

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/21/2018 12:07 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Scuola Vita Nuova (U282E180020)

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

	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	27
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	8
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	18
<b>Continuation Plan</b>		
1. Continuation Plan	15	15
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	89
<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	91

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - CSP Developers (84.282E) - 3: 84.282E

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

Applicant: Scuola Vita Nuova (U282E180020)

## 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 effectively demonstrated that the proposed project will replicate the school's current instructional design for expanded capacity. The current program has established an enrollment preference for students living within a two-mile radius from the school. As a result, the demographics of students enrolled in the school are reflective of the community it serves. The school uses a non-weighted lottery for admissions. Missouri law only allows enrollment preference for siblings of current students, children of employees, or for a geographically defined area that does not result in racially or socioeconomically isolated schools. (pgs. 8-9)

Currently, the applicant enrolls low income students and students of color at rates that are comparable to those of surrounding schools and identifies students with disabilities at a lower rate than those schools. The school enrolls English Learners at a dramatically higher rate than surrounding schools. The proficiency of students on the state assessments is dramatically better than Kansas City Public Schools and approaching the overall state percentages while serving a student population approximately two-thirds of whom are English learners. (10-11)

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide clearly labeled data sets to differentiate the actual year(s) of the data. Additionally, the applicant at times did not differentiate between state and local assessments. This information was needed to precisely determine if the targeted students were meeting and exceeding State academic standards.

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: 27

#### Sub Question

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

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided clearly specified goals that are aligned with measurable outcomes. The goals were presented in four broad components of the project: (1) provisioning the school for the increased capacity, (2) providing professional development for the staff to support the expansion, (3) supporting increased constructionist instruction and authentic learning and (4) increasing family engagement. (pgs. 23-27)

The applicant provided baseline data for each measurable performance goals. For example, the applicant presented a goal to increase the proficiency of 4th and 8th grade students on state assessments. The baseline is 52% and the 5-year target is 64%.

**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:**

The applicant clearly demonstrated that the proposed project has the potential to address the needs of targeted ELL population. Throughout the narrative, the applicant provided evidence of their current successes with serving a neighborhood community with a high population of immigrants and ELL students. For example, the school serves one of the higher concentrations of English Learners in the State with 65% to 70% of students typically in their ELL program compared to 25% across all schools in Kansas City and 3.5% across all schools in the State of Missouri. (pg. 26)

The applicant will support students with change in instruction from a model where the classroom teacher provides instruction in all content areas to one where teachers specialize in instruction in one core content area and students rotate between teachers for instruction. (pg. 27)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide evidence that the professional development will specifically address the needs of the staff in regards to ELL students. The applicant did not explain how the family engagement component of the project design will meet the needs of the targeted population. This information was crucial for determining if more family involvement would increase student success.

**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**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

No strengths noted.

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant provided the required GEPA statement that indicated the program will not discriminate in the Appendix, the applicant did not provide a narrative that address how they will encourage employment from who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed key personnel are qualified to implement the project's goals and objectives based on educational backgrounds and prior experiences. The assessment of the qualifications was based on a review of resumes and experience summaries in the narrative. (pgs. 30-32) For example, the project director has twenty-one years of experience in urban education, including eight years at Scuola Vita Nuova. She has eight years of experience in the classroom, including thirteen years of experience in administration. She has a B.A. in Elementary Education from Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, masters in administration from Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri, and masters in reading and an ESL endorsement from Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska.

Similarly, the Director of Finance has thirteen years of experience in the charter school system and five years with Scuola Vita Nuova. She is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and Certified Administrator of School Finance Operations (SFO). A member of the Missouri Society of CPAs, Missouri Association of Business Officials, and Association of Business Officials International.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided a detailed management plan that provided a blueprint as to how the proposed project will be implemented and the operational tasks. The management plan provided details on the activities and tasks that will take place to begin the project and sustain it over the life of the grant. The management plan was aligned with the tasks and activities to meet each goal and objective and the persons responsible for implementing the tasks. The timeline is for completion is reasonable. The applicant provided evidence that in 2013 the school purchased and renovated the existing 32,000 square foot building to support the relocation and expansion of the school. The project had a budget of \$5.1 million and was executed on budget and on time to support the school opening for the 2014/15 school year. This evidence

demonstrated that the applicant has the potential for meeting the project tasks on time and within budget. (pgs. 24-27)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide milestones for completing tasks and activities. This information would have been helpful in determining if the project will have in place contingency plans for not meeting timelines.

**Reader's Score:** 8

**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:**

(1) The applicant provided comprehensive evidence that the proposed expanded program has the potential to successfully increase achievement for all sub-groups. For example, currently, the applicant is a neighborhood school serving a community with a high population of immigrants. The school serves one of the higher concentrations of English Learners in the State with 65% to 70% of students typically in their ELL program compared to 25% across all schools in Kansas City and 3.5% across all schools in the State of Missouri. (pg. 29-32)

The applicant provided disaggregated data evidencing that the achievement gap has been narrowed among all of their subgroups. The data shows that proficiency for groups of educationally disadvantaged students is close to the proficiency of all students in the state. The data also shows comparable data that indicated the achievement gap between low income students, English learners and students of color and all students in Missouri compared to the gap between those groups of educationally disadvantaged and all students throughout the state.

The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proficiency of students on the state assessments is higher than Kansas City Public Schools and approaching the overall state percentages while serving a student population approximately two-thirds of whom are English learners. The charter school is ranked fifth out of the nineteen traditional and charter school districts serving Kansas City students on State assessments. (pgs. 32-35)

(2) The applicant provided data documenting that the current program has produced high quality academic outcomes for the ELL students. For example, in the current program the proficiency on the state assessments is 17-18% greater than

the comparable group of students in Kansas City and 7-8% greater than comparable students across the state for ELL students. The school has a retention rate for English learners of 86% which is comparable to their overall retention rate of 87% and significantly higher than the average retention rate of Kansas City charter schools.

(3) The applicant indicated that no charter schools operated by Scuola Vita Nuova have been closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; 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; nor have had any significant issues with respect to student safety within the last three years. The applicant provided a letter from the Director of the UCM Charter School Office. (Appendix)

**Weaknesses:**

(1) The applicant did not delineate in the proficiency data where prior assessment scores were lower than the state and local averages. This information would have been helpful in determining if students have exceeded the average academic achievement results for students in the State

**Reader's Score: 18**

**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 SchoolSmartKC is a not-for-profit organization. The organization is well-funded with \$50 million in seed funding from three major philanthropic foundations. SchoolSmartKC is providing some financial support for the school's expansion aligned with the design of this project. (pg. 32)

The applicant further indicated that Scuola Vita Nuova has been supporting regular operations since 1999 on state, local and federal non-discretionary title funds alone. Funds from grants have been used for school expansion. In anticipation of expansion costs, Scuola Vita Nuova built reserves through conservative spending and management of the school's budget, lean administrative staffing, and no transportation costs. The school had a reserve balance of \$2,620,774 per the annual audit report at June 30, 2017 with a loan balance of \$2,200,000 as of March 31, 2018 remaining from the 2014 renovation of the current facility. Annual principal and interest payments on the loan balance are \$164,681. Reserves at March 31, 2018 are \$1,727,608 with \$468,407 due upon completion of renovation of the middle school building.

**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:**

The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed project will serve a neighborhood community with a high population of immigrants. The applicant indicated that the school serves one of the higher concentrations of English Learners in the State with 65% to 70% of students typically in their ELL program compared to 25% across all schools in Kansas City and 3.5% across all schools in the State of Missouri. (pg. 1) The applicant provided data that documented that the current program has produced high quality academic outcomes for the ELL students. For example, in the current program the proficiency on the state assessments is 17-18% greater than the comparable group of students in Kansas City and 7-8% greater than comparable students across the state for ELL students. The school has multiple specialists with ESL endorsements. This project plans for professional development and ESL certification for core content area teachers. (pgs. 4-6)

**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:**

Not applicable. The applicant is not proposing a Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs or Early College High School.

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable. The applicant is not proposing a Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs or Early College High School.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/21/2018 12:07 PM



Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/22/2018 12:22 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Scuola Vita Nuova (U282E180020)

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

	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	23
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	10	8
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	18
<b>Continuation Plan</b>		
1. Continuation Plan	15	15
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	85
<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	86

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - CSP Developers (84.282E) - 3: 84.282E

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

Applicant: Scuola Vita Nuova (U282E180020)

## 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 existing school serves a higher-than-average proportion of ELA students for its locality (65% at the school vs 25% for its city and 3.5% for its state). The school's students seem to be outperforming their city peers on state tests for the past two years as shown in Table 1. Some subgroups are exceeding the state averages on those tests.

#### Weaknesses:

The school's students, overall, still lag behind the state average on some state tests. The application overstates a bit when it says that the school "is very close to demonstrating that the achievement gap can be eliminated." For example, Table 1 shows the school currently 6 points behind the state average in ELA and 4 points behind the state average in Math for All Students.

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: 23

#### 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 existing school serves a higher-than-average proportion of ELA students for its locality (65% at the school vs 25% for its city and 3.5% for its state, p. e29). The school's students seem to be outperforming their city peers on state tests for the past two years as shown in Table 1 (pp. e21-22). Some subgroups are exceeding the state averages on those tests.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The enrollment goal for Year 5 on p. 22 does not match the stated enrollment goal in the narrative. Some rationale is provided for why particular academic measures were chosen (meeting or surpassing the state averages). However, even meeting these targets would result in relatively low performance levels by the end of the grant period (39% of 8th grade students proficient in Math, for example).

**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 school has a recent track record of academic success with the target population, as described in Table 1 (pp. e21-22). The school has had academic success with FRL students, minority students, ELL students, and SWD students (all are leading the state averages on ELA and Math tests). Table 2 (p. e24) shows that the school has an above average local performance index score.

**Weaknesses:**

Some targets in Table 8 seems low, though they track with projected state averages. For example on Table 8 (p. e40), the target calls for 39% of 8th grade students to be proficient on the state math assessment after Year 5. Also, the application lacks a sufficient description of professional development PD implementation and use of family engagement personnel. This description is important, as these are large aspects of the application's logic model.

**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 noted.

**Weaknesses:**

The application includes a General Education Provisions Act mention, and states that it recruits underrepresented teachers, but it makes no mention of how that recruitment is done.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

### Sub Question

#### Strengths:

The application includes descriptions of and resumes for key project personnel demonstrating their academic, school leadership, and financial expertise (pp. e47-48, e53-57). Key personnel have appropriate credentials in education/leadership (Education Administration degrees and finance (a CPA), as well as a multi-year record of successfully operating the school.

#### Weaknesses:

Several individuals are named as being responsible for particular parts of the project, but their experience/expertise is not described in the narrative. For example, these key personnel will oversee the project, but some other individuals are tasked with a large number of project activities in the Project Plan (Table 9, pp. e43-46). Also, as professional development is such an important aspect of this project, it would be helpful to include the resumes of the individuals responsible for implementing that work.

**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:

Individuals are named for particular tasks within the application, along with start and end dates for task completion in Table 9. Timelines and individual costs are described in the budget narrative. The logic model is sound and supported by theory/research, and this section notes that the school has successfully implemented multiple grants in the past (p. 24).

#### Weaknesses:

Some expenses (1:1 computers for example) are included in the budget narrative itemized list, but their necessity is not described in the full application. The application would be strengthened by explaining the need for this type of purchase more.

**Reader's Score: 8**

### 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:**

(1) The school has had academic success with its students, scoring higher than its surrounding school district on state tests, and higher than the state average on some of the state tests. These results show success for ELL students and minority students. (2) The school has a year-to-year retention rate above 90 percent for students receiving FRL, and above 80 percent for students of color and ELLs (pp. 319, e63). Its attendance rate is higher than its neighboring system's average and higher than the state's average (pp. e26-27). (3) The application shows no evidence that the school has been closed or had its charter revoked, nor that it has had serious regulatory or financial difficulties. This application includes a letter of support from the school's authorizer (p. e58).

**Weaknesses:**

(1) None noted.

(2) The school still lags the state average on the achievement of its total population compared to the state average on state tests, as shown in Table 1.

(3) None noted.

**Reader's Score: 18**

**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 school has been in existence since 1999, supporting itself on local/state/federal funding. It has a meaningful and growing reserve balance, and a plan to support new programs through increased revenue that will come after the expansion this application is meant to facilitate (pp. e71, e78). The school has a relationship with a local foundation interested in supporting choice programs in its area (p. e33).

**Weaknesses:**

None 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:**

The school has a history of serving ELL students, and students from its immediate physical vicinity. It also has a waiting list (pp. e16, e32). The proposed expansion through this application would likely provide more access to similar students.

**Weaknesses:**

The application does not explicitly state that these students will be the targets of the expansion. It seems likely, but the application could say more about recruitment of such students.

**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:**

Not addressed.

**Weaknesses:**

Not addressed.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/22/2018 12:22 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/22/2018 12:44 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Scuola Vita Nuova (U282E180020)

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

	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	21
<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	16
<b>Continuation Plan</b>		
1. Continuation Plan	15	15
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	78
<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	80

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - CSP Developers (84.282E) - 3: 84.282E

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

Applicant: Scuola Vita Nuova (U282E180020)

## 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:

Attendance rates for economically disadvantaged students, students of color, and ELL students are all higher than district averages. Because higher attendance is correlated to higher proficiency, this indicator support the argument of expanding educational opportunities for disadvantaged students (e26-e27).

Data indicate student proficiency for Scuola Vita Nuova students increases along with years enrolled within the school district, showing an ability of the school to build on previous years' academic growth (e23).

Scuola Vita Nuova currently services 81.8% economically disadvantaged, 92.9% students of color, 65.8% ELL, and 4.7% students with disabilities. Two of these four subgroups demonstrate proportionally higher representation than the district, indicating effective outreach and retention of these subgroups (e29). The data indicate these educationally disadvantaged subgroups are well served by the school's operation and an expansion of the school would allow more area students in these subgroups to receive similar benefits.

#### Weaknesses:

Data on proficiency on state assessments by subgroups is not specific as to years and/or actual state assessments utilized (e20-e23). This lack of specificity makes it difficult to confirm the accuracy of the provided information.

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: 21

#### Sub Question

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

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

School goals on proficiency are clearly specified and measurable with expectations of growth and/or stability of baseline data to gradually move the serviced students to state average (e40). Measurable goals include growth in proficiency towards state averages in 4th grade and 8th grade on ELA and Math assessment (e40). The projected growth is both measurable and achievable.

**Weaknesses:**

There is a mismatch between projected enrollment data presented in the table and in the narrative (e20, e40).

**Reader's Score: 14**

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

**Strengths:**

Research basis for project activities include Hattie's effect size ranking for (1) providing professional development for staff, (2) supporting increased constructivist instruction, and (3), increasing family engagement (e35). This reflects an understanding of recent and relevant research in providing the most impact on student learning based on project activities.

**Weaknesses:**

Specific professional developments are described only in the broadest detail possible and it is unclear how PD selections will effectively increase student achievement (e36).

Precise methods of how increased constructivist instruction and authentic learning will be accomplished cannot be found in this application.

Specific details on job description, roles, & responsibilities of School/Home Coordinator cannot be found and it is unclear how this position will result in increased family engagement (e37).

Specific details on parent training under the stated The Leader in Me curriculum cannot be found in this section and it is unclear how this program will result in increased family engagement.

**Reader's Score: 7**

**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**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses:**

Although the partnership with Kansas City Teacher Residency Program with a focus on persons traditionally underrepresented in education is mentioned (e48), specific steps to recruit and encourage the application of traditionally underrepresented groups are not made clear in this section of the proposal.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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

**Strengths:**

Key project personnel possess the necessary and relevant education and experience to effectively manage charter school operations.

Attached resumes provide specific accomplishments, trainings, and initiatives that provide further reassurance of the capacity of key project personnel to execute the expansion and implement necessary policies to ensure charter school success(e53-e56).

Principal has two master's degrees in Reading & Education Administration, has served as school Principal since 2007 (e53).

Director of Finance and operations has a degree in Accounting and has served in this capacity since 2013 (e54).

Assistant Principal has a master's degree in Special Ed. and has served in this capacity since 2012 (e55). Description of projects managed including data analysis and special education compliance are appropriate and necessary for effective management.

Advanced degrees in relevant and diverse fields along with extended experience at the currently successful operation provide reassurance of the ability to effectively oversee expansion (e47-e48).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found in this section.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

**Strengths:**

A high-level view of specific purchases, events, and professional development sessions with start and end dates is included which provides some understanding of how project funds will be spent (e42-e46). While item descriptions and activities are not accompanied with details, a significant list of 95 project activities indicates the specific purchases or tasks to be undertaken under the project.

**Weaknesses:**

The management plan relies heavily on the success of previous school operations without clearly outlining how the proposed project will be managed (e42-e43). The brevity and lack of detail leaves little else to be evaluated and it is unclear how exactly the project will be managed.

Specifically, the proposal is lacking a clear description in narrative form of what the management and oversight of project objectives would look like. While responsibilities for purchase ordering require little description and are adequately addressed, responsibilities centered around professional development and project oversight require more of a detailed picture to ensure comfort the objectives will be met on time and within budget.

**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 proficiency on state tests of all students in ELA and Math at Scuola Vita Nuova is markedly higher than Kansas City Public Schools. This is also true for economically disadvantaged, racial minorities, ELL and students with disabilities subgroups. Proficiency scores for each subgroup also exceed that of the State of Missouri as a whole (e21-e22).

Attendance rates for Scuola Vita Nuova are higher than Kansas City Public Schools and the State of Missouri across all subgroups for which data is provided - all students, economically disadvantaged, students of color, ELL's (e26-e27).

A statement attesting to the fact that no schools operated by the applicant have been closed and no charters have been revoked due to non-compliance with statutory or regulatory requirements is included along with a letter from the University of Central Missouri Office of Charter Schools attesting to these facts (e58, e63).

**Weaknesses:**

Table 1 showing "Percent of Students Proficient on State Assessments" is non-specific as to assessments referenced or specific school years for data, making it difficult to ascertain the accuracy of the information (e21-e22). Data on attendance rates for students with disabilities is not included because of "a statistically insignificant sample size" (e26).

These data could still be included within the application for a more complete picture.

Data indicate that the school is behind state averages on Math despite being ahead among the educationally disadvantaged subgroups (e21).

**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:**

The school built significant reserve funds in anticipation of the expansion project. A reserve balance of \$2,620,774 in the annual audit report (2017) demonstrates a fiscally conservative operation. 78% of proposed expenditures on the project are startup costs alone and will not be recurring expenses (e49). The additional enrollment of the expansion will allow the recurring expenses to be paid and economies of scale support the argument that the school can continue to support operations while building its reserve fund separate from any federal grant awards.

Independent audits support the accuracy of Scuola Vita Nuova's financial statements (e67).

#### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found in this section.

**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:**

The school's population is approximately two-thirds ELL in a city of approximately 25% ELL students, indicating programming and outreach well-targeted to ELL students (e19). The data offered on state assessments (disaggregated by student populations) demonstrate statistically significant differences between Scuola Vita Nuova and Kansas City Public Schools and therefore an ability to raise achievement for economically disadvantaged students, racial minorities, ELL, and students with disabilities (e21-e22).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found in this section.

**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:**

This priority is not addressed in the proposal.

**Weaknesses:**

This priority is not addressed in the proposal.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/22/2018 12:44 PM