

**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: Utah County Academy of Sciences (U282E180011)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	12
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	16
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	5
Quality of the Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	16
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	13
Sub Total	100	71
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Access to High-Quality Educational Choice		
1. Increasing Access	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs		
1. Enrollment Programs	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Total	104	75

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Utah County Academy of Sciences (U282E180011)

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 successfully demonstrated that the proposed program has made efforts to increase access to high need students in the targeted region. For example, the applicant indicated that while Utah has one of the lowest poverty rates (10%) in the US, there has been an increase in the number (20%) of free and reduced lunch students in the region. Efforts such as providing free rapid transit passes for high poverty students to access the program are in place to ensure transportation is not a barrier.

The targeted region additionally has a low number of special education students (1%) served by 504 provisions. To ensure these students have access to the program, the Utah State Board of Education created special education mandatory policies and procedures to ensure students with disabilities are accounted for through the random lottery selection and admissions process. Similar provisions are provided for ELL students and students from federally recognized Tribes. For example, the applicant developed the Native American Initiative, which is an agreement to actively seek Native American students to attend the program. (pgs. e20-25)

Weaknesses:

Overall, while the applicant has shown that the targeted high need demographic groups of students are low in number, the applicant has not comprehensively provided evidence that high quality programmatic recruitment efforts are in place to promote and provide access to the program.

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: 16

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 generally indicates that the objective and mission of the charter school is to provide a quality early-college education to a diverse student population with the opportunity to earn both a high school diploma and up to two years of college credit. The applicant indicated that their goal is for at least 50% of its student population to obtain an associate degree each year. The goal has been overreached ever since the first graduating class where 80% of students received their associate degree. (pgs. 15-17)

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide an appropriate response to the selection criteria. The applicant did not provide goals, objectives, and outcomes that were aligned with any specified measureable means.

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: 8

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 indicated that the proposed program has served 10-12 grade students over the past 13 years. In the 2018 -2019 school year, in order to fill a need in the local community, the program will expand to 9th grade students. (pg. 18) The applicant has a proven track record of academic success with the current 10-12th grades program focusing is on career and college

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide an appropriate response to the selection criteria to address how the expanded program will incorporate the 9th grade program. The applicant did not discuss the curriculum model that will guide 9th grade. While the applicant used some research reports to talk about the responsiveness needed to address targeted populations, the applicant did not address the 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: 8

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 noted.

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant provided a GEPA Statement in the Appendix, the applicant did not provide a narrative beyond the GEPA Statement that addressed how the program will encourage employment from members of traditionally underrepresented groups. This information was not available and the GEPA statement only related to participants in the program. (pg. e12)

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

The applicant provided an adequate review of the key persons responsible for managing the activities in the proposal. There will be three administrators and support staff led by a project manager. She is an experienced administrator. Other key personnel include the guidance counselors, business manager and the Special Education Director. A review of the resumes attached in the Appendices evidenced that all key personnel have experience working with the charter school. (pg. e42 and pgs. e68-85)

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 indicated that the Board of Trustees at UCAS is the governing body and is responsible for the overall governance of the school including: managing finances, establishing policies and programming, overseeing the school's performance, and providing input to, and review of the CEO. (pg. 25)

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide a management plan that outlined and aligned program implementation from the beginning to the end. There was not information given as to who would be responsible for ensuring timely milestones will be accomplished within budget.

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 the Eligible Applicant

1. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the charter school to be replicated or expanded is a high-quality charter school, including:
 - (1) The degree to which the applicant has demonstrated success in increasing academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students and for each of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the ESEA, attending the charter schools the applicant operates or manages. These subgroups of students include: Economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, children with disabilities, and students who are ELs.
 - (2) The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates, and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students in the State.
 - (3) The extent to which charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have been closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation; have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management; have experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and have had any significant issues with respect to student safety.

Strengths:

The applicant indicated that the program maintains a waiting list of over 300 students annually. The school admits students through a random lottery, guided by federal and state policies and procedures, and is open to any student in Utah. Additionally, for the past four years that grades have been given to schools in Utah, UCAS is one of six high schools in the State to have received an "A" grade for the past four years. This grade is given based on student graduation rate, proficiency, and ACT scores. UCAS has a population of 10% of students who are high functioning autistic students. The applicant indicated that their goal is for at least 50% of its student population to obtain an associate degree each year. The goal has been overreached ever since the first graduating class where 80% of students received their associate degree.

The applicant indicated that on the assessments and ACT, students exceeded state and national averages. For example, SY 2017 Assessment Data indicated ELA Proficiency Math Proficiency was 44% and 50% for State while their Science Proficiency was 52% and the for State average was 64%

The applicant did not indicate the charter schools have ever been closed or had their their charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements. (pg.e-65)

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide an appropriate response to the selection criteria, beyond general statements made by the applicant with zero data to substantiate the claims. For example, there was not proven documentation on the graduation rates, including subgroup data for racial and ethnic groups, children with disabilities and ELL students.

The applicant did not provide the appropriate and relevant responses to clearly respond to the selection criteria. There was not information found that clearly determined if the school has consistently increased in the area of academic achievement.

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 applicant adequately demonstrated that the proposed program is financially sound and over the past 13 years, UCAS has been the gold standard among Utah charter schools. The applicant indicated that they have over 330 days of cash on hand. Every year the program has an outside financial audit and no unsatisfactory findings have been reported. Funding for charter schools in Utah is accomplished through state allocation of education funds. The average weighted pupil unit (WPU) from the State of Utah is \$3,600.00 per student. (pgs. e43-45) The applicant demonstrated via documents a financially healthy institution for the existing school (e82-e86). The financial statements indicate an ability to operate a financially stable institution once the startup is complete.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide detailed financial statement that would have fully documented the financial strength of the charter school.

Reader's Score: 13

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Access to High-Quality Educational Choice

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 1—Supporting High-Need Students by Increasing Access to High-Quality Educational Choice**

This priority is for projects that are designed to increase access to educational choice and improve academic outcomes and learning environments for one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students in communities served by rural local educational agencies
- (ii) Children with disabilities
- (iii) English learners
- (iv) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The applicant successfully demonstrated that the proposed program has made efforts to increase access to high need students in the targeted region. For example, the applicant indicated that while Utah has one of the lowest poverty rates (10%) in the US, there has been an increase in the number (20%) of free and reduced lunch students in the region. Efforts such as providing free rapid transit passes for high poverty students to access the program are in place to ensure transportation is not a barrier.

The targeted region additionally has a low number of special education students (1%) served by 504 provisions. To ensure these students have access to the program, the Utah State Board of Education created special education mandatory policies and procedures to ensure students with disabilities are accounted for through the random lottery

selection and admissions process. Similar provisions are provided for ELL students and students from federally recognized Tribes. For example, the applicant developed the Native American Initiative, which is an agreement to actively seek Native American students to attend the program. (pgs. e20-25)

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:

The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed program is a 10th-12th grades STEM focused Early College program located on the campus of Utah Valley University. The program serves three counties and the students enrolled in the program can earn a high school diploma and up to two years of college credits or the Associates Degree. (pgs. e26-29)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **2**

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Utah County Academy of Sciences (U282E180011)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	9
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	13
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	5
Quality of the Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	14
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	10
Sub Total	100	60
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Access to High-Quality Educational Choice		
1. Increasing Access	2	1
Sub Total	2	1
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs		
1. Enrollment Programs	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Total	104	63

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Utah County Academy of Sciences (U282E180011)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

1. The significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational Opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make, the Secretary considers the quality of the plan to ensure that the charter school the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students and serve those students at rates comparable to surrounding public schools.

Strengths:

The school enrolls economically disadvantaged students at double the rate of the state average, per p. e20 (the school enrolls 20 percent FRL students, which the application notes is double the local poverty rate). It also provides transportation over a large geographic area.

Weaknesses:

The school enrolls ELL (1 percent) and SWD students (1 percent) at rates lower than the state averages (5 percent and 10 percent, respectively, (p. e21). The application would be strengthened by saying how the school would recruit more such students to enroll.

Reader's Score: 9

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: 13

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 lists activities (equipping and staffing the new site), and has broad statements about goals for the school on p. e48 and e 43.

Weaknesses:

The application lacks a clear section stating measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes. Ideally thee academic goals would tie to the programs offered and be clearly measurable.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 5

- 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 had success addressing its target population. According to the application, 100 percent of students graduate with high school diplomas and 80 percent earn associate's degrees. According to pp. e40-44, the school scores above average on all state tests, and has above average ACT scores.

Weaknesses:

The goals of the project plan are best described in the budget narrative. The application would be stronger if this were a separate section, and each of the strategies was tied to specific, measurable academic outcomes.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:**

Reader's Score: 9

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

This criterion was not addressed.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was not addressed.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

The key personnel have appropriate education and experience in educational leadership, counseling, and financial management as noted on p. e41 and in the resumes beginning on p. e68. Their experience as counselors, as leaders of CTE programs, as school leaders, and as financial managers is appropriate.

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 application includes a discussion and table on pp. e89-91, within the budget narrative, about project activities and annual expenditures. It also includes a section on "management of the charter school" beginning on p. e41 which describes the general operational format of the school, including board roles and community/parent involvement.

Weaknesses:

The application lacks a clear management plan specifically for the project. The application could be strengthened, for example, by attaching responsible parties, milestones, and oversight plans to the table on p. e91.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

- 1. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the charter school to be replicated or expanded is a high-quality charter school, including:**
 - (1) The degree to which the applicant has demonstrated success in increasing academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students and for each of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the ESEA, attending the charter schools the applicant operates or manages. These subgroups of students include: Economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, children with disabilities, and students who are ELs.**
 - (2) The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates, and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students in the State.**
 - (3) The extent to which charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have been closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation; have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management; have experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and have had any significant issues with respect to student safety.**

Strengths:

The school has had success academically. Pp. e40-41 show that student performance on all state tests is above the state average in Math, Science, and ELA, in some cases significantly so.

The school has shown success with attendance (97 percent), retention (94 percent), and graduation (100 percent) as noted on p. e66. Additionally, 80 percent of students graduate with associate's degrees.

The application includes a statement from an auditor that the school met all compliance requirements in 2017 on p. e64, and the application reaffirms this on p. e66.

Weaknesses:

While the school has shown achievement for "all students," the application would be strengthened by showing results disaggregated by subgroup.

While the school seems to have success on these measures, it would also be helpful to have local/state comparisons for more than test scores, and include sources/definitions for these measures.

The application only includes the short audit letter on p. e64. It is lacking a full audit report, as well as budget statements that would provide more information about the school's financial position and compliance.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Continuation Plan

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

Strengths:

The application states that the school intends to continue using only state funds when the expansion is completed, in a section on sustainability (pp. e54-55).

Weaknesses:

While the application hopes to continue with only state funding, the combination of higher salaries the application describes, and lower per student funding, make this difficult. Because of this the application would be especially strengthened by providing a budget plan showing how this will be possible.

Reader's Score: 10

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 application notes the presence of students from federally recognized Indian tribes in its vicinity and in the enrollment of their partner institution.

Weaknesses:

The school does not seem to enroll students from Indian tribes at any higher rate than the general population according to p. e24. The application would be strengthened by a plan to recruit 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:

The school's entire purpose is built around being an early college high school. The school seems to be very successful in this mission, with 80 percent of students graduating with an associate's degree. The school has a strong partnership with a local institution, making these efforts viable for the long term.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/22/2018 12:35 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Utah County Academy of Sciences (U282E180011)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	15	12
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	19
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	5
Quality of the Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	18
Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	15	13
Sub Total	100	76
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Access to High-Quality Educational Choice		
1. Increasing Access	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs		
1. Enrollment Programs	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Total	104	80

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Utah County Academy of Sciences (U282E180011)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

1. The significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational Opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make, the Secretary considers the quality of the plan to ensure that the charter school the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students and serve those students at rates comparable to surrounding public schools.

Strengths:

As stated in the Competitive Preference Priority comments, the current school 504 population is disproportionately higher than state average and possibly due to offering "...programs that have been developed to specialize in autism studies with academic experts" on the UVU campus (e21-22). Access to university level autism programs and services provide a valuable resource to students with autism.

Awareness of statutory and regulatory requirements for students with disabilities is well-demonstrated by the proposal's "Policies/Procedures & Management Systems." An appropriate referral & identification process is described to include a certified school psychologist, initial evaluations, and multidisciplinary team process. Appropriate IEP steps for Special Education and RtI model for 504 students further illustrate the applicant's knowledge of working with these subgroups (e43-e44).

A free rapid transit pass assists students from high-poverty and racially/ethnically diverse areas to access the program, increasing the potential enrollment among these subgroups (e21).

Weaknesses:

UCAS student special education population rate of 1% as compared to state average of 10% cannot be fully explained by a random lottery admissions process, and is indicative of a need for greater outreach and marketing to this demographic (e21). While the proposal has strong policies and procedures in place for working with students with disabilities, the low representation of this group among the student population does not ensure that the applicant will recruit or enroll large amounts in its expansion.

Annual testing for English proficiency of ELL students in speaking, listening, reading, and writing using WIDA may be insufficient to effectively respond to data to serve a population who must hit growth benchmarks throughout the school year (e22). While the need to fully support a high needs ELL population is made clear in the application, the extent to which the school will provide this support or achieve proportional enrollment is not well-supported(e23, e45).

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: 19

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 goal of increasing enrollment from 400 to 1000 within three to five years is clearly specified and measurable (e54). The proposal articulates well how this will be accomplished through its replication and specific design of an already successful program. They also have a goal that 50% of the student population will obtain Associate's Degree (e23).

Weaknesses:

Other specific goals beyond number of students serviced are not found to be well clearly specified. Goals rooted in academic achievement as measured by standardized assessments are not found. If the applicant were to set similar goals to current performance for the student body as a whole and for most subgroups, this criterion would be better satisfied. Furthermore, goals around achieving more proportional representation of students with disabilities cannot be found.

Reader's Score: 6

- 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:

UCAS proven track record will likely be effectively expanded through the grant project activities. The target population, which includes economically disadvantaged students, students with autism, and Native American students are likely (based on current enrollment and services offered) to be well-represented in the expansion. A 50,000 square foot building has been secured along the rapid transit line, which is likely to pull in students who would otherwise have transportation issues (e48).

Salaries will consume a share of the expansion grant funds because of the higher degrees of education of UCAS teachers and the payment of tuition for UCAS students to receive concurrent enrollment credit (e47).

Project activities including technology expenses and a great deal of technology startup costs are appropriate for the project (e49). These startup expenses will address the needs of the target population as indicated by UCAS's prior record in producing increased academic outcomes for educationally disadvantaged subgroups.

Weaknesses:

A lack of curricular model for the expanded 9th grade calls question into how this part of the expansion will service the targeted population.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:**

Reader's Score: 9

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

This criterion was not addressed in the application.

Weaknesses:

This criterion was not addressed in the application.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

The school principal possesses necessary education background (PhD in Ed. Leadership) and has worked as an Administrator with UCAS since 2007, overseeing a successful program (e68).

The school counselor has appropriate licensures and education (Ed. Leadership endorsement, M.A. School Counseling) and, under her direction, A.A. attainment by students has increased from 70 to 80 percent (e71).

All resumes included for key personnel include appropriate licensure, experience, education, and background to successfully implement an expansion of the existing program (e68-e85).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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:

Timelines for expenses of the project are clearly laid out with educational leadership salaries and benefits over the five years are well-described (e48). Construction costs are also separated by year over the course of the project (e49). Plans for marketing through mail outs, the school's website, UVU multicultural programs, Open Houses, etc. are described (e50).

Transportation needs of students are well addressed through free public transit and location along the public transit line (e56). A \$10 million bond agreement has been entered into by the school with the building owner (e48) to house the new operations.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear from the application what the current physical status of the secured building is and whether or not it can be made operational within the suggested timeframes.

Milestones, responsibilities, and timelines for project activities are not found to be well described within the application, leaving little to be evaluated in this section. In order to better satisfy this criterion, it should be made clear who is responsible for different aspects of the expansion, how progress towards those goals or objectives will be measured, and the timeframe under which they will be met as well.

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:

ACT Composite score data for the previous five years indicate the school outperforms the State of Utah on this standardized college entrance exam by four to five points on average (e41). The ACT Composite are equal to district averages (e52).

The school also exceeds state and local school averages on end of level assessments in 2017 by a statistically significant amount, earning the school an A in Utah's School Grade system (e40). These data strongly support that students in general will have better than state average educational opportunities through the UCAS mode, and similar opportunities to other students in the district.

Although state and district averages on proficiency exams are not offered as a point of comparison by subgroup, the application does include its own school's performance disaggregated by subgroup. These data indicate that Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students at UCAS perform better than state averages for students in general (e40, e65).

Although precise comparisons to state attendance, retention, and high school graduation could not be found, the applicant points to very high attendance at 97%, retention among highest in state at 94%, and a 100% high school graduation rate (e66).

The application claims the school has had no compliance or management issues (e65, e91).

Weaknesses:

Data on the performance of students with disabilities and on ELL students is not offered due to small sample sizes (e65). This raises questions about the school's efforts to effectively market to this subgroup of students.

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 claims a reserve balance equivalent to "330 days of cash on hand." External financial audits have resulted in no unsatisfactory findings (e47).

The success of the current program and the proposed expansion numbers from the current 400 to 1000 students would result in sufficient state funding to sustain the school after the expiration of funds from this grant award(e64-e65).

Weaknesses:

Detailed financial statements to support the claim of 330 days cash on hand to include revenues, expenditures, and reserve funds cannot be found.

Reader's Score: 13

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Access to High-Quality Educational Choice**

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 1—Supporting High-Need Students by Increasing Access to High-Quality Educational Choice**

This priority is for projects that are designed to increase access to educational choice and improve academic outcomes and learning environments for one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) Students in communities served by rural local educational agencies
- (ii) Children with disabilities
- (iii) English learners
- (iv) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Note: Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this competitive preference priority.

Strengths:

The current school 504 population is disproportionately higher than state average and possibly due to offering "...programs that have been developed to specialize in autism studies with academic experts" on the UVU campus (e21-22). Access to university level autism programs and services provides a valuable resource to students with autism.

Although a compelling case is not made for the school's ability to increase educational opportunities for ELL students or special education students in general, the program described would likely provide more options for students with autism and improve academic outcomes for this particular group.

UCAS services a proportional amount of Native American students as compared to Utah County's .5%. Furthermore, the UVU campus where UCAS is located "has a Native American Initiative, in which they actively seek students who are of Native American descent to attend the UVU program" (e24). The partner University offers excellent resources to Native American students who attend the charter school that will serve to improve their learning environments and academic outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2—Dual or Concurrent Enrollment Programs and Early College High Schools

The extent to which the proposed project is designed to increase student access to, participation in, and completion of dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high schools.

Strengths:

The proposed applicant will offer significant concurrent enrollment opportunities, including Science, Speech, and Student Success in the 9th grade (6-9 college credits), Science, Speech, Art, and History in the 10th grade (9-12 college credits), Science, CTE, and U.S. Government in the 11th grade. They will also offer an additional 5 credits on the University campus (14 credits) and 18 credit hours on the campus of UVU or MTech in the 12th grade (e28-e29).

Students will have the opportunity to earn up to a full Associate's degree while still enrolled in high school (e29).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted
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