

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Alpha Public Schools (U282M180005)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the eligible applicant		
1. Quality of the Applicant	45	44
Significance		
1. Disadvantaged Students	30	27
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Evaluation Plan	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	15
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Promoting Diversity		
1. Promoting Diversity	3	2
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Reopening Poor-performing Public Schools		
1. Reopening Public Schools	3	0
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
High School Students		
1. High School Students	3	2
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Replicating/Expanding High-quality Charter Schools		
1. Replicating/Expanding	3	0
Total	112	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Alpha Public Schools (U282M180005)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the eligible applicant

1. Selection Criteria 1: Quality of the eligible applicant

Reader's Score: 44

Sub

1. (i) **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 served by other public schools in the State.**

Strengths:

The applicant notes a consistently high academic record with a higher percentage proficient on state assessment in ELA and Math than comparison district and state (p e37). Additionally, all schools have average daily attendance exceeding 94% across the network (p42).

Weaknesses:

When looking at the academic assessment data, there is some inconsistency across campuses (Jose, Blanca) (p e38). Retention percentages are low at Cindy High School and Jose Middle School (pe43).

Reader's Score: 14

2. (ii) **The extent to which 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:

The applicant does not disclose any past record of charter revocation or compliance problems. Alpha is in good standing with all of its authorizers and has a sound operational history (p e46-47).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses to note.

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

3. (iii) **The extent to which 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.**

Strengths:

The applicant indicates a stable financial history and clean audits (p e 47). The applicant does not disclose any past record of financial and operational mismanagement.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses to note.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. Selection Criteria 2: Significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students

In determining 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, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 27

Sub

1. (i) **The extent to which charter schools currently operated or managed by the applicant serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools or, in the case of virtual charter schools, at rates comparable to public schools in the State.**

Strengths:

As a network, the applicant serves more economically disadvantaged students than comparison districts (p e37). Students who stay at Alpha longer tend to do better academically, supporting the proposal to expand grade levels offered at the schools (p e34). As a network, the applicant also serves a larger population of students with disabilities (12%) than surrounding districts and the state (p e31).

Weaknesses:

Comparative demographic data for ELL and special education students is not clearly presented and it is difficult to glean a full understanding of how the network and individual schools within the network compare to surrounding schools and the state.

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: 14

2. (ii) **The quality of the plan to ensure that the charter schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged**

Sub

students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.

Strengths:

The applicant has a recruitment plan that includes hiring multi-lingual recruiters (p e25) and has a stated goal of supporting diversity. The network also strives to recruit and retain a diverse staff (p e25).

Weaknesses:

The applicant had no clear plan for specifically recruiting students from other subgroups not well represented at the school, especially those with disabilities is evident.

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: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. Selection Criteria 3: Quality of the evaluation plan for the proposed project

In determining the quality of the evaluation plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the proposed project, as described in the applicant's logic model, and that will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

The applicant has partnered with a 3rd party evaluator (SRI Education) (p e67) and includes qualitative and quantitative data in the well-detailed evaluation plan. The evaluation is specific to this grant proposal.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Selection Criteria 4: Quality of the Management Plan

In determining the quality of the applicant's management plan, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

- 1. (i) The ability of the applicant to sustain the operation of the replicated or expanded charter schools after the grant has ended, as demonstrated by the multi-year financial and operating model required under section 4305(b)(3)(B)(iii) of the ESEA (5 points). (NFP)**

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant includes a detailed, complete budget for the proposed program duration and notes that it plans fundraising efforts to bridge funding gaps, as it has in the past (p e71). As key replication and expansion structures are already in place, the sustainability of the growth does not depend solely on funding.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. (ii) **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. (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))**

Strengths:

The applicant includes a management action plan that designates the person(s) responsible and timeline for each phase of the project. Milestones are identified and aligned to the goals in the logic model (p e73).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. (iii) **The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (34 CFR 75.210(e)(3)(ii))**

Strengths:

The applicant has previous experience with school expansion and the included resumes indicate that the organization is well-staffed with highly qualified individuals to lead replication and expansion work (p e74-79).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Promoting Diversity

1. **Competitive Preference Priority 1— Promoting Diversity.**

Under this priority, applicants must propose to replicate or expand high-quality charter schools that have an intentional focus on recruiting students from racially and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds, and maintaining racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies in those charter schools, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Strengths:

The applicant cites demographics across its student body that are diverse across several indicators, including socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, ELL status and ability (p e24). The applicant takes special efforts to recruit for a diverse student body and staff (p e25). Comparative data indicates that the applicant serves more Hispanic and Asian

students, low-income student, ELL and Special Education students than the state and comparison districts (p e24).

Weaknesses:

The applicant could widen its recruitment efforts to include more focus on groups not well-represented in their school and staff demographics.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Reopening Poor-performing Public Schools

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2— Reopening Academically Poor-performing Public Schools as Charter Schools

Under this priority, applicants must:

(i) Demonstrate past success working with one or more academically poor-performing public schools or schools that previously were designated as persistently lowest-achieving schools or priority schools under the former School Improvement Grant program or in States that exercised ESEA flexibility, respectively, under the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB); and

(ii) Propose to use grant funds under this program to reopen one or more academically poor-performing public schools as charter schools during the project period by--

(A) Replicating one or more high-quality charter schools based on a successful charter school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success; and

(B) Targeting a demographically similar student population in the replicated charter schools as was served by the academically poor-performing public schools, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Strengths:

The applicant does not specifically address this component of the competitive preference priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not specifically address this component of the competitive preference priority.

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: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - High School Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3— High School Students.

Under this priority, applicants must propose to:

(i) Replicate or expand high-quality charter schools to serve high school students, including educationally disadvantaged students;

(ii) Prepare students, including educationally disadvantaged students, in those schools for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions through activities such as, but not limited

to, accelerated learning programs (including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses and programs, dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college high schools), college counseling, career and technical education programs, career counseling, internships, work-based learning programs (such as apprenticeships), assisting students in the college admissions and financial aid application processes, and preparing students to take standardized college admissions tests;

(iii) Provide support for students, including educationally disadvantaged students, who graduate from those schools and enroll in postsecondary education institutions in persisting in, and attaining a degree or certificate from, such institutions, through activities such as, but not limited to, mentorships, ongoing assistance with the financial aid application process, and establishing or strengthening peer support systems for such students attending the same institution; and

(iv) Propose one or more project-specific performance measures, including aligned leading indicators or other interim milestones, that will provide valid and reliable information about the applicant's progress in preparing students, including educationally disadvantaged students, for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions and in supporting those students in persisting in and attaining a degree or certificate from such institutions. An applicant addressing this priority and receiving a CMO grant must provide data that are responsive to the measure(s), including performance targets, in its annual performance reports to the Department.

(v) For purposes of this priority, postsecondary education institutions include institutions of higher education, as defined in section 8101(29) of the ESEA, and one-year training programs that meet the requirements of section 101(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA).

Strengths:

The applicant prepares educationally disadvantaged schools for college enrollment through intensive math, AP courses, college counseling and prep programs (p e26-28). The applicant has plans for supporting these students during college (p e29) and has appropriate performance measures in place to manage the college transition programming (p e30).

Weaknesses:

The applicant has not yet graduated a class of high school students and does not have data to show that the model it is proposing to replicate is proven to be successful as a high-quality charter school in terms of college matriculation, retention and graduation measures.

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: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Replicating/Expanding High-quality Charter Schools

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4— Replicating or Expanding High-quality Charter Schools to Serve Native American Students.

(i) Propose to replicate or expand one or more high-quality charter schools that--

(A) Utilize 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;

(B) Have 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

(C) Have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Indian organizations located within the area to be served by the replicated or

expanded charter school;

(ii) Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Indian organization located within the area to be served by the replicated or expanded charter school; and

(iii) Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Indian 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:

This application did not respond to this priority area. No strengths are noted.

Weaknesses:

This application did not respond to this priority area.

Reader's Score: 0

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Alpha Public Schools (U282M180005)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the eligible applicant		
1. Quality of the Applicant	45	44
Significance		
1. Disadvantaged Students	30	29
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Evaluation Plan	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	15
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Promoting Diversity		
1. Promoting Diversity	3	2
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Reopening Poor-performing Public Schools		
1. Reopening Public Schools	3	0
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
High School Students		
1. High School Students	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Replicating/Expanding High-quality Charter Schools		
1. Replicating/Expanding	3	0
Total	112	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Alpha Public Schools (U282M180005)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the eligible applicant

1. Selection Criteria 1: Quality of the eligible applicant

Reader's Score: 44

Sub

1. (i) **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 served by other public schools in the State.**

Strengths:

The applicant provided strong evidence that the schools in the Alpha Charter Network has significantly outperformed students in comparable schools and in the state in overall student performance, statewide assessments and attendance and graduation rates. (Pg. 6 and Appendix G) The applicant provided data sets that indicated that based on a conditional growth percentile with students with a percentile of 50 achieved average growth and they grew more than 50% of comparison students. The applicant maintained an attendance in the 95th percentile over the past 5 years and with no expulsions.

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided inconsistent data sets that demonstrated successful academic growth among all schools. The data presented did represent academic performance among all schools. Without consistent data, it is difficult to determine if all schools out-performed students in comparable schools in the local area and throughout the state.

Reader's Score: 14

2. (ii) **The extent to which 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:

The applicant effectively demonstrated that the Alpha Charter Network is in good standing with all of its authorizers—Alum Rock Unified School District, Franklin McKinley Unified School District, Santa Clara County Office of Education, and East Side Union High School District and have been re-authorize to continue Alpha schools. Alpha Public Schools has had no school closures, no issues of noncompliance with statutory or regulatory

Sub

requirement, no charter revocations for any reason, and no affiliations revoked. (pg. 27)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

3. (iii) **The extent to which 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.**

Strengths:

The applicant successfully demonstrated that the Alpha Charter Network has not had any issues as an organization with operational management or financial issues that could lead to statutory violations or non-regulatory compliance or revocation of the school's charter. The applicant evidenced that the Charter Network is financially sound and operating with grants and the revolving loan from the California Department of Education (CDE). The applicant indicated that Alpha's operating reserves are currently (and are projected to be over the next 5 years) above 25% of annual operating expenses. Additionally, Heritage Bank has approved Alpha for a line of credit in the amount of \$1,500,000 and the applicant has not used this offer but will use as future security if needed. There have been no safety issues. (pgs. 27-28)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. **Selection Criteria 2: Significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students**

In determining 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, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 29

Sub

1. (i) **The extent to which charter schools currently operated or managed by the applicant serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools or, in the case of virtual charter schools, at rates comparable to public schools in the State.**

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant comprehensively demonstrated that the charter schools currently operated or managed by the applicant serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools. For example, Alpha serves a student population that is 86% low income, 72% Hispanic, 40% English Language Learners, and 12% Special Education. Comparatively, Alpha serves 86% low-income, while the surrounding area serves 76% and the State of California 61% and English Language Learners, Alpha 40%, surrounding area 32% and the State of California 17%. (pgs. 29-30)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

- 2. (ii) The quality of the plan to ensure that the charter schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.**

Strengths:

The applicant provided strong evidence that the Alpha Charter Network has a plan in place to ensure that the charter schools the applicant is proposing to replicate or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners. The applicant indicated that the targeted focus will be educationally disadvantaged students from the East San José neighborhood, with a focus on students who are low-income, students of color, English Language Learners, and special education students. The funding will allow the Network to grow from 1,530 students to 2,301 by the end of the grant period, with at least 85% of whom are projected to be low-income, 70% Hispanic, 40% English-language learners, with comparable rates of students with disabilities as currently served. Alpha will remain an open-enrollment lottery charter school that accepts students from all socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

The plan for meeting their goals to replicate and expand will include: (1) to enroll to siblings of current students and family referrals, (2) targeted social media campaigns, (3) information tables at Vietnamese shopping centers and Hispanic supermarkets, (4) mailing postcards and send flyers to families in targeted neighborhoods. (pgs. 36-37)

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide a clearly developed plan for outreach and recruitment for students with disabilities and special education students. The inclusion of the recruitment plan would have clearly demonstrated the charter network will reach all educationally disadvantaged students.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

- 1. Selection Criteria 3: Quality of the evaluation plan for the proposed project**

In determining the quality of the evaluation plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the proposed project, as described in the applicant's logic model, and that will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

The applicant provided a comprehensive evaluation plan that is aligned with the intended outcomes in the Logic Model. The evaluation plan includes strong methods of evaluation that will be aligned with objective performance measures capable of producing quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the grant period. The applicant will utilize the services SRI International, a national nonprofit research organization as an external evaluator. The evaluation will (1) describe the implementation of the core elements of Alpha's school model, (2) identify strategic elements of the network's expansion and sustainability; and (3) examine student retention and academic success outcomes.

The SRI team will work with Alpha leadership to develop measurable indicators for the key components of the model using surveys, interviews, data review, classroom observations and other measurable mixed method. The applicant indicated that the evaluation will provide timely feedback and time for midcourse adjustments and to increase the likelihood of success. (pgs. 37-46)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**1. Selection Criteria 4: Quality of the Management Plan**

In determining the quality of the applicant's management plan, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

- 1. (i) The ability of the applicant to sustain the operation of the replicated or expanded charter schools after the grant has ended, as demonstrated by the multi-year financial and operating model required under section 4305(b)(3)(B)(iii) of the ESEA (5 points). (NFP)**

Strengths:

The applicant comprehensively demonstrated the ability of the applicant to sustain the operation of the replicated or expanded charter schools after the grant has ended. The applicant successfully demonstrated that the Alpha Charter Network has not had any issues as an organization with operational management or financial issues. The applicant evidenced that the Charter Network is financially sound and operating with grants and the revolving loan from the California Department of Education (CDE). The applicant indicated that Alpha's operating reserves are currently (and are projected to be over the next 5 years) above 25% of annual operating expenses. Additionally, Heritage Bank has approved Alpha for a line of credit in the amount of \$1,500,000 and the applicant has not used this offer but will use as future security if needed. There have been no safety issues. (pgs. 27-28)

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

- 2. (ii) 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. (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))**

Strengths:

The applicant provided a comprehensive 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. The management plan is aligned with the logic model and the goals and objectives of the proposed project with accompanying milestones. The applicant clearly aligned the project tasks and activities in the management plan and who will be responsible for accomplishing these tasks. Additionally, the applicant indicated the roles of individuals who will be responsible for data collection and reporting on progress towards goals, objectives, and outcomes. This information is aligned in the evaluation plan and will be key as the evaluators use the data analysis for progress reporting and final reports.

For example, upon announce of the CSP grant award to Alpha Public Schools learning communities the CEO and the Executive team will meet with stakeholders, including parents, to review goals, objectives, activities, and the budget. Other ongoing activities allotted for in the management plan includes time for Principals to participate in professional development to plan the opening and replication of K-4 at existing schools, as well as ongoing professional development for teachers. (pgs. 53-55)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

- 3. (iii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (34 CFR 75.210(e)(3)(ii))**

Strengths:

The applicant provided convincing evidence that the qualifications, relevant training and experience, of key project personnel are strong and the teams are appropriately staffed to support Alpha's schools through the growth phase and at full growth. The applicant indicated they do not anticipate major changes to the staffing. For example, the three Alpha schools in the process of replicating and expanding have a school leadership team that consists of the Principal, Assistant Principals who manage teachers, Instructional Coaches that provide academic support, and a School Operations Manager who manages the office team and school operations.

The applicant provided bios and resumes for each staff person and the operational team. The information provided strongly referenced a team of qualified individuals who has worked for the charter school network for many years. The resumes indicate all have relevant degrees in education and experience working with charter schools. For example, the Project Director for the CSP grant is the Director of Finance and will be responsible for overseeing the annual budgeting process, long-range financial planning, federal and state compliance with regulations for public revenues including Federal Title programs, preparing financial statements and reporting financial information to key stakeholders, including funders, lenders and members of the Board of Directors. He has significant experience managing Alpha's grants, including those from the State of California. (pgs. 55-60)

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Promoting Diversity

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1— Promoting Diversity.

Under this priority, applicants must propose to replicate or expand high-quality charter schools that have an intentional focus on recruiting students from racially and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds, and maintaining racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies in those charter schools, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Strengths:

The applicant indicated that they serve more Hispanic and Asian students, more low-income students, more English-language Learners (ELs), and more Special Education students than the state and more or a comparable number of each population all comparison districts. Further the applicant indicated their plan to continue recruiting students from the current diverse backgrounds to maintain the diverse student body that they currently serve, through such methods as enrolling siblings of current students; asking current families to refer their acquaintances from the community.(pgs. 8-9)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not effectively propose to replicate or expand their charter schools with an intentional focus on recruiting students from racially diverse backgrounds. For example, the applicant provided extensive data to describe the current demographics for the Alpha charter network in which they state that currently there are 72% Hispanic, 23% Asian, and 5% other races/ethnicities. (The demographics of the 5% is not identified). The applicant further indicated that they serve more Hispanic and Asian students, more low-income students, more English-language Learners (ELs), and more Special Education students than the state and more or a comparable number of each population all comparison districts.

If these current demographics indicate what is currently being served and what they are proposing to continue to recruit, the applicant is not proposing to intentionally focus on recruiting students from racially and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds. For example, the applicant does not indicate the intention for recruiting African-American students.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Reopening Poor-performing Public Schools

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2— Reopening Academically Poor-performing Public Schools as Charter Schools

Under this priority, applicants must:

(i) Demonstrate past success working with one or more academically poor-performing public schools or schools that previously were designated as persistently lowest-achieving schools or priority schools under the former School Improvement Grant program or in States that exercised ESEA flexibility, respectively, under the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB); and

(ii) Propose to use grant funds under this program to reopen one or more academically poor-performing public schools as charter schools during the project period by--

(A) Replicating one or more high-quality charter schools based on a successful charter school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success; and

(B) Targeting a demographically similar student population in the replicated charter schools as was served by the academically poor-performing public schools, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Strengths:

The applicant is not addressing CPP2.

Weaknesses:

The applicant is not addressing CPP2.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - High School Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3— High School Students.

Under this priority, applicants must propose to:

(i) Replicate or expand high-quality charter schools to serve high school students, including educationally disadvantaged students;

(ii) Prepare students, including educationally disadvantaged students, in those schools for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions through activities such as, but not limited to, accelerated learning programs (including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses and programs, dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college high schools), college counseling, career and technical education programs, career counseling, internships, work-based learning programs (such as apprenticeships), assisting students in the college admissions and financial aid application processes, and preparing students to take standardized college admissions tests;

(iii) Provide support for students, including educationally disadvantaged students, who graduate from those schools and enroll in postsecondary education institutions in persisting in, and attaining a degree or certificate from, such institutions, through activities such as, but not limited to, mentorships, ongoing assistance with the financial aid application process, and establishing or strengthening peer support systems for such students attending the same institution; and

(iv) Propose one or more project-specific performance measures, including aligned leading indicators or other interim milestones, that will provide valid and reliable information about the applicant's progress in preparing students, including educationally disadvantaged students, for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions and in supporting those students in persisting in and attaining a degree or certificate from such institutions. An applicant addressing this priority and receiving a CMO grant must provide data that are responsive to the measure(s), including performance targets, in its annual performance reports to the Department.

(v) For purposes of this priority, postsecondary education institutions include institutions of higher education, as defined in section 8101(29) of the ESEA, and one-year training programs that meet the requirements of section 101(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA).

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrated that the proposed project will expand the number of high school students it serves by 35%. The applicant indicated that currently the high school program enrolls 434 students in grades 9-12 and will graduate its first class of seniors in June 2019. The high school program is focused on preparing all students for postsecondary education through an intensive math program, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and college counseling, including assisting students in the college admissions and financial aid application processes and preparing students to take standardized college admissions tests.

The applicant utilizes the AVID program (Advancement Via Individual Determination), a college readiness program that builds students' skills in critical thinking, teamwork, and organization to create a college-going culture in 9th and 10th grade. Students take an SAT Prep class that prepares them for the SAT college admission exam, which is nationally recognized as a barrier to college acceptance for low-income students. Alpha proposes four project specific performance measures on preparing students for postsecondary education: For example, 100% of students apply to a balanced list of colleges. Based on their academic credentials—GPA and SAT score—100% of seniors will apply to a balanced list of postsecondary institutions. (pgs. 6-10)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Replicating/Expanding High-quality Charter Schools**1. Competitive Preference Priority 4— Replicating or Expanding High-quality Charter Schools to Serve Native American Students.****(i) Propose to replicate or expand one or more high-quality charter schools that--**

(A) Utilize 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;

(B) Have 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

(C) Have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Indian organizations located within the area to be served by the replicated or expanded charter school;

(ii) Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Indian organization located within the area to be served by the replicated or expanded charter school; and

(iii) Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Indian 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 is not addressing CPP4.

Weaknesses:

The applicant is not addressing CPP4.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2019 05:11 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2019 05:11 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Alpha Public Schools (U282M180005)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the eligible applicant		
1. Quality of the Applicant	45	43
Significance		
1. Disadvantaged Students	30	29
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Evaluation Plan	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	14
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Promoting Diversity		
1. Promoting Diversity	3	2
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Reopening Poor-performing Public Schools		
1. Reopening Public Schools	3	0
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
High School Students		
1. High School Students	3	2
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Replicating/Expanding High-quality Charter Schools		
1. Replicating/Expanding	3	0
Total	112	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Alpha Public Schools (U282M180005)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the eligible applicant

1. Selection Criteria 1: Quality of the eligible applicant

Reader's Score: 43

Sub

1. (i) **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 served by other public schools in the State.**

Strengths:

The application provides data that demonstrate that low-income Hispanic students are meeting or exceeding standards at a higher percentage than similar students across the state (e34). Applicant demonstrates that attendance rates are higher than students across the state (94% vs. 86%) (e42). Students who begin below grade level outperform students throughout the state by grade 11 (e31). Students at grades 3 and 4 outperform meet or exceed standards at a higher rate than the authorizing districts and the state (e34). The Alpha High School outperforms the nearby East Side Union HSD at its site in both ELA and Math (e41). Applicants schools show growth data (year to year increases) exceed state and local increases in total and for all subgroups (e44). The school has been reportedly the highest performing charter school in San Jose (2014) (e20). The cornerstone program is highly successful when compared to local and state peers (e31). The applicant shows cohort growth at both Bland and Jose (approximately 16%) (e36).

Weaknesses:

Students at Blanca and Jose do not outperform students at the state level in ELA and math (e35). Retention rates at two of the applicant's schools are mostly in the 70% range (e43). Middle grades retention is less than 75% in grades five and six, meaning only 3 of 4 middle schoolers return each year. (e43).

Reader's Score: 13

2. (ii) **The extent to which 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.**

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant has not had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or other significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter from any of its four authorizers. The applicant has been awarded the follow distinctions at its programs: Alpha: Cornerstone won a California Distinguished School Award and Alpha: Blanca won a Next Generation Learning Challenges award¹². Alpha: Cindy holds a six-year accreditation, the maximum possible, by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) (e46).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this area.

Reader's Score: 15

3. (iii) **The extent to which 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.**

Strengths:

The applicant has not experienced any significant financial or operation issues, including safety. There are no issues with regulatory compliance. The applicant has received several grants from California Department of Education (CDE) (e47).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this area.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. **Selection Criteria 2: Significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students**

In determining 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, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 29

Sub

1. (i) **The extent to which charter schools currently operated or managed by the applicant serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools or, in the case of virtual charter schools, at rates comparable to public schools in the State.**

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant serves educationally disadvantaged students at rates higher than the authorizing districts and the state (e 48). The school enrolls a higher rate of ELL, low income, and special education students than the authorizing district or state (e48)

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this area.

Reader's Score: 15

2. (ii) The quality of the plan to ensure that the charter schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.

Strengths:

The applicant designed its program around the students with educational disadvantages that attend its schools. For example, since Alpha serves a majority low-income, first-generation Hispanic population its program is specifically built to provide these students with the supports and skills (e49). The applicant's students meet or exceed state standards for all subgroups at rates higher than the authorizing school district or the state (e50). The applicant's programs offer a therapeutic Learning Classroom for students with severe challenges (e51). The applicant has outperformed local systems and the state for students who or English Learners(e52).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not demonstrate a recruitment plan that increases the number of educationally disadvantaged groups that currently do not attend the school (e.g., African American students). The scores of students with disabilities do not exceed those of the state or local systems at all programs (e50).

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. Selection Criteria 3: Quality of the evaluation plan for the proposed project

In determining the quality of the evaluation plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the proposed project, as described in the applicant's logic model, and that will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

The applicant will partner with SRI to conduct its evaluation (e 56). The evaluation focuses specifically on the implementation and outcomes of the program proposed in the grant application to CSP (e56). The applicant provides a detailed and thorough logic model that aligns with the implementation plan and evaluation (e56). The applicant provides performance targets for achievement, teacher retention, staff and student culture, parent engagement and finances (e58).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Selection Criteria 4: Quality of the Management Plan

In determining the quality of the applicant's management plan, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 14

Sub

1. (i) **The ability of the applicant to sustain the operation of the replicated or expanded charter schools after the grant has ended, as demonstrated by the multi-year financial and operating model required under section 4305(b)(3)(B)(iii) of the ESEA (5 points). (NFP)**

Strengths:

The applicant expects to operate solely on public funds and to have a positive balance after full enrollment at the end of the grant period (e68). The applicant provides a 5 year budget for the entire project and for each individual site that demonstrates a positive operating income at the end of the grant (e68). The applicant receives significant philanthropic support (e71). The schools pay a reasonable 17% management fee (e70). Large waitlists appear to ensure that seats will be filled at the programs (e72).

Weaknesses:

The applicant is operating at a deficit at one or more of its programs (e68). The operator's current programs are running with annual deficits. The operator claims that once the K-4 enrollment is reached, then the issue will be resolved. Alpha: Cindy, however, remains in a deficit after 4 years of operation (e68). In year 4 of the grant, two of the three programs will still be in a deficit (e69).

Reader's Score: 4

2. (ii) **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. (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))**

Strengths:

The applicant provides a timeline that includes dates and deliverables (e66), milestones and persons responsible (e73). The applicant's plan has already been approved by the authorizer (e71). The applicant has already secured sites for the program (e72). The project director is assigned to lead the Executive Team to ensure that the project is reaching project goal and outcomes and that data is collected to meet the needs of the proposal (e74).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 5

3. (iii) **The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (34 CFR 75.210(e)(3)(ii))**

Strengths:

The applicant provides detailed qualifications for members of the evaluation team (e67). The organization chart provided demonstrates that all areas of the proposed program are covered (e75). Training and experiences of key

Sub

personnel are included (e76), as well as resumes demonstrating the quality of the staff listed as key staff to perform this work (e84). the Project Director for the grant has highly enumerated responsibilities, although he has never before managed a school of this size; his only school-based role having been 5th and 6th grade teacher (e87). The rest of the management team has extensive experience in education, including experience within the Alpha system (e77).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Promoting Diversity

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1— Promoting Diversity.

Under this priority, applicants must propose to replicate or expand high-quality charter schools that have an intentional focus on recruiting students from racially and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds, and maintaining racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies in those charter schools, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Strengths:

The applicant provides data that show their programs are at least as diverse as local school systems and the state in all areas but one; in most cases they are more diverse (e23). The school describes its focus on recruiting a diverse student body with specific methods and strategies such as enrolling siblings, asking current families for referrals, employing recruiters who speak the languages of the community, and focus on Section 8 housing. (e25). The CMO proposes to hire a diverse faculty to encourage the enrollment of diverse students (e25).

Weaknesses:

The applicant makes no mention of some groups (e.g., African American students) and should widen its recruitment strategies to go beyond groups already served.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Reopening Poor-performing Public Schools

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2— Reopening Academically Poor-performing Public Schools as Charter Schools

Under this priority, applicants must:

(i) Demonstrate past success working with one or more academically poor-performing public schools or schools that previously were designated as persistently lowest-achieving schools or priority schools under the former School Improvement Grant program or in States that exercised ESEA flexibility, respectively, under the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB); and

(ii) Propose to use grant funds under this program to reopen one or more academically poor-performing public schools as charter schools during the project period by--

(A) Replicating one or more high-quality charter schools based on a successful charter

school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success; and

(B) Targeting a demographically similar student population in the replicated charter schools as was served by the academically poor-performing public schools, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Strengths:

The applicant did not address this priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - High School Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3— High School Students.

Under this priority, applicants must propose to:

(i) Replicate or expand high-quality charter schools to serve high school students, including educationally disadvantaged students;

(ii) Prepare students, including educationally disadvantaged students, in those schools for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions through activities such as, but not limited to, accelerated learning programs (including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses and programs, dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college high schools), college counseling, career and technical education programs, career counseling, internships, work-based learning programs (such as apprenticeships), assisting students in the college admissions and financial aid application processes, and preparing students to take standardized college admissions tests;

(iii) Provide support for students, including educationally disadvantaged students, who graduate from those schools and enroll in postsecondary education institutions in persisting in, and attaining a degree or certificate from, such institutions, through activities such as, but not limited to, mentorships, ongoing assistance with the financial aid application process, and establishing or strengthening peer support systems for such students attending the same institution; and

(iv) Propose one or more project-specific performance measures, including aligned leading indicators or other interim milestones, that will provide valid and reliable information about the applicant's progress in preparing students, including educationally disadvantaged students, for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions and in supporting those students in persisting in and attaining a degree or certificate from such institutions. An applicant addressing this priority and receiving a CMO grant must provide data that are responsive to the measure(s), including performance targets, in its annual performance reports to the Department.

(v) For purposes of this priority, postsecondary education institutions include institutions of higher education, as defined in section 8101(29) of the ESEA, and one-year training programs that meet the requirements of section 101(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA).

Strengths:

The applicant is increasing its elementary enrollment to ensure that students are better prepared to graduate (e26). The applicant offers programming that includes an intensive math program, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, AVID, and

college counseling, including assisting students in the college admissions and financial aid application processes and preparing students to take standardized college admissions tests.e26).The applicant keeps data on AP pass rates (e27). The applicant designs its courses to meet the A-G requirements in CA (e28).

Weaknesses:

The applicant has not yet graduated a class from its high school making it difficult to decide whether this is a “high quality charter school” or that the strategies proposed are effective once students begin attending post-secondary schools.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Replicating/Expanding High-quality Charter Schools

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4— Replicating or Expanding High-quality Charter Schools to Serve Native American Students.

(i) Propose to replicate or expand one or more high-quality charter schools that--

(A) Utilize 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;

(B) Have 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

(C) Have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Indian organizations located within the area to be served by the replicated or expanded charter school;

(ii) Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Indian organization located within the area to be served by the replicated or expanded charter school; and

(iii) Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Indian 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 did not respond to this priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not respond to this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2019 05:11 PM