

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/18/2018 02:37 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Moore Montessori Community School (U282B180038)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvanta		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	15
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	17
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	20	19
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	11
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	5
Sub Total	100	67
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Access to High Quality Educational Choice		
1. Increasing Access	4	4
Sub Total	4	4
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs		
1. Enrollment Programs	4	0
Sub Total	4	0
Total	108	71

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - CSP Developers (84.282B) - 1: 84.282B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Moore Montessori Community School (U282B180038)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvanta

- 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 open will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students and serve those students at rates comparable to surrounding public schools.**

Strengths:

The application describes a 4-part plan to provide educationally disadvantaged students an educational program that supports meeting state standards. (e26) The plan addresses enrollment and recruitment. The school is intentionally located to serve "at least 50% educationally disadvantaged students."(e26) Based on its location the school has set goals for enrolling educationally disadvantaged students, including special education and ELL, at rates that slightly exceed that of the nearby public schools. Marketing materials were distributed at local daycare centers that serve at-risk children, and registration drives were held at Head Start Preschools. (e28) It is clear that the enrollment and recruitment efforts of the school strategically focused on educationally disadvantaged students. If enrollment trends show an increase of "white middle- and upper-income families" the school plans to work with the Office of Charter Schools and the State Board of Education to establish a weighted lottery. (e30) Because the school has a goal of serving educationally disadvantaged students the weighted lottery would give priority to students whose families qualify for the National School Lunch Program.

The application describes parent demand as being a factor. In 2016 a series of Listening Tours were held in the community. In partnership with Boys and Girls Club and Head Start over 250 families were communicated with. In addition to feedback from parents regarding their concerns about the "lack of rigor or depth of learning at school", parents and students had opportunities to explore Montessori math materials. The application indicates that "children and parents expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to learn math with Montessori hand-on materials."(e28)

The application also includes findings from four different research studies that document the effectiveness of the Montessori model with educationally disadvantaged students. (e31-e32)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified

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: 17

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The application identifies four strong goals; each goal has objectives and outcomes. Measurements/assessment tools that will be used to monitor or evaluate the project as it pertains to that goal. (e34-e35; e41-e42; e47-e48; e52)

Three of the four goals have at least one measurable outcome. For Goal 1: Strong Academic Foundations the measurable outcomes are 70% of students advancing at least one grade level in reading; yearly students demonstrate at least one year of growth; by the end of Year Three 75% of students will perform "at or above grade level on third grade NC End of Grade assessments (EOGs) in math and reading" (e35)

Goal 3: Support Educationally Disadvantaged Students will be measured by the performance of educationally disadvantaged students as compared to other students in Moore County. The target is for approximately 70% of educationally disadvantaged students to test at college and career-ready levels on EOGs.

For Goal 4: Improve Student Executive Function Skills the expected outcome is for at least 75% of students to perform at "typical to moderately above age per national norms". (e52)

The majority of the project goals have measurable outcomes that can be used to monitor the success of the project.

Weaknesses:

One of the goals, Goal 2: Highly Effective Montessori teachers has no quantifiable outcomes. Without quantifiable measures related to this goal it is not clear how the applicant will be able to verify that it has accomplished its goal to "recruit, onboard, develop, and retain highly effective, Montessori-trained teachers who also reflect the diversity of students we serve".(e41) For example, the description for Objective 4: Create a staff culture of "reflective teaching" states that the school will use the "Development Environmental Ratings Scale (DERS)" as an in-class observational tool. This tool allows school leaders to "view trends, and track progress at least five times during the course of the year." (e45) Because data is collected multiple time and trends are reviewed it is reasonable to expect that a quantifiable goal could be established. Without a quantifiable measure for this objective, it is unclear how the applicant will verify that its teaching staff exhibits the qualities of "reflective teaching" that it expects.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 12

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 target population is identified on page e26. Goal 3 specifically focuses on Educationally Disadvantaged Students and has outcomes specific to educationally disadvantaged students. (e47)

Weaknesses:

The application does not explicitly identify needs of the target population or any other specific project needs. Specific goals and outcomes are identified in the application, but there is no discussion of why these specific goals and outcomes were selected for this project. There is no connection between the target population of educationally disadvantaged students and the project goals and outcomes articulated in the application.

Sub Question

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

- 1. Note: 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: 19

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:

One of the responsibilities of the Board of Directors is to conduct a "nationwide search to recruit a diverse and highly qualified Montessori teaching staff reflective of the target population."(e56) This statement goes beyond merely stating that the school desires to have a diverse staff. Setting this as a responsibility of the board demonstrates a commitment to take specific action. Additionally, it establishes a broad search for staff from across the nation and not just locally. By seeking candidates nationally, the applicant greatly broadens the pool of candidates which greatly increases the possibility of locating highly qualified staff that is reflective of the target population.

The application includes a general statement of being an equal opportunity employer. (e55)

Weaknesses:

The emphasis for staff recruitment is on Montessori-trained teachers. (e42) While this is a logical approach given the specialized training required to effectively implement the Montessori model, it may result in a staff composition that is not reflective of the target population. By setting "Montessori-trained" as an emphasis the candidate pool for teachers is greatly restricted. Due to Montessori schools being a small subset of all schools, and no data present to demonstrate that there are a significant number of Montessori schools that serve educationally disadvantaged students, the likelihood of finding a teacher that is reflective of the target population and Montessori trained is significantly smaller than the group of teachers that are solely reflective of the target population. By prioritizing "Montessori-trained" as a factor in teacher recruitment, the applicant has greatly reduced the pool of candidates to recruit from, which greatly increases the probability of that is not reflective of educationally disadvantaged students.

Reader's Score: 1

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

Strengths:

Brief biographies (e56-e61) and detailed resumes (e74-e91) were provided for the MMCS Board of Directors, school leadership and classroom teachers.

The Board of Directors takes an active role in the project and has "overseen all aspects of establishing the school". (e56) The current Board Chairperson will transition to Head of School when the school opens. Several other

Sub Question

Directors will also take on day to day responsibilities at the school. Their areas of responsibilities align with their qualifications and experience.

The instructional coach "has 30 years of experience teaching in the AMI recognized Montessori classroom". (e57) The experience will benefit the newly trained and hired teachers in implementing the Montessori instructional methods.

As vacancies are created on the Board of Directors several members have been identified to fill these positions. The current treasurer will become the Board Chairperson. Two current board members will fill the vacated secretary and treasurer positions. (e57) The changes benefit the operation of the school. The current treasurer has no financial experience, but the incoming treasurer, who currently sits on the board, is a certified financial planner and has over 10 years of experience in the financial industry. (e57)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 18

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 application includes a management plan (e63-e65) and a logic model (e34). The objectives in the management plan align with the objectives presented in the project design.

The goals in the management plan align with the logic model. The logic model identifies a "4-point Grant Investment Strategy". The first point is Strong Academic Foundations (e34), this aligns with the Implementation Goal 1 "Build Strong Academic Foundations" (e63). The logic model identifies one of the short-term outcomes as "Educationally disadvantaged children meet individual academic goals". (e63) This aligns with a milestone for Implementation Goal 1: All students have personal learning plans, academic goals in TC by Oct 1". (e64) Objectives, timelines, and milestones are provided in the management plan to identify completion times for specific tasks and how completion will be demonstrated.

Weaknesses:

Budget items are included in the management plan; however, this information is overly general and does not identify specific amounts. The budget narrative (e207-e220) provides descriptions of budget categories, but a clear linkage between the budget descriptors in the management plan and the budget narrative categories is not present for all items. For example, the management plan identifies a budget category of "professional development" for the following objectives: Provide high quality Summer Institute with orientation and professional development; Implement Child Study protocol as early intervention tool for children who need additional support in the classroom. In the budget narrative the description provided for professional development only identifies a coaching contract with National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (NCMPS). No information is provided the summary of the contract to indicate that NCMPS is involved in the summer institute or the child study protocol. As a result, it is not clear how these objectives will be funded if they are not part of the services provided by NCMPS. Without clear information in the budget related to these items it is unclear how these objectives will be monitored to ensure they are completed within budget.

The measurements/assessment tools identified as the tools used to record progress toward outcomes are not all present

in the management plan. Since these tools will be used to monitor progress toward outcomes, the application would have been strengthened to have these present in the management plan. Additional detail in the management plan would clarify how oversight is planned for all tools used to measure outcomes and ensure a mechanism is in place for ensuring implementation consistent with project design. For example, for Goal 1 includes the following tools for measuring outcomes: teacher observation, data collection, student work samples, formative assessments, and Narrative Progress Reports (e35). Teacher observation and Narrative Progress Reports are not included in the management plan. (e63-e64) Without the inclusion of all tools in the management plan it is not possible to ensure that the project will be fully implemented as designed.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 11

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 application states that dependence on grant funding gradually decreases each year of the project. (e67) The majority of funds will go to one-time start-up costs such as "Montessori materials and furniture in each classroom, equipment for our nutrition program, a school library, science labs, and gardens." (e67) Due to minimal costs to maintain these initial one-time expenses the school will likely not require large investments to maintain the program.

Weaknesses:

After grant funding ends, the school estimates that a \$10,000 per year shortfall will exist in recurring costs. (e67) Although the application states that this will be covered by the increase in per-pupil funding in the sixth year of operation, no contingencies or alternate funding plans were provided to demonstrate other methods of addressing the shortfall if enrollment projections for year 6 are not met. The application does not provide data to demonstrate an enrollment trend to support reaching the sustainability targets identified in year 6 of operations. If enrollment targets are not met, the \$10,000 shortfall will continue.

The application also indicates that 8.7% of grant funds are allocated to recurring costs. As identified in the chart at the bottom of page e67 this 8.7% is equivalent to \$61,500. The application does not describe a plan for funding these recurring costs once grant funding ends. When combined with the identified annual \$10,000 shortfall, the applicant has described an annual shortfall of \$71,500 and has not identified a revenue source to address this shortfall.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 5

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 school intends to serve students served by rural local education agencies, children with disabilities, and English learners. (e21). The school demonstrates that intends to serve a rural population because the school will be located within Moore County School District which is currently classified as a Rural Low-Income School (RLIS). The school indicates that 97% of lottery application were from rural students. (e21)

The school anticipates serving a population that is 15% special education and 10% ELL. It has chosen a location to "serve at least 50% educationally disadvantaged students."(e26) Additionally the application identifies a strategic recruitment to attract educationally disadvantaged students. (e28-e29)

It is clear that the school has an intentional design and location that will result in increased access for educationally disadvantaged students.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 4

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:

Application does not address this priority

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/18/2018 02:37 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/18/2018 05:55 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Moore Montessori Community School (U282B180038)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvanta		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	15
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	27
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	20	19
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	20
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	10
Sub Total	100	91
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Access to High Quality Educational Choice		
1. Increasing Access	4	4
Sub Total	4	4
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs		
1. Enrollment Programs	4	0
Sub Total	4	0
Total	108	95

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - CSP Developers (84.282B) - 1: 84.282B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Moore Montessori Community School (U282B180038)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvanta

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 open will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students and serve those students at rates comparable to surrounding public schools.

Strengths:

The applicant proposed to implement Montessori Method (research-based and evidence-based) to expand educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students. The applicant purposes to address four key areas for the proposed project as follows: strong academic foundations, highly effective teachers, support educationally disadvantaged students, and build the students' executive functions. MMCS purposes to improve academic outcomes and learning environments for students in rural communities with disabilities and are English Language Learners, and provides evidence of attainment (p. e21). The applicant stated that 97% of lottery applications at MMCS were from students currently served in Rural Low Income School (RLIS) district. MMCS will provide a Montessori model as an innovational education option to educationally disadvantaged students (p. e22). MMCS shared that the Montessori Method was developed with the intent to serve exceptional children by using the inclusive support for students with learning disabilities by providing activity-based learning (p. e23). MMCS indicated it would serve ELL students at a rate of 10% compared to a rate of 3% of local district's rate (p. e26). In addition, MMCS provided input from four studies to highlight the efficacy of MMCS' Montessori Model that serves educationally disadvantaged students. The findings provided indicated the effectiveness of the Montessori Model in closing/erasing the achievement and opportunity gaps for educationally disadvantaged students (pgs. e31-e33).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses indicated.

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: 27

Sub Question

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The applicant provided clearly specified measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes for the proposed project. The applicant provided detailed narrative and table for further clarity. The applicant indicated that the MMCS goals consist of four specific areas to include strong academic foundations (Goal 1), highly effective Montessori teachers (Goal 2), support targeted population (Goal 3), and improve students' executive function (EF) (Goal 4) (pgs. e34-e55). The applicant provided objectives that align with the goals, including measurable outcomes for each goal and set of objectives. For example, the outcomes for the fourth goal indicated, "at least 75% of students at MMCS would perform at typical to moderately above age per national norms on MEFS" (Minnesota Executive Function Scale). The objectives for Goal 3, Objective 4 is to establish MMCS as an anti-biased, anti-racist school and community (p. e51). In addition, the applicant provides a logic model that includes the situation, goals, inputs, outputs (students and activities), and the short, medium, and long-term outcomes (e34).

Weaknesses:

The applicant failed to provide quantifiable outcomes for all goals and/or objectives (for example, Objective 4, p. e41).

Reader's Score: 12

- 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 provided illustration (3A) to show how Target literacy and mathematics foundational skill is implemented (Goal 1, Objective 5). The illustration gives the Common Core and North Carolina State Standards, Montessori lessons and the Montessori material used (p. e39). MMCS teachers would be trained in the Orton-Gillingham reading instructional approach in an effort to assist students with difficulty with reading, writing, and spelling, most often associated with dyslexia (p. e38). The applicant proposes to close the achievement gap enabling educationally disadvantaged students performance to match the performance of non-educationally disadvantaged students (Goal 3) in Moore County (70% test at college- and career-ready levels on EOGs). The applicant provided information to validate that the Montessori Method is evidence and research based approach that ensures success for meeting the needs of the target population (p. e33-e55). The applicant provided a Logic Model to link the target population served that included measurable outcomes (p. 47, e64).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses indicated.

"This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria."

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. **Note: 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: 19

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 indicated it has attracted exceptional key personnel while ensuring wide representation of individuals based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, and disability, in addition to being an equal opportunity employer (p. e55). As evidence, the applicant indicated that board member and future secretary, a member of the Lumbee tribe of North Carolina, board-certified by the American Board of Pediatrics and the Association of American Indian Physicians (p. e57).

Weaknesses:

The applicant failed to provide evidence of this practice for employees hired or applicants seeking employment.

Reader's Score: 1

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

Strengths:

The applicant provided the provided key personnel by name, title, current roles supported by attached resumes showing evidence of significant experience, education and training to effectively oversee and support the proposed project (pgs. e55-e61, e74-e91). For example, applicant indicated that the board secretary and future instructional coach, has 30 years of experience teaching in the AMI recognized Montessori classroom, owned and operated a private Montessori school (e57). The applicant provided role descriptions with current and future responsibilities for the key staff with relevant training and experience for the proposed project (pgs. e55-e61, e74-e91).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses indicated.

Reader's Score: 18

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 applicant indicated that the Head of School would be responsible for overseeing implementation and evaluation to ensure success the MMCS proposed project (p. e61). The applicant provided evidence of the experience, education, and qualifications of the Head of that includes completion of Montessori training at Washington Montessori Institute, credentialed as a Primary Montessori guide through Association Montessori International (AMI). In addition, the applicant stated that the Head of Schools have built relationships with national leaders in the public Montessori movement, and participates in the Montessori for Equity Collaborative, a consortium of the top public Montessori charter leaders (p. e59). The management plan consist of four specific goals: build strong academic foundations, highly effective Montessori teachers, supports for educationally disadvantaged students, and build students' executive function skills. The applicant provided a table with the goals, objectives, responsibility, timeline, milestone, and budget for the proposed project. The applicant provided the five-year CSP grant budget with a breakdown of cost (Graph, p. e67, pgs. 207-220).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses indicated.

"This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria."

Reader's Score: 20

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 indicated that MMCS Board of Directors would be responsible for ensuring the CSP grant project objectives are achieved on time and within budget. The applicant provided a table illustrating how the board-approved six-year budget would ensure attaining sustainability for the proposed project by Year 6 and beyond. The applicant provided the strategy for attaining a sustainable project beyond grant funding. For example, the applicant indicated that it would open in 2018-19 with 90 children (in five mixed-age classrooms) for kindergarten through second grade adding a grade through 2022. The goal is to reach an enrollment of 256 students in kindergarten through 6th grade in 2022 resulting in a fully sustainable project on existing public funding available to North Carolina charter schools (p. e66-e68). The applicant provided numerous letters of support from state, city, and local organizations, and a parent (Appendix).

Weaknesses:

The applicant failed to provide any additional funding sources in addition to state, city, federal funds received based on enrollment.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

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:

Strengths

The applicant indicated that it would serve students (Kindergarten through Grade 6) located in rural North Carolina County that is educationally underserved. Moore Montessori Community School (MMCS) will initially serve 90 students for grades Kindergarten through Grade 2 and expand one grade per year to reach a capacity of 250 students (Abstract, e16). The applicant purposes to address four key areas for the proposed project as follows: strong academic foundations, highly effective teachers, support educationally disadvantaged students, and build the students' executive functions. The applicant indicated that MMCS purposes to improve academic outcomes and learning environments for students in rural communities with disabilities and are English Language Learners (p. e21). The applicant stated that 97% of lottery applications at MMCS were from students currently served in RLIS district. MMCS provides evidence of increasing access to educational choice while improving academic outcomes and the learning environment. MMCS indicated that there is a private Montessori school that is located over 70 miles away with tuition of \$20,000 per year. MMCS will provide a Montessori model as an innovational education option to educationally disadvantaged students at no cost to attend (p. e22). The applicant indicated that MMCS would serve ELL students at a rate of 10% compared to a rate of 3% of local district's rate (e26). The applicant indicated that it would implement a Montessori curriculum that is child-centered model that builds strong academic foundations. The applicant indicated that according to research Montessori is "effective in closing the opportunity gap between economically disadvantaged students and their peers" (p. e16).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses indicated.

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 indicated.

Weaknesses:

Applicant did not address this priority.

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/18/2018 05:55 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/16/2018 02:55 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Moore Montessori Community School (U282B180038)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvanta		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	15
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	17
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	20	19
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	20	11
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	5
Sub Total	100	67
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Access to High Quality Educational Choice		
1. Increasing Access	4	4
Sub Total	4	4
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs		
1. Enrollment Programs	4	0
Sub Total	4	0
Total	108	71

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - CSP Developers (84.282B) - 1: 84.282B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Moore Montessori Community School (U282B180038)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvanta

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 open will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students and serve those students at rates comparable to surrounding public schools.

Strengths:

MMCS will serve students in a rural, underserved, high poverty area in southeastern North Carolina. The local school district is classified as a "rural low-income school district" by the US Department of Education (pages e21-22). MMCS plans to serve 15% special education which is three percent more than the surrounding public schools (page e23) and is committed to serving all students who apply, especially the underserved students in the neighborhood. There are plans in the application for fully including special needs students (page e23), such as an Exceptional Child Coordinator along with Child Study, individual learning plans, and the integration of the Montessori method (pages e22-25). MCCA specifically targets 45% African American compared to 20% with the surrounding schools, 10% Hispanic compared to 6% with county schools, 45% white compared to 70% for surrounding schools, 10% English learners compared to 3% for the surrounding district, and 50% or more educationally disadvantaged. 90% of lottery applications were from students currently served in rural schools (page e21). There is only one private Montessori school that charges \$20,000 in the area so this would provide free educational choice for families in the area (page e22). They are targeting educationally disadvantaged students with listening tours in 2016 and have a partnership with the local Boys and Girls Club (pages e22-23). It is noted in the application that the Montessori model might be of more interest to white families so the applicant plans a weighted lottery system on page e30 if needed to increase educationally disadvantaged.

Weaknesses:

no weaknesses noted

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: 17

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:

Goal #1 is strong academic foundations, goal #2 is highly effective Montessori teachers, goal #3 is supporting educationally disadvantaged students, and goal #4 is improving student's executive function skills. Each goal is accompanied by supporting objectives, measurements and assessments, and outcomes (see pages e34-55). Some of the outcomes are measurable (for instance 75% of students perform at typical to moderately above average per national norms on MEFS – page e52). Three of the four goals have quantifiably measurable outcomes.

Weaknesses:

Many of the outcomes are not easily measurable (contribute to the growing body of evidence that high-quality Montessori supports EF, strong academic and socio-emotional outcomes for all MMCS students, strong relationships with families, etc – see pages e34-55).

Reader's Score: 12

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:

There are a variety of details for each goal to successfully address the needs of the target population. Specific plans for English learners and special education students target the needs those students have (pages e34-55). Literacy is targeted in goal 1 objective five using Montessori methods (page e39). Page e38 proposes to close the achievement gap using specific Montessori reading and writing methods. Goal #3 specifically targets the educationally disadvantaged students (page e64) of generally accepted or known issues such as racism, bias, and needed family supports.

Weaknesses:

The applicant has identified the target population on page e26 (African American, educationally disadvantaged, English learners, and Special Education). However, there is no indication of the needs of those students. While there are objectives identified to support goals, there are no indicated action steps that are articulated that support the goals of the project. (pages e63-65). For instance, the goal of improvement on EOGs (can you spell this out?) does not tie back to economically disadvantaged students or English Learners or Special Education students with particular tasks and action steps to achieve the goals. The rationale is not clear to support that the goal is appropriate or linked to the target population (e.g. Executive Function on pages e52-55).

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. Note: 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: 19

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

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant states they “ensure a wide representation based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, and disability.” (p. e55). Page e56 states the board has a responsibility to conduct a nationwide search for a diverse staff reflective of the target population of students.

Weaknesses:

There is no specific plan to encourage applications from underrepresented populations. While it is logical to recruit Montessori trained teachers, the school may struggle with finding a diverse staff without a specific plan in place (pages e55-56).

Reader's Score: 1

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

Strengths:

The board has a variety of experience. The school leader has extensive experience. (please provide some information on why the school leader has extensive experience. The treasurer is becoming the board chair and due to their experience as a Certified Financial planner this will support appropriate fiscal oversight. The board chair will become the head of school. She has over thirty years of Montessori teaching and administrative leadership. Detailed resumes are provided (pages e55-61, e74-91).

Weaknesses:

None noted

Reader's Score: 18

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 on pages e63-65 and logic model on page e64 include objectives that align with the project design and with the model. The plan includes completion times for tasks include how and by whom each task will be accomplished and measured. Each of the objectives is appropriately linked to the overarching project purpose and goals and accomplishes an appropriate component of the logic model.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant does list objectives their scope is quite large and they lack much-needed detail. The application would have been strengthened if the objectives and tasks were broken down into clear manageable tasks. There are persons listed as responsible for various tasks but no specific mechanisms to report progress to the board or other stakeholders (pages e63-65).

Budget item descriptions e207-220 are not aligned with the budget in the management plan and are too general. For instance, measurement tools page e35 goal #1 says measurement and achievement tools include teacher observations. The management plan (on page e63-64) should indicate when and how those observations will be conducted In the budget narrative on page e208 (contractual), no professional development costs of anti-racism or anti-bias are included but they are in the management plan and objectives.

Reader's Score: 11

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 chart on page e68 shows how the grant proposes to end up without any funds required beyond the CSP grant.

Weaknesses:

The application does not provide a contingency plan in the event 256 students are not able to be recruited and enrolled in the school (page e68). There is no indication the recruitment and retention plans are solidly in place. There is no indication of any local philanthropy or fund raising which would support the project long-term, but would be necessary in light of the fact that the pie chart on page e69 indicates that 8.7% of the grant funds will be used for recurring costs but includes no indication how that \$61,500 will be covered beyond the life of the grant.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 5

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:

Moore Charter School will serve students in a rural, underserved, high poverty area in southeastern North Carolina. The local school district is classified as a "rural low-income school district" by the US Department of Education (pages e21-22). MMCS plans to serve 15% special education which is three percent more than the surrounding public schools (page e23) and is committed to serving all students who apply, especially the underserved students in the neighborhood.

Weaknesses:

None noted

Reader's Score: 4

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:

Priority not addressed.

Weaknesses:

Priority not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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