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

**Applicant:** New Hope Public School Academy Project Team (U282B180043)  
**Reader #1:** *********

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## Priority Questions

**Competitive Preference Priority 1**

Access to High Quality Educational Choice  
1. Increasing Access  
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**Competitive Preference Priority 2**

Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs  
1. Enrollment Programs  
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Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *******
Applicant: New Hope Public School Academy Project Team (U282B180043)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged

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 created a compelling argument that describes the significance of the proposed project. On page e19 the applicant included research that helps support the necessity of providing wraparound services for high-need students. On page e23 and e24, the applicant provided demographic data that describes the students in from surrounding public schools. The school will share a facility with an existing community center that currently provides services to families in the community. On page e25, the applicant describes the location and current services offered to families. Due to the location of the school, there is an increased likelihood that many of the families who are currently being served will enroll their students at the school.

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: 30

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

On pages e32 and e33, the applicant identified the curriculum that will be used to help ensure that students have access to a quality instruction. Since the measures identified by the authorizers will compare the academic progress with peer schools based on the state assessments, the applicant described how the school will utilize the same benchmark assessments to monitor progress towards school goals.

The goals referenced in the application on pages e44 - e46 are clear and measurable. The activities listed directly
Sub Question

correlate to specific outcomes of the project. Additionally, the application was strengthened by including benchmarks that measure the impact of the project goals and objectives that relate to supportive school culture.

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.

Reader’s Score: 15

2. (2) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:
There was substantial information included that describes how the applicant will address the needs of the targeted population. On pages e45, the applicant provided a list of activities that align and support identified needs of the community. Additionally, the applicant provided information on page e25 that describes the current usage of the community center for various services. Because the school will be located within the facility of an existing community center that provides services for the entire family, the addition of the school is a "value-add" for the community by creating a full-service community school. With access to afterschool tutoring, counseling services, and hot meals, the concept naturally addresses the needs of the targeted population.

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.

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: 17

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:
On page e47, the applicant provided a detailed plan that will be used to recruit and hire staff. The use of an experienced and diverse HR team to oversee the hiring process adds further assurance that strong hiring practices will be implemented. The applicant also provides research on page e47 that supports the necessity for having a racially proportionate number of staff members for the students that they serve. To that end, the applicant has described a plan to partner with universities and organizations that can assist with attracting a diverse applicant pool.

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted.
Sub Question

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

Pages e50 and e51 detail the qualifications of the founding board members. The listed board members have varied backgrounds that add strong value to the oversight of the school. The current board members backgrounds seem to compliment each other and are reflective of the various stakeholders of the within the community. On pages e49 and e50 the applicant described a plan for transitioning from the founding board to the governing board. The foresight of this plan is key to ensuring a smooth school startup.

The key personnel listed on pages e53 from Choice School Associates are experienced in managing similar schools. Additionally, both the Chief Strategic Operations Officer and Chief Executive Officer are experienced in overseeing large grants and operations for charter schools. When working with startup charter schools, particularly with grants of this magnitude, it will be essential to have personnel who understand how this grant should be managed and who can support the school with hiring staff that adequately manage the human and physical resources.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not clearly describe how the governing board will operate independently of the management company. In order to ensure that the board is the responsible entity for the charter school, the applicant should fully describe the relationship with the management company and the services that will be contracted to the management company.

Reader's Score: 15

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:

As evidenced by the information included on pages e56 and e57, the applicant has a thorough understanding of the charter school start-up process as well as managing grants and resources. There is a strong level of assurance that the applicant will be able to achieve the objectives of the project on time and within budget. On pages e59 and e60, the applicant describes the relationship with Choice Schools Associates and clearly demonstrates the separation of responsibilities between the school leader, the board, and the education service provider. Pages e63-e65 includes a detailed timeline with major milestones that align with the project goals. The timeline is reasonable and can be accomplished within the specified timeframes. The management plan is thorough and provides great assurance that the project will be managed effectively.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant included detailed information about the organizational performance the plan did not include defined student achievement objectives. It is essential to show how the school operations will directly impact student achievement and increase higher-level educational opportunities for disadvantaged students.
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 provided examples of how the project goals could continue after the grant is completed. On pages e66 and e67 there is a plan to adjust the budget according to the current enrollment. The applicant also plans to apply for other grant funding that will offset the costs of the school’s operational needs. The unique partnership with Samaritas described on page e67 affords the applicant an opportunity to negotiate the terms of the facility. If the applicant is able to secure the necessary funds from the title grants and other funding means, there is a strong likelihood that the project goals could continue after the grant funding is concluded.

   Weaknesses:
   There was no mention of any fundraising efforts that will assist in sustaining the school operations after the grant cycle. Fundraising efforts could be helpful in securing other grants or funding measures that require in-kind contributions. Plans to fundraise can also help to ensure that there is a consistent source of funding that can support the school goals and operations are essential for continued program development. There is no reference to the cost of the service provider which could have a significant impact on the school operations long-term.

Reader's Score: 12

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 research included on pages e19 help to support the necessity for opening increasing access to a high-quality educational choice in the Saginaw community. The applicant described the population of students that will be served with the opening of the school which includes a population of approximately 15% of children with disabilities and 16% of the students attending neighboring schools are English Learners (EL). These percentages support the need to increase access for students in this community.

   Weaknesses:
   No weaknesses noted.
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 address this priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this priority.

Reader's Score: 0
Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** New Hope Public School Academy Project Team (U282B180043)

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

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**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 1**

**Access to High Quality Educational Choice**

1. Increasing Access

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**Competitive Preference Priority 2**

**Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs**

1. Enrollment Programs

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**Total**

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Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *********
Applicant: New Hope Public School Academy Project Team (U282B180043)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged

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:

Applicant presented meaningful current data and information that describes a geographic region that is ripe with socio-economic challenges: Racial disparities of the city represent 61.8% African American, 11.9% Latino and 29.4% White; The median household income being $27,658, which is almost doubled at the state level at an average of $48,471; and Saginaw County has the second highest rate of children living in poverty in the State of Michigan (e23). Additional disparities in school show of 1,021 K-6 students in the three elementary schools, an average of only 10% scored "Proficient" on state-mandated M-STEP assessments and also ranked bottom 10% in performance of all schools in the state of Michigan in 2015-16 (e24).

In helping educationally disadvantaged students to access academic services and to increase their academic performance, applicant plans to provide service support via two tiers of an integrated delivery platform through: Meeting Challenges and Academic Standards, and Community and Family Involvement (e25). Methods will consist of implementing a program that addresses both academic deficiencies and basic human needs by incorporating a holistic wraparound services approach to complement educational programs (e29). Through active planning and engagement with representative families and key leaders in the community, applicant has established a significant level of support for the Academy as is confirmed through the submitted letters of support (e25). The school leadership team will be headed by the school social worker for these efforts and will also work closely with parents. Noted activities will include a targeted neighborhood outreach campaign to recruit and enroll Saginaw's educationally disadvantaged students (e26).

Weaknesses:

Applicant's narrative indicates that there could possibly be a population underrepresented groups might not have access to their proposed high quality educational programming. Such a policy to refuse entry to a group represents entry criteria which is not part of the federal definition of a charter school (e27).

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:
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:

Applicant provided detailed and measurable objectives that offer rational baseline data in addition to clearly defined quantitative performance outcomes (e36 & 37). Each of the objectives are integrated with the following activities: Enrollment in Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) or the MI-Access assessment; Usage of the NWEA Measures for Academic Progress (MAP) assessment tool for Grades 1-6; and the creation of an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP). Additional activities will focus around: Monitoring student progress; Parent involvement; Community engagement; Supporting all students (Response to Intervention/Multi-tiered System); Small-group tutoring for 45 minutes, three times a week; Positive Discipline Support Plan; Professional Learning Communities (PLC); and clear approach to Section 504 (ADA) and Special Education (IDEA) compliance. (e35-43)

Applicants target goal for student performance is to: outperform the four local public schools on the state mandated assessments; and to be on par with, or exceed the results reported from the three local charter schools (e36). For the goal, applicant provides wide-ranging snapshots of each of the comparison schools along with performance data for math and ELA. All of the performance indicators for grades 3-6, show only one of the seven schools attaining over 50% proficiency in either math or ELA (52% in ELA) (e34-35).

Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses noted in this section.

Reader’s Score: 15

2. (2) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

Applicant provided a detailed Logic Model table that explains the methods and rationale for implementation strategies (e44 -46). Applicant’s proposed usage of the Logic Model for evaluating the program’s overall performance demonstrates a very methodical approach and covers: Program Goals, Activities, Objectives, and Performance Measurements. Program Goals are clearly defined and in alignment with Program Activities (e44 -46). The activities are designed to be assessed and counted for later evaluation to measure against year to year performance goals. The promise of the applicant’s proposed strategy is that the manner of the design is seamlessly integrated and involves all key operational functions. (e44-46)

Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses noted in this section.

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:
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:

Applicant will contract with Choice Schools Associates who will assume responsibility for staffing Academy based on Board approved annual operating budget. A selection team made up of other Choice Schools Associates' teachers, School Leaders, and HR specialists will interview and a final interview will take place with the Superintendent and Chief Human Resources Director. Applicant also proposes a detailed vetting process (e47) District demographics will be used as a consideration in making hires in a way to afford students with teachers that share a similar composite of the student population. This proposal is supported by several studies that tout the values of the theory and demonstrate the potential for increasing student academic performance when exposed to at least one same race teacher (e48). To obtain this goal and to satisfy the requirement of employing persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented, applicant will regularly engage in relationships with diverse educator networks, such as the National Alliance of Black School Educators, and also partner with a wide variety of universities both inside and outside of Michigan.

Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses noted in this section.

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The applicant’s planning committee is steeped with individuals who possess a wide array of backgrounds that can prove highly beneficial to the overall operation of the Academy (e54). Post grant award, many members of the committee will seek to transition and remain with the Academy and become founding Board Members. Some of the experiences are as follows: Experienced Charter School Principal and Teacher; General Motors Financial; Michigan State Police; Admin at Saginaw Valley State University; Social Worker/Community Specialist; Community banker; facility owner for charter school development; Community Center Director; Choice Schools Associates Area Superintendent; Choice Schools Operations Officer; and CEO Choice Schools Associates (49). While a school leader has not been identified, applicant has proposed the intended leader possess the following attributes: educational professional that is knowledgeable of the unique needs of the children and families; highly qualified administrator; Able to implement educational interventions and curricula with fidelity; and Able to increase academic performance. (e54 & 55)

Weaknesses:

Applicant does not clearly state what prior teaching experiences will be required as well as academic credentials that a teach will need to be considered a viable candidate of employment. The experiences and educational requirements for the school leader should be more clearly defined. While applicant presented a breadth of appropriate professional and personal experiences held by the current planning committee, applicant does not make it clear as to why the members of the same planning committee would have to apply to the authorizer to serve
Sub Question
as founding board members. (e49-55)

Reader's Score: 15

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 proposed a clear management plan to provide implementation and oversight of the Academy. Because the applicant does not have their own 501c3, it will rely in large part on the established charter school management operation of Choice School, their parent organization, who have a long-standing track record in managing successful charter schools that are based in urban environments (59).

The operational characteristics of the management plan are outlined in a detailed narrative that explains how management tasks will be implemented and support will be afforded the Academy through interdependent functions of: Project Team and School Board; Education Service Provider – Choice Schools Associates; Authorizer – Grand Valley State University Charter Schools Office; and the facility lessor – Samartas (e60). The Academy is promised significant in-kind support from engaged partners beyond the Project Team. Additionally, applicant provides an intensive table that outlines: Operational functions; Tasks and milestones; Who is responsible; and Calendar dates for deadlines. The applicant’s commitment to employ usage of the Logic Model will also strengthen to the application of the proposed management plan. (e63-65)

Weaknesses:
A significant amount of program resources will go to contracted services that could have the potential to lessen revenue of program support for students and families if the committed in-kind support is delayed or not forthcoming. Additionally, management plan needs to be more aligned with proposed student achievement goals and objectives that connect the overall performance indicators to educational goals.

Reader's Score: 16

Selection Criteria - Continuation Plan

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

Strengths:
Applicant has proposed a sound and persuasive strategy for long-term sustainability of the Academy beyond the life of the grant. Applicant’s vision of sustaining the Academy include: receipt of Michigan State Aid Allocation at a rate of $7,600 (estimated) per student; When grant funds are no longer available, all essential school operations will be able to be covered by the Academy’s General Fund Budget; bridge loans if it becomes necessary; federal supplemental financial resources: Title I, Title II, Title IV, and 31A At-Risk grants; the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program Grant; Community Eligibility Program; Great Start Readiness Program. The building owner has pledged to keep the rent at a
break-even amount should anticipated revenues be lower than the estimated budget.

**Weaknesses:**

Applicant does not explain how expenditures for contracted services will be covered by other sources as a means to guarantee the continuation of uninterrupted services.

**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:**

Applicant provides an extensive accounting of their reasoning for how and why they are going to be able to address the education needs of the targeted population in Saginaw, Michigan that will to increase access to educational choice and improve academic outcomes and learning environments. Programmatically, Applicant plans to enroll high-needs students in numbers that will be equal to, or above student headcount recorded in their local school districts, and will offer physical, social and emotional support services. All Special Education services will be overseen by a special education supervisor who will also support school leaders and staff. Applicant also reports that these services represent a gap in availability within the schools, as most are typically only available through outside organizations. (e19) Applicant proposes to address the following two categories:

(ii) Children with disabilities Applicant provided current, comprehensive data on the children that they hope to provide educational services to, who have also been diagnosed with disabilities. Applicant reports that: The City of Saginaw reported a Special Education student count of 14.0% of the total number of students enrolled in 2016-17, 1% higher than the state average of 13.0; Almost half of the 850 students (40.9%) were diagnosed with specific learning disabilities; and 15% exhibiting speech and language impairments. Comparative neighboring Community School District reported Special Education students at 15.7%; specific learning disabilities (38.2%); and speech and language impairments (17.9%). The three local charter schools in the area ranged between 11.4% - 12.9% of Special Education students. (e20)

(iii) English learners Applicant provided current, comprehensive data on the children that they hope to provide educational services to, who have also been diagnosed as English Learners. Applicant reports that: The School District has 260 English Learner (EL) students as assessed using the WIDA Access Performance series; only 13.5% ranked as proficient, well below the state’s average EL proficiency level of 19.9%; none of the 35 EL students tested attained proficiency who attend the closest neighboring elementary school. Additionally, many families that currently utilize the community center are of Hispanic origin and represent a significantly higher percentage of Hispanic families in comparison to the City of Saginaw. (e22)
Weaknesses:
There were no weaknesses noted in this section.

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:
N/A Applicant did not address Competitive Preference Priority 2

Weaknesses:
N/A Applicant did not address Competitive Preference Priority 2

Reader's Score:   0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/18/2018 07:45 PM
Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Hope Public School Academy Project Team (U282B180043)
Reader #3: ********

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<td>1. Management Plan</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuation Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Continuation Plan</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>86</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **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** | **90** |
Technical Review Form

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

Reader #3: *******
Applicant: New Hope Public School Academy Project Team (U282B180043)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged

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 provides substantial data reflective of the targeted area that the school will recruit and enroll students. For example:

• The elementary school population in the target area performs an average of only 10% Proficient on state required assessments (p. e24).
• The three elementary schools in the targeted area rank in the bottom 10% of all schools in the state (p. e24).
• The racial makeup of the city, based on census data, is 61.9% African American and 11.9% Latino with a medium household income of $27,658 (p. e23)
• The county has the second highest rate of children living in poverty in the State (p. e23).

The quality of the plan is based on holistic, integrated wraparound services partnered with an in-house community service agency (pp. e24-25) and through a dedicated Social Worker employed by the school.

Weaknesses:

The applicant states the “the Board authorizes the School Administrator to deny admission to any student who has a record of behavior that s/he believes would constitute a threat to the safety and well-being of fellow students and staff (p. e27). An enrollment restriction of this kind presents a concern relative to the typical open enrollment policies and regulations of public charter schools (p. e27).

Reader’s Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader’s Score: 30

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The framework of goals and measureable outcomes is based on two clearly understood references: (1) The authorizer, Grand Valley State University Charter Schools Office (GVSU) maintains specific academic and growth goals based on a comparison to “peer schools” as defined in the charter contract (p. e17); (2) the proposed school has internally planned educational goals which stipulate that, after one year of enrollment, all students will outperform the four traditional public school in the area on the state mandated assessments (pp. e17-18).

The applicant also provides a clear set of program goals, key activities/inputs, outputs, objectives and performance measures.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 15

2. (2) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

Strengths:

The logic model presented (pp. e44-46) clearly documents that the project will substantially address the needs of the target population by integrating a wide variety of measureable social services and specific student academic expectations.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses noted.

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: 17

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 notes that, within the school district, there exists a wide disparity in the districts' staff ethnicity breakdowns and the racial makeup of the student populations (pp. e47-48). Accordingly, the project has set a goal of higher overall staff diversity than that of the local district (p. e48).

Also, Choice Schools Associates will provide contracted services for the recruitment of staff using instituted best practices that foster diversity and inclusion, including its diverse educator networks, such as the National Alliance of Black Educators (pp. e48-49).
Sub Question

Weaknesses:
There are no weaknesses noted.

Reader’s Score: 2

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

Strengths:
The project has assembled a large planning committee with significant diversity and complementary experience and skills (p. e50). It includes representatives from the service provider, including the area superintendent. While the school leader has not been selected, details of the position description are provided (pp. 54-55).

Weaknesses:
The project director position is not clearly understood, unless it is simply embedded in the service provider, i.e. the Area Superintendent for the Academy (p. e53). Furthermore, key personnel utilized through the partnered community center and the service provider needs to be detailed as part of the leadership team of the school.

There is also a concern relative of the independence of the governing board if, as stated, the board will be determined by the authorizer (p. e54).

Reader’s Score: 15

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 provides for a complete description of an organizational management plan, inclusive of planning dimension/budget link, milestones, responsible party and deadlines (pp. e63-65). The management plan is divided, according to relevant tasks, with the charter school board, education service provider and community organization. It is the service provider, however, that will be responsible to achieve each of the educational goals of the charter contract with the board’s authorizer (p. e60).

Weaknesses:
The management plan needs to be more aligned with meeting the defined student achievement objectives. For example, most of which is depicted in the plan pertain to organizational needs rather than a plan that integrates the major performance goals and objectives.

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:
   Per pupil funding is substantial; $7,600 (p. e66) and facility rental cost appear to be reasonable. Additionally, the contracted service provider will be responsible to secure other ongoing grant programs such as Title and State Grants, National School Meal Grants, etc. (p. e67).

   Weaknesses:
   The continuation plan does not address the cost of contracted services, including the multiyear cost of the service provider. This factor could be a critical factor in the long term financial viability of the project.

Reader's Score: 12

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 adequately describes an Integrated Student Support approach to address both academic and nonacademic needs through an outside Education Service provider that specializes in these services to children with disabilities and English learners (pp. e19-21). The project also cites census data within the immediate location of the school which has a high percentage (16.8%) of residents who are identified as of Hispanic or Latino origin (p. e22).

   Weaknesses:
   There are no weaknesses 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:**
The applicant did not address this priority

**Weaknesses:**
The applicant did not address this priority

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted
**Last Updated:** 06/13/2018 03:31 PM