

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/12/2019 03:14 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Academie Lafayette (S282E190030)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	30	24
Assisting Educationally Disadvantage Students		
1. Significance	15	11
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	20
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	9
Quality of the Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	10	8
Sub Total	100	82
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	10	0
Sub Total	10	0
Total	110	82

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - FY19 Developers - 2: 84.282E

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Academie Lafayette (S282E190030)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Eligible Applicant

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

The extent to which –

Reader's Score: 24

Sub

1. i. 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, postsecondary enrollment and persistence rates, including in college or career training programs, employment rates, earnings, and other academic outcomes) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school(s) operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students served by other public schools in the State;

Strengths:

This is an applicant that already operates 3 French immersion K-8 schools and is looking to expand its Kansas City middle school (Armour Campus) to K-12. Its current middle schools outperform the state proficiency rates by 25% in English Language Arts (ELA) and 25% in Math (p. e16). The plan of the expanded school is to offer a robust IB program to the full continuum of K-12 students.

Weaknesses:

The applicant has no track record of successfully operating a HS or how Special Education will be handled at these new grade levels.

Reader's Score: 8

2. ii. One or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation;

Strengths:

There is no evidence that any of this applicant's schools has closed or had severed affiliation with the grant applicant. On p. e25 and e26 the applicant discusses their successful operation and lack of any safety issues raised.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. iii. **One or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and**

Strengths:

The review of the financial statements (starting on p. e85) indicates a sound financial position.

Weaknesses:

The school has formed AL Real Estate SPE, LLC. to manage transactions associated with New Market Tax Credits (p. e94). There is not clear or adequate information on AL Real Estate SPE, LLC's relationship to the schools.

The auditor's report notes that the school's deposits are not secured (based on the type of accounts) as required by State charter law and are subject to market fluctuation (p. e106).

Reader's Score: 8

4. iv. **The schools operated or managed by the applicant demonstrate strong results on measurable outcomes in non-academic areas such as, but not limited to, parent satisfaction, school climate, student mental health, civic engagement, and crime prevention and reduction.**

Strengths:

The applicant has successfully operated K-8 schools as shown on p. e21, table that compares Kansas City and State of Missouri public schools. They point out the fact that their charter was renewed for 10 years in 2019 (p. e25) as a testament of their overall quality.

Weaknesses:

Parental approval of expanding Academie Lafayette Armour campus to include HS is 65% (p. e34) which may be the preferred parent option, but it was not overwhelming.

The applicant as a whole has not so far demonstrated a true diverse student body as evidenced on Table 3, p. e27, and acknowledge this as an issue (p. e16).

Reader's Score: 3

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantage Students

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students for the proposed project. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational opportunity for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards, the Secretary considers the quality of the plan to ensure that the charter school the applicant proposes to open, replicate, or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, which include children with disabilities and English learners.**

Strengths:

The applicant started implementing strategies to reach educationally disadvantaged students in 2014 (per narrative on p. e29). They are reporting an increase from 58% to 70%. Furthermore, they state that internal and external supports are in place for students with disabilities (p. e29) as well as Title I (disadvantaged) students.

Weaknesses:

On p. e32 the applicant states that "Only ELL and black students have demonstrated proficiency on the state assessments modestly below that of all students in MO." Such statement it is not in line with the goal of assisting educationally disadvantaged students.

Reader's Score: 11

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

The extent to which --

- i. The goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specific and measurable; and**
- ii. 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 project objectives, as stated on p. e34 through e36, are correct in that they address where the grant money will be channeled to and how they will support the overall Academie Lafayette's student body, including the new students in the expanded Armour Campus.

Weaknesses:

The table on pages e40 and e41 reflects targeted gains against a set baseline for low income and minority students. What it doesn't reflect is the percentage of students with these characteristics, so it is not clear whether they are a small sample group that is catered to in order to specifically show gains.

Reader's Score: 20

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:**

The extent to which --

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

Sub

1. i. **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; and**

Strengths:

Given the IB nature and the French language immersion of the existing (and proposed) schools, the staff diversity has been successfully demonstrated (p. e43 - e44) with 28% male and 35% minorities among the ranks of teachers and staff.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

The instructional team has an experience in both general instruction and IB and have advanced degrees (Master, PhD) in their relevant fields. Many have been with the Academie Lafayette organization since its inception as noted on p. e43. The instructional staff also has experience in French immersion school models as reflected on their resumes (pages e61 through e73).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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 applicant's management plan, the Secretary considers the following factors**

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. i. **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 assigned staff has experience in opening new schools, as noted starting on pages e44 through e50, and will be supplemented by an outside expert (Informed Improvement, LLC) focusing on use of gathered data to develop effective school improvement strategies. They will be further monitored by their LEA authorizer (UMC Charter Office). The project implementation timeline and milestones is reasonable with the preparatory year 2019-20 (pages e46 to e50).

Sub

Weaknesses:

The applicant is presenting a long evaluation plan that will not be fully implemented until 2024, which is a long time to gauge achievement, or lack thereof (p. e50, Item #80 on table).

Reader's Score: 5

2. ii. **The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project; and**

Strengths:

The team tasks as reflected on the Project Plan (pages e46-e50) indicate that the members' assignments are spread throughout a reasonably long period of time, so that they do not impede their other day-to-day role requirements.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

3. iii. **How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.**

Strengths:

On p. e45 the applicant indicates that in addition to an external investigator (Informed Improvement, LLC) and the charter authorizer (UCM) they have established a dedicated website to solicit parent input on the Armour expansion project. They are furthermore stating that the community and parents have participated in meetings (p. e45). Their board member demographic is diverse as well (p.e45).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Continuation Plan

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the continuation plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the continuation plan, the Secretary considers the extent to which the eligible applicant is prepared to continue to operate the charter school 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 has accounted for the areas where the grant dollars will be spent, with the understanding that once the grant funds are depleted, the school will continue its operation based on per pupil payments (which will increase as enrollment increase). Furthermore, they have a designated Development Director (p. e50) to lead to lead the school's fundraising activities and have engaged donors and community.

Weaknesses:

There is no mention as to the possibility that the per pupil dollars may be reduced by the state. Although they state (p. e50) that revenues will increase as enrollment increases, they are omitting the fact that operational expenses will increase too (staff, technology, maintenance, etc.).

It is also their first High School which is a model that they have had no experience with, therefore, they are not familiar with its expenses.

Reader's Score: 8

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Opening a New Charter School or Replicating or Expanding a High-quality Charter School to Serve Native American Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

- a. Propose to open a new charter school, or replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that—
 - 1. Utilizes targeted outreach and recruitment in order to serve a high proportion of Native American students, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws;
 - 2. Has a mission and focus that will address the unique educational needs of Native American students, such as through the use of instructional programs and teaching methods that reflect and preserve Native American language, culture, and history; and
 - 3. Has or will have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Native American organizations located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school;
- b. Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Native American organization located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school; and
- c. Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Native American organization(s) from which the applicant has received a letter of support in a timely, active, and ongoing manner with respect to the development and implementation of the educational program at the charter school.

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

This is not applicable for Academie Lafayette as they are not targeting this demographic.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Academie Lafayette (S282E190030)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	30	27
Assisting Educationally Disadvantage Students		
1. Significance	15	13
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	23
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	9
Quality of the Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	10	10
Sub Total	100	92
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	10	0
Sub Total	10	0
Total	110	92

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - FY19 Developers - 2: 84.282E

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Academie Lafayette (S282E190030)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Eligible Applicant

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

The extent to which –

Reader's Score: 27

Sub

1. i. 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, postsecondary enrollment and persistence rates, including in college or career training programs, employment rates, earnings, and other academic outcomes) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school(s) operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students served by other public schools in the State;

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates it performed 5th highest in the state among 548 Local Education Agencies (LEAs). The applicant provides evidence that its performance exceeds all charter and public schools in Kansas City or St. Louis, even those in affluent suburbs (p. e16-17). The applicant presents data that demonstrates educationally disadvantage students' proficiency exceeds the proficiency of similar groups of students in Missouri and either exceed or are comparable to those of ALL students in the State (Table 1 on p. e21). The applicant presents evidence of strong retention of 95% (p. e79). The applicant was among the top five public middle schools in the state based on the last three state assessment results (p. e77). The applicant had an average daily attendance of 90% (p. e24 and Table 2 on p. e25).

Weaknesses:

The applicant lacks evidence of yearly pass/fail rates of students from each grade level in this grant.

Reader's Score: 9

2. ii. One or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation;

Strengths:

None of the (3) schools managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated (p. e79).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. iii. **One or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and**

Strengths:

None of the three charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter (p. e79).

Weaknesses:

The audit dated December 7, 2018, mentions one immaterial instance of noncompliance as noted in the Schedule of State findings (i.e. school funds were not secured as required, p. e105-e106). Some of the responsibility can be attributed to the sponsor, UCM, and not all the responsibility of the management team of the school.

Reader's Score: 9

4. iv. **The schools operated or managed by the applicant demonstrate strong results on measurable outcomes in non-academic areas such as, but not limited to, parent satisfaction, school climate, student mental health, civic engagement, and crime prevention and reduction.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong data that 57%, or 178 applicants for kindergarten, had to be placed on a waiting list. The strong performance of the applicant's other school, and increased popularity in Missouri about school choice, demonstrates community demand (p. e16). The applicant documented data that of 65% of parents surveyed, that Lafayette high school would be their preferred choice. The applicant offers French language classes to four low-income and racially diverse pre-schools (p. e29).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not show much civic and community engagement, which could benefit this applicant.

Reader's Score: 4

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantage Students

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students for the proposed project. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational opportunity for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards, the Secretary considers the quality of the plan to ensure that the charter school the applicant proposes to open, replicate, or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, which include children with disabilities and English learners.**

Strengths:

The applicant provided exhaustive data that demonstrates that the school in the proposed plan, as the school has proven in the past, serve educationally disadvantaged students, which include children with disabilities and English learners (see Table 4 p. e32 and Table 1 on p. e21). The applicant demonstrates that it is very close to eliminating the achievement gap for all educationally disadvantaged students (p. e32). These same students will continue to high school grades and graduate college-ready as proposed in this grant (p. e35). Also, the data supporting the applicant's service to this population in comparison to the state and the city is reasonable and, in some case, higher (see Table 3 on p. e27). The applicant purchased the proposed Armour Campus in a census tract with a higher poverty rate than the previous school campuses (p. e29).

Weaknesses:

The applicant failed to provided data to demonstrate the benefits of expanding academic programs, like, Open Book reading program and Avancez! Summer French program (p. e30). The applicant did not provide data about the number of parents or students who attended (p. e31).

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:**

The extent to which --

- i. The goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specific and measurable; and**
- ii. The design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.**

Strengths:

Goals and objectives to expand the applicant's Armour Campus to serve 9-12th grades are specific and measurable as stated (p. e36) and demonstrated by the Project Logic Model (Table 5, p. e35). Three sound components of this project included provisioning of the building to support the expansion, start-up support for an International Baccalaureate College preparatory program (p. e37), and staff professional development. The last components include academic excellence and continued success on assessments statewide (p. e35 and e36) which are reasonable, and sound, given the time period for execution.

Weaknesses:

Some of the project timelines and dates in Table 7 Project Design (p. e46) were not clear. For example, the applicant did not clearly explain in Table 7 the decrease in expenditures from year 1 to year 5 to 17 thousand as well as the positive cash flow in 2025 (p. e51).

Reader's Score: 23

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:**

The extent to which --

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

1. i. **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; and**

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates strong global and underrepresented groups for employment. The applicant's purpose is to mirror the groups that are represented by their students. The applicant documents 28% male, 35% of minorities, primarily black, both of which are significantly higher than the school staff in the Kansas City area. Applicants have a very atypical international and globally diverse staff (p. e16).

Weaknesses:

No apparent weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

The applicant has qualified, and designated key personnel and plans to expand their international personnel to meet these project goals and objectives (see resumes, p. e 61). Diversity training and modeling are included in the management plan for all staff and teachers (p. e43). The applicant shows clearly in Table 7 Project Design that IB training and conferences will continue until the year 2025 (p. e46). The principal investigator for the project works for two other charter schools, is president of Informed Improvements LLC, and has experience working for the Department of Education. (p. e45)

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

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 applicant's management plan, the Secretary considers the following factors**

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. i. **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;**

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant specifies tables that include the responsibilities, timelines, and milestones to achieve the proposed project (Table 7. p. e46). , The table includes the activity, the assigned personnel, and the completion dates for all objectives (p. e46). Table 6 (p. e40-41) defines targets for the project performance measures for the enrollment and retention of educationally disadvantaged students and are from the board's' strategic plan for increasing the targeted population and ongoing project to serve 6th-8th grade in the same building (p. e41).

Weaknesses:

The target population may need more consideration in the management plans since this is the applicant's first experience with high school-aged students. However, they have past experience with the targeted population (Table 1, p. e21).

Reader's Score: 5

2. ii. **The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project; and**

Strengths:

The applicant provided strong resumes for the project director and the principal investigator (p. e. 61). The experience of key project staff for the IB college preparatory program is appropriate (p. e44 and e45). The applicant demonstrates appropriate foresight and planning to surrender other duties of the project director to take over tasks for this project (p. e45). The applicant provides a reasonable management plan considering its experience and success with similar projects (p. e44).

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 2

3. iii. **How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.**

Strengths:

There is a comprehensive page on their website that is dedicated to continually soliciting parent and community input and involvement in their growth and to keeping stakeholders informed of the project (p. e34). The board members are diverse and represent the community served.

Stakeholders, parents, and teachers have meetings about the direction of the school. Surveys are important and often used to measure parents' opinions (p. e45).

The applicant offers French language classes to four low-income and racially diverse pre-schools (p. e29).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Continuation Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the continuation plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the continuation plan, the Secretary considers the extent to which the eligible applicant is prepared to continue to operate the charter school 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:

Historically, the applicant has had 96-97 % of its funds raised through public funds and the philanthropic community (p. e50). The applicant has also engaged community donors and tax credits have been utilized to support expansion efforts (p. e50). The applicant employs a full-time development director to support fund-raising (p. e50). The applicant has demonstrated strong financial leadership in the past because this grant is for the final phase of their project (p.e28).

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Opening a New Charter School or Replicating or Expanding a High-quality Charter School to Serve Native American Students**

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

- a. Propose to open a new charter school, or replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that—**
 - 1. Utilizes targeted outreach and recruitment in order to serve a high proportion of Native American students, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws;**
 - 2. Has a mission and focus that will address the unique educational needs of Native American students, such as through the use of instructional programs and teaching methods that reflect and preserve Native American language, culture, and history; and**
 - 3. Has or will have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Native American organizations located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school;**
- b. Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Native American organization located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school; and**
- c. Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Native American organization(s) from which the applicant has received a letter of support in a timely, active, and ongoing manner with respect to the development and implementation of the educational program at the charter school.**

Strengths:

The applicant has not addressed this competitive preference priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant has not addressed this competitive preference priority.

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/12/2019 02:20 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/06/2019 11:30 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Academie Lafayette (S282E190030)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Eligible Applicant		
1. Eligible Applicant	30	25
Assisting Educationally Disadvantage Students		
1. Significance	15	11
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	20
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	9
Quality of the Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	10	8
Sub Total	100	81
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	10	0
Sub Total	10	0
Total	110	81

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - FY19 Developers - 2: 84.282E

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Academie Lafayette (S282E190030)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Eligible Applicant

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

The extent to which –

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

1. i. 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, postsecondary enrollment and persistence rates, including in college or career training programs, employment rates, earnings, and other academic outcomes) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school(s) operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students served by other public schools in the State;

Strengths:

This applicant has received a Tier 1 status since 2014 (p. e27). This status is the highest status that can be achieved and is based off of the school quality reports.

Weaknesses:

There is little evidence to support strategies for the special education student population. General terms are mentioned and an assessment team is utilized. However, no assessment tools are utilized. Page e22 states a dramatic increase in their statewide performance, but insufficient data is given to support this. Additionally, the data is presented in such a way as it is difficult to interpret. For example, page e24 mentions 95% retention rate in elementary school but neglects other years. The applicant also uses terms such a significant, substantial, and considered, but the applicant does not define those. There is an overarching concern about the demographics of students being served (i.e., educationally disadvantaged and strategies implemented for such students).

Reader's Score: 7

2. ii. One or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation;

Strengths:

This charter has had no concerns in the area of being non-compliant with statutory or regulatory requirements. The audit starting on page e81 has no findings.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

3. iii. **One or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and**

Strengths:

Indicated no issues and clean audit. Pg 7 has statement indicating that there was no concerns with the audit. There are three independent schools that had no issues which resulted in any concerns. the fact that they have operated three schools with no concerns is impressive as all policies have to be implemented with fidelity with three independent budgets

Weaknesses:

Indicated no issues and clean audit with the schools in the network

Reader's Score: 10

4. iv. **The schools operated or managed by the applicant demonstrate strong results on measurable outcomes in non-academic areas such as, but not limited to, parent satisfaction, school climate, student mental health, civic engagement, and crime prevention and reduction.**

Strengths:

The application demonstrates emphasis placed on parent satisfaction and school climate (physical climate), which show that the school is focusing on the whole person and not just academics and understands the impact of all the systems of care (pg e27-28) such as arts and music as well as health and physical education.

Weaknesses:

The applicant needs a more thorough description of non-academic areas and community involvement and engagement. The applicant doesn't focus on non-academic areas which would better support those outcomes. The school is highly centered around academics.

Reader's Score: 3

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantage Students

1. **The Secretary considers the significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students for the proposed project. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational opportunity for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards, the Secretary considers the quality of the plan to ensure that the charter**

school the applicant proposes to open, replicate, or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, which include children with disabilities and English learners.

Strengths:

This applicant proposes to expand an existing program that has a proven track record of success. Page 16 details statistics that show the success rate of the students as compared to other students in ELA and math. On page e27, the applicant details a comparison of the percentages of educationally disadvantaged students in the various districts and those of Académie Lafayette. The applicant outlines on page e28 how it will ensure that its schools will represent and effectively serve the right population of students. On page e29, it is important to note that the applicant is tracking trends in data and using this to support their expansion.

The program outlines many strategies to help with students from backgrounds that are educationally disadvantaged as evidenced by its research. Page e22- outlines academic strategies related to ELA, MAT, Science, social studies and civics, as well as other curriculum areas ie music and arts.

Weaknesses:

There is limited evidence of the school addressing ELL or children with disabilities. There should be more information discussing this based on the demographics served. IEPs are mentioned and French classes are also mentioned , but it is important that specific strategies be designed (p. e30).

Reader's Score: 11

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

The extent to which --

- i. The goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specific and measurable; and**
- ii. The design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.**

Strengths:

Parents feedback was garnered to help support the design of the project. Pages e32-e34 outline parents surveyed with a high rate of return (65%) and that parents support charter schools. In the proposal the need for charters was mentioned and the fact that there are waiting lists, which shows parents eagerness to get their children in (p. e25).

An outline of the goals and objectives discusses increases in attendance, especially of low-income students and students of color (p. e39). This is also tied into the board strategic mission, so there is clear alignment.

Assumptions can be made that the goals, objectives and outcomes are specific and measurable as there is an identified team for assessment data analytics as well as data analytic tools being used. There is a lot of information and data collection points throughout this project (p. e39-e42).

Other areas are outlined in pages e52-e55 to help establish activities.

Weaknesses:

The logic model outlines the project component, theoretical and operational relationships and objectives (p. e35), but they are general. As defined, a logic model presents the shared relationships among the resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact for your program. The logic model is supposed to depict the relationship between the program's activities and its intended effects, and this is not clearly defined. Additionally, page e35 states that the project described is limited to the projected components and that all activities cannot be addressed due to narrative length. However, a depiction could be given so that there is a clearer picture of the design.

Reader's Score: 20

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:**

The extent to which –

Reader's Score: 8

Sub

- 1. i. 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; and**

Strengths:

The head of school is representative of underrepresented groups and is fluent in three languages with an understanding of the fourth. (9page e42-44) Additionally Page e12 identifies how the academy strives to have a diversified staff so that it can mirror its students.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified. Would be helpful to outline specific strategies used to recruit staff in these areas.

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

All staff are highly trained and has been involved in the school for many years. Many of the administration conduct training themselves and are highly experienced (p. e42-e44 and resumes on e61-e73). Ongoing training is not definitely outlined but suggested to help implement many of the training modules associated with reading, ELA and the IB Model.

Sub

Weaknesses:

There is an assumption that staff will be consistently trained in many of the curriculum and strategies used in the classroom. However, this is not clearly demonstrated in the application. The applicant should have provided more information on staff and professional training.

Reader's Score: 6

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 applicant's management plan, the Secretary considers the following factors**

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

- 1. i. 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:

Page e44 briefly describes that this is not the charter's first time successfully completing a comparable project. Based on the current staff, who have been there awhile, they are very familiar with the project and timeline. Each entity and staff have clearly defined roles and milestones. Additionally, Table 7 (p. e46-e50) outlines specific timelines, activities, and the person responsible, that are appropriate and reasonable.

Weaknesses:

The applicant should have an evaluation plan with intermittent strategies, and not only in 2024, which should be ongoing. The lack of intermittent strategies hinders their ability to achieve the objectives of the proposed plan on time, because if things are not being implemented with fidelity outcomes will not be achieved in a timely fashion.

Reader's Score: 5

- 2. ii. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project; and**

Strengths:

The time commitments outlined are reasonable in the table on page e46. Page e45 indicates how they will achieve this. The applicant has credibility since they have done this at two other schools and their stakeholders are familiar with this process. They have also removed themselves from other projects or responsibilities to implement this project.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified

Sub

Reader's Score: 2

- 3.
- iii. How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

Strengths:

The applicant has done a thorough job of including a variety of stakeholders such as parents, grandparents, and university personnel. The applicant demonstrated that they gather and listen to various perspectives throughout the entire project. (e.g., were parents surveys indicated previously).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses

Reader's Score: 2

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Continuation Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the continuation plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the continuation plan, the Secretary considers the extent to which the eligible applicant is prepared to continue to operate the charter school 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 has done an excellent job of utilizing fundraising efforts in the past to support its school (p. e50). However, it is very difficult to determine if the changing of the demographics will have an impact on its donor and fundraising efforts. The LEA has implemented a plan to help fund any gaps and to ensure the successful funding as well as surplus (p. e51).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not fully address concerns about the financial aspects of funding this school. The school is identifying and targeting lower income students, which they stated will result in increased funding. There is also a deficit due to low high school enrollment and high school start-up cost (p. e51).

Reader's Score: 8

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 2: Opening a New Charter School or Replicating or Expanding a High-quality Charter School to Serve Native American Students**

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

- a. Propose to open a new charter school, or replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that—
1. Utilizes targeted outreach and recruitment in order to serve a high proportion of Native American students, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S.

Constitution and Federal civil rights laws;

2. Has a mission and focus that will address the unique educational needs of Native American students, such as through the use of instructional programs and teaching methods that reflect and preserve Native American language, culture, and history; and

3. Has or will have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Native American organizations located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school;

b. Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Native American organization located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school; and

c. Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Native American organization(s) from which the applicant has received a letter of support in a timely, active, and ongoing manner with respect to the development and implementation of the educational program at the charter school.

Strengths:

No strengths noted

Weaknesses:

Applicant did not address this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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