWEA MAP percentiles, Final GPA, and Attendance listed for both general education and IEP students on p. e38. Specific measurable PARCC assessment goals for reading and math for students in the expanded grade levels are described on p. e39-40

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

Social Emotional outcomes for students in expanded grade levels are described on p. e39, but the outcomes described are not measurable as listed in the application

**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 identifies a project design intended to prepare students for success the Chicago public high schools of their choice (p. e34) including activities to enhance ownership of learning objectives, increased technology to enhance individualized learning, and social-emotional development. The applicant also describes a program of family advocacy, parent education, counseling, and other resources (p. e41-42).

**Weaknesses:**

No quantifiable evidence is presented to indicate the success of these activities in meeting the needs of the target population.

**Reader's Score: 12**

**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:**

The applicant states that they are an equal opportunity employer and that they do not discriminate (p. e42). The staff and board members are described as diverse.

**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 management team described evidences relevant training and experience in executive leadership, curriculum and instruction, family support, and financial management, school operations, and funding (p. e43-49)

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

One identified member of the management team directs the early childhood program (Ross-Williams, p. e46), which is not relevant to the 6th-8th grade 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 addresses 10 management categories and identifies the personnel responsible, activities conducted, and date ranges for the activities (p. e50-59)

**Weaknesses:**

There is some variation in the management plans from year to year and the activities for each date range, but many of the activities are simply repeated from year to year, especially in the areas of student recruitment, teacher and professional development, assessment, parents and community, finance, and operations. (pe50-59)

**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:**

Hispanic reading performance on the NWEA MAP improved from 1% to 99% in one year (p. e163-165). Growth in overall performance/economically disadvantaged performance (100% of the student population) on NWEA MAP (p. e60-61) shows significant growth in reading and math performance for CHCS students from 2016 to 2017. PARCC assessment data shows significant growth in students meeting expectations between 2016 and 2017, with achievement growth rates exceeding state of Illinois averages (p. e62). The applicant states that there have been no instances of noncompliance with regulatory requirements, revocations, or terminations of the charter (p. e63).

**Weaknesses:**

Data presented for academics (p. e60-62) only describes two years of performance, so it is difficult to surmise success in improving academic performance with a limited data span. Performance for IEP students on NWEA MAP for 2016-17 was significantly below the performance of other student groups in meeting or exceeding the national norm (p. e167). Material noncompliance in the handling of student records was noted in the latest financial audit report (p. e193).

**Reader's Score:** 15

**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 describes requesting funds only required for the expansion of the school, as well as additional resources including \$2.7 million from an overall \$6.5 million expansion campaign, and a bank commitment of \$2.2 million (p. e63). As noted in the audit report on p. e178, the charter holder has over 100 years of operational history operating as a settlement house, Head Start provider, and charter holder.

**Weaknesses:**

There is no evidence to suggest that the applicant will not continue to operate the charter school consistent with the application once the grant period has ended.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**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:**

As of the 2017-18 school year the charter holder serves a much higher percentage of English Language Learners and children with disabilities than the Illinois state and Chicago Public School average (p. e19). The applicant indicates that current processes and procedures developed for diverse learners and ELLS will be expanded to meet the needs of current and future students as they progress to the expanded 6th through 8th grade levels (p. e24)

**Weaknesses:**

Specific plans for increased access and choice for ELLs and diverse learners are not included in the student recruitment sections of the management plan (p. e51, e54, and e57) nor in the competitive priority narrative, so increased access and

choice must be assumed based on the current success of the charter school in recruiting these students in higher percentages than other state and local public schools as listed on p. e19.

**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 did not respond to this CPP.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not respond to this CPP.

**Reader's Score:** 0

---

**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/20/2018 07:27 AM

Status: Submitted

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

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Christopher House (U282E180005)

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	11
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	30	24
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	5
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	14
<b>Continuation Plan</b>		
1. Continuation Plan	15	13
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	75
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Access to High-Quality Educational Choice</b>		
1. Increasing Access	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs</b>		
1. Enrollment Programs	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	0
<b>Total</b>	104	77

# Technical Review Form

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

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Christopher House (U282E180005)

## 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 enrolls a significant proportion of educationally disadvantaged students and provides data to support their assertion. The table on pg. e22 clearly shows the racial/ethnic diversity at Christopher House relative to CPS and the Belmont Cragin neighborhood. Relative to the Belmont Cragin neighborhood and CPS, they over-enroll Hispanic students (95.2%) and under-enroll White students (only 1.5%). Black, Asian, and Multiracial sub-groups are enrolled in relatively equal proportion to the community. In the 2016-17 school year, 46.6% of students were English learners (more than 2x rate of CPS) and 23% of students were diverse learners (14% at CPS). A full 100% receive free or reduced-price lunch, while only 77% do so overall at CPS (e23).

The applicant hires administrators and teachers with relevant experience to implement their educational model and are supported by strong systems for identifying and meeting special needs, bilingual and bicultural staff, and a strong internal network of social services (see pg. e23).

Assurance provided that all current processes and procedures will be expanded to meet need of current and future students as they progress to grades 6-8 (e24).

On their high EL enrollment (46.6%), the applicant provides sufficient detail on how it identifies, observes, and screens EL students, how teachers collaborate with the ELL team, and the rights of parents to deny services (e24-25). School is aligned with Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) as per Illinois state law, an inclusive and supportive instructional framework (e25). Bilingual faculty are available to communicate with family members, multilingual materials distributed, and each class has at least one bilingual teacher (e25).

Twenty-three percent of students at the school are children with disabilities (or "diverse learners"). The Diverse Learner Outline of Support is provided on pg. e26 which includes personalized support, details on IEP development and meetings, monthly parent meetings, MTSS program (detail on e27-29), family involvement, and more. Responsibilities of staff to carry out MTSS and IEP processes to best support students is detailed on pg. e29. Assurance provided that the expansion will have the necessary supports to meet IDEA guidelines and a middle school counselor will collaborate with the diverse learner team to support students with high school preparation and planning for transition (e29-30).

Ten Differentiated Learning Goals are provided on e30-31; these goals are meaningful and detailed.

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant provides sufficient detail on how the current K-5 charter school serves EL students and children with disabilities, and provides assurances that these programs and services will be expanded into the 6-8. However, little detail is provided on how exactly the programs and services will be adapted for the grade span.

Recruitment and enrollment for the 6-8 expansion is not addressed; rather the reader is left to assume that matriculation from the K-5 and any recruitment in the community will result in the correct balance of students at rates comparable to surrounding public schools. No plan for recruitment and enrollment is provided.

**Reader's Score:** 11

### **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:** 24

#### **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:**

Their expansion was part of long-term, data-driven strategic plan to create a continuum of education and track student progress. The first phase was K-5, second phase was pre-school, and third phase is 6-8. (e33)

Strong through-line of and commitment to tracking and measuring outcomes so that methods are data-driven. Clearly defined success measurements and outcomes for 2018-2024 provided on pg. e35.

Clearly defined enrollment target of 210, and goal to prepare students to attend and succeed at top-tier Chicago high schools (e34). Goals for 6-8 focus on admission to selective enrollment high schools, PARCC scores, reading level achievement, and social emotional growth. Benchmarks are rigorous and appropriate and detailed on pgs. e37-e40.

There is an overarching goal to develop strong, resilient families via the Parent School – and sufficient detail is provided on parent engagement program model (including family advocates, parent education, counseling, access to school resources like the food pantry and emergency funds, and parent leadership opportunities (e40-42). Assessments are used to learn families' interests and design programming to meet their needs, and individual, family, group counseling offered with licensed clinical social workers (e41).

#### **Weaknesses:**

PARCC assessment goals on e39-40 were lacking in depth and detail; only measurement provided was for 100% of students to obtain a Level 4 (meets expectations). Application would have been strengthened if it included measurable goals for all levels.

**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:**

Vision of Christopher House is to target low-income children and their families; the model from "birth through high school" is appropriate when combined with adult educational programs to create successful students and stable families (e32).

**Sub Question**

Given the scope of the problem Christopher House is aiming to solve, the Chicago Benchmarking Collaborative (CBC) is a strong component of their model – with 69% of partner organizations seeing an increase in results through sharing best practices and data (e33).

The new 6-8th grade curriculum will develop student ownership of learning, increase technology use to enhance learning, and including socio-emotional supports (e34). Use of technology and arts in the classroom explained in detail on pgs. e35-37, and Christopher House has earned an “Excelling in the Arts” rating from CPS for four years in a row after meeting rigorous benchmarks (e37).

**Weaknesses:**

The application does a great job of providing the overarching model that they believe will meet the needs of students and families; however, it would have been strengthened by clearly articulating what the school’s understanding of their needs are so that the suitability of the goals and benchmarks could be better assessed.

The project plan does not include a description of the start-up or planning work to be done leading up to the first year of 6th grade; instead, it reads as a simple continuation of current operations at the K-5.

The application does not include a detailed plan for what the expansion will look like across years or how the roll-out will occur to reach 210 students. The reader has to deduce from different sections of the application that enrollment will begin with 6th grade in year 1, 7th grade in year 2, etc.

The application narrative should align with the project budget request, but the two documents exist in isolation. The narrative does not refer explicitly to any of the budget requests.

**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: 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 identified.

**Weaknesses:**

The application does not mention recruitment of (or encouragement of applications from) persons who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups.

The leadership team leading this expansion consists of existing staff, of which only 1 is identified explicitly as a person of color (Gloria Kuechenberg – pg. e45). No mention of hiring additional persons of color is included.

**Reader’s Score: 0**

## Sub Question

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

#### Strengths:

Christopher House has a large team: diverse staff of 192 individuals and 24 board members, led by CEO Lori Baas (e42). Detailed qualifications, relevant training and experience, and demonstrated results are provided for the CEO, Principal, Dir. of Family Support Services, Dir. of Early Childhood and Youth Development, Dir. of Quality Assurance, CFO, Dir. of Operations, and Dir. of External Affairs (pgs. e43-48). Appendix B also includes resumes of additional personnel associated with the expansion (beginning on pg. e73)

The detailed qualifications of key project personnel are varied and aligned with the needs of students and the school more broadly. The roles together demonstrate a unified commitment to the full range of student and family support services: rigorous instruction, youth development & early childhood services, evaluation, family support, outcomes, growth and strategic planning, strong finance and accounting practices, HR & IT, communications, and fundraising.

#### Weaknesses:

The qualifications and experience of the project team is appropriate and expansive; however, the narrative does not describe each individual's role in the expansion itself beyond their current responsibilities. No mention is made of how their roles may change to specifically accommodate the 6-8 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:

Quarterly plans for implementing school culture, leadership & governance, teachers & PD, curriculum & instruction, student recruitment, parents & community, facility, finances, operations and fundraising are included for each grade level implementation beginning on pg. e50. Grade 6 will enroll in 2018-19, grade 7 in 2019-20, and grade 8 in 2020-21. For each category there is a designated staff member who will oversee implementation and other staff who will be involved in specific pieces of it (i.e. social workers for development of interventions) (e50).

#### Weaknesses:

In general, the management plan seems to be an amalgamation of the very high-level items that need to happen in the first year of enrolling each of the new grade spans but does not describe the work that needs to happen before each of the first years of enrolling (i.e. student and teacher recruitment, family engagement, and more). Moreover, while a different plan (e50-59) is provided per grade level, they more or less read the same with little difference across plans.

The plan for 6th grade Student Recruitment (e51) is confusing and seems to address other elements of the plan (namely, high school application workshops and teacher recruitment) but not student recruitment directly. The application would be stronger if it included benchmarks for student recruitment and made explicit where students will come from (i.e. what % matriculating from grade 5, what % recruited from other neighborhood schools). The Student Recruitment sections for grade 7 and 8 are similarly confusing and it's not clear how students will be recruited to join the middle school; instead the focus is on high school workshops, which seems unrelated.

The plan mentions monitoring construction of a new facility (pgs. e51, 55) but nowhere else in the application is there mention of this happening to accommodate the expansion. Application should describe what is being done to provide space for new students (new facility, addition to current facility, etc.) so that the project plan is cohesive and addresses

everything being done to accommodate the expansion.

**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 school has high attendance rates – 96.1% in 2015-16 and 96.5% in 2016-17 – and both years was above the district average of 92.8% (e60).

Christopher House showed unprecedented levels of student growth on NWEA in 2017-18 and is among Chicago's top 1% of schools (e60). The applicant demonstrates results that exceed state and district averages. It increased its rating from a Level 1 school to a Level 1+ school, which is highest of CPS' five tier rating system that only 30% of Chicago schools achieve – and it's one of only two Level 1+ schools in the Belmont Cragin neighborhood (e60).

Between 2016-17 and 2017-18, there was a 19.4% increase in students meeting expectations on PARCC tests. Only 4 elementary schools in Illinois (only two in CPS) saw larger growth in results (e62). Christopher House's results (38.3% of students meeting expectations in 2017-18) exceeds the state average of 37.4% and far exceeds the CPS average of 24.1%.

The school earned top ratings on NWEA, placing in the 99th percentile in Reading and 97th percentile in Math (e60). In terms of subgroup performance, Hispanic students mirrored the overall school assessment performance. ELs placed in 99th percentile in both Reading and Math, exceeding even overall school performance (e61).

Christopher House has never had a charter school closed or revoked due to noncompliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, has never had any issues that could lead to revocation or closure, or any significant financial, operational, or student safety issues (e63).

#### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not systematically highlight subgroup performance apart from NWEA performance for Hispanic and EL students (e61). For example, some discussion of performance of students with disabilities (diverse learners) would be relevant and appropriate here, given the focus on this population as described earlier in the narrative.

The application narrative and appendices (e163-167) only provide data on two years of performance (2016-17 and 2017-

18), but the school opened in 2013.

**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:**

Construction costs for the expansion are not included in the budget request and will be acquired via a \$6.5 million expansion campaign, with \$2.7 million secured + \$2.2 million committed from bank (e63).

Christopher House assures that it has a history of success raising private revenue for current operations and additional fundraising goals will be added to support expansion (e63). Additional economies of scale will be created through Christopher House's back-office support.

#### **Weaknesses:**

The application would be strengthened if it provided real figures demonstrating its success at raising private revenue in the past to supplement government funding, or named sources or letters of support from which it historically has drawn these private revenues.

**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 explicitly states that the expansion will improve learning environments for two targeted groups: English learners (ELs) and children with disabilities (e19).

The applicant demonstrates that the existing Christopher House Charter School serves far more ELs (46.6% in 2016-17) than the district or the state (e19). Christopher House also maintains bilingual faculty supports for EL students and families (e19-20). Additionally, the applicant demonstrates that Christopher House serves a larger population of children with disabilities (23% in 2017-18) compared to the district and state. They do so with an inclusive model that serves "diverse learners" in a general education setting (e20). Both of these assurances point to an expansion of grades that would continue to serve high proportions of ELs and children with disabilities.

Christopher House has a “Diverse Learners Department” that provides high-quality and specially designed instructional supports and services for all diverse learners. There is a dedicated staff team comprised of the Principal, Diverse Learner Managers, diverse learner teachers, clinicians, and paraprofessionals that consultant with general education teachers on student progress (e20-21).

**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:**

CPP #2 was not addressed anywhere in the application.

**Reader's Score: 0**

---

**Status:** Submitted

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