

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

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Charter Management Organization - 2: 84.282M

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Collegiate Academies (U282M160021)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

In determining the quality of the applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors--

Reader's Score: 31

Sub Question

1.

Strengths:

Collegiate consistently outscores the Recovery School District (RSD) schools in NOLA, EBR schools, and the statewide averages across all subgroups which are disaggregated in the data table. (e351-356)
Collegiate has historically ranked at the top of the RSD-NOLA in EOC scores, with one or more top test scores in 2009 and 2011. (e28)
In 2014 US News and World Report ranked Sci Academy the #2 high school in the state. (e29)
CREDO's gold-standard virtual twinning study shows that students enrolled in collegiate schools are receiving substantially better instruction, and their growth is equated to "additional days of learning" which have resulted in students progressing almost twice as fast as their comparison students. In 2012, 2014, and 2015, these "additional days of learning" were the equivalent of more than a school year. (e31) Additionally, this same study ranked Collegiate first in growth among all open-enrollment schools in NOLA. (e32)

Weaknesses:

Citywide comparison data was not provided. Nationally normed test scores and statewide test scores (LEAP/iLEAP, MAP/ACT/SAT) were not provided. Scores for ELLs and SWD were not disaggregated.
While they dramatically outscore the comparisons provided, Collegiate's test scores have not risen over time, in fact, they have in many cases experienced a net decrease.
Collegiate was approved for additional campuses in 2013, by BESE, but has not opened them, and states earlier in the application that they have an application pending decision in October with BESE. (e29)

Reader's Score: 15

2. (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by

Sub Question

the applicant, or

(ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111 (b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant and to which significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (15 points).

Strengths:

Collegiate consistently outscores the RSD schools in NOLA, EBR schools, and the statewide averages across all subgroups in all datasets shown. (e351-356) Further, the EOC scores presented show uniform outperformance for FRL and African American students over the same comparisons. (e34)

With regard to graduation rates, in 2015 Collegiate graduated 71.4% of SWD and 75% of FRL students, as opposed to the state averages in Louisiana (36.7% and 68.8%) and Mississippi (28.1% and 70.9%). (e36)

All of these achievements are even more impressive given that the application notes that the majority of student enter several years (up to five) below grade level. (e36)

Weaknesses:

While they dramatically outscore the comparisons provided, Collegiate's test scores have not risen over time, in fact, they have in many cases experienced a net decrease.

Additionally, Collegiate's scores indicate that there are significant achievement gaps between subgroups, with white and Asian students performing much higher than all other subgroups, and Hispanic students performing substantially worse.

Citywide comparison data was not provided. Nationally normed test scores and statewide test scores (LEAP/iLEAP, MAP/ACT/SAT) were not provided. Scores for ELLs and SWD were not disaggregated.

Reader's Score: 9

- 3. The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including performance on statewide tests, annual student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates where applicable and available) for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State (15 points).**

Strengths:

Collegiate consistently outscores the RSD schools in NOLA, EBR schools, and the statewide averages across all subgroups on EOCs. (e351-356)

Over the past three years, Collegiate has significantly improved its attendance at all campuses, and in 2015, all campuses significantly outperformed EBR and the state.

Collegiate's graduation rates for FRL and SWD for 2015 were both close to its rate for all students and were dramatically higher than state averages for both Louisiana and Mississippi. (e36) Notably, Collegiate serves significantly greater percentages of SWD and graduates them at twice the rate of the state.

Weaknesses:

Citywide comparison data was not provided. Nationally normed test scores and statewide test scores (LEAP/iLEAP) were not provided. Scores for ELLs and SWD were not disaggregated.

Three years of disaggregated data on annual student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates,

Sub Question

and college attendance rates were not provided.

All collegiate campuses significantly underperformed the district and state in 2013 and 2014 on attendance rates, although they did outperform by about two percentage points in 2015. (e35)

Comparisons for college persistence are not provided, and the three year trend is a significant decline. (e38)

Collegiate's four year graduation rates are effectively equal with Mississippi and only marginally higher than Louisiana (in this case for each of the past three years). (e36)

With the exception of 2015, Collegiate underperformed all comparison groups except RSD-NOLA on the ACT.

Notably, even in 2015, students are not scoring at the generally accepted college ready benchmark of 21. (e37) On the whole, college acceptance and matriculation rates are sinking at Collegiate, even though they do outperform the comparisons. (e37-8)

Reader's Score: 7

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

- 1. The contribution the proposed project will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged students served by the applicant to meet or exceed State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, and to graduate college- and career-ready. When responding to this selection criterion, applicants must discuss the proposed locations of schools to be created or substantially expanded and the student populations to be served.**

Note: The Secretary encourages applicants to describe their prior success in improving educational achievement and outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners. In addition, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how they will ensure that all eligible students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education and how the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners, in mastering State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.

Strengths:

As previously established, Collegiate Academies serve a student body that is almost entirely made up of students that meet one or more of the definitions of educationally disadvantaged, and serves these students in higher proportion than the districts of the state.

Collegiate offers an impressive array and spectrum of services for students in need of special services such as overage, ELL, and SWD. Most incoming Collegiate students enter four years below grade level. (e40)

The Essential skills program is a full day program for students with severe cognitive disabilities. REACH/Explorers is for students with less severe cognitive disabilities, and these students access general education classes more frequently.

The Journey program is for students with emotional disorders, behavioral disorders, or a combination of behavioral and disability issues. Opportunities academy is a post-secondary program for students 18-22 with intellectual or autism diagnoses. (e43)

ELL students have ESL instruction, translation of all documents into home languages, as well as access to a variety of translation services including document translation, phone translation, and in-person translation. (e44)

Weaknesses:

The application indicates that Collegiate has an intentional siting process, but does not describe the process, nor does the application address the competitive authorization process in either state.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the 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 extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and attainable. Applicants proposing to open schools serving substantially different populations than those currently served by the model for which they have demonstrated evidence of success must address the attainability of outcomes given this difference.

Strengths:

The application provides a detailed table of goals and objectives, with baseline measures and performance targets for each year. (e47) Goals are presented in SMART terms. The logic model clearly demonstrates both short and long-term goals (e49)

Collegiate has consistently met financial expectations set by the LDE in its contracts (e50), and has letters of support from NSBR and CSGF, two potential funding partners.

Weaknesses:

The rationale for undertaking two new schools in two different states in year three is not provided. (e45)

Overall, the growth in academic target scores appears low and slow, which, while it makes the goals more attainable, is possibly not in the best interest of students. For example, it takes all five years of the grant for the schools to reach a college-ready ACT score of 21. Further, the four year graduation rate tops out at 85%. (e47)

The teacher retention rate targets are very low. (e48)

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan & Personnel

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate and substantially expand high-quality charter schools (as defined in this notice). In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers-

Reader's Score: 17

Sub Question

1. 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 (4 points).

Strengths:

The management plan includes a table of annual activities. (e35-6)The responsibilities for tasks are assigned to high level staff and time bound by quarter.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The table does not clearly describe the growth of regional staff to support the EBR and Jackson schools, nor describe how the CMO will support the additional burden of additional schools.

Reader's Score: 3

- 2. The business plan for improving, sustaining, and ensuring the quality and performance of charter schools created or substantially expanded under these grants beyond the initial period of Federal funding in areas including, but not limited to, facilities, financial management, central office, student academic achievement, governance, oversight, and human resources of the charter schools (4 points).**

Strengths:

The new schools will be supported by a CMO which takes on a significant number of functions including staff recruitment and PD; academic supports including learning standards development; finance, budget, and vendor/contract management; and fundraising. (e53)

The CMO has a significant buildout of senior staff which should support the network through the expansion period. (e54) Staff roles that will be supported by the grant are clearly identified, and in many cases are only partially grant funded.

Staffing plans for the schools are top heavy for year one but leadership roles included are largely designed to support the specialized programs. (e55)

The Collegiate teacher residency program has been identified as a model program by the state, and the organization focuses on growing its own leadership teams from its current talent pool. (e58-9)

Weaknesses:

It is not clear why each school needs a finance and operations director in addition to an operations coordinator, there may be efficiencies to be realized in the EBR and Jackson replications by staff sharing or development of the regional office. (e55)

While the staffing and PD plans are well described, it is difficult to understand how this model will be sustainable given the high teacher attrition noted previously (up to 25%) especially as this means that not only must the new schools hire new staff as they grow, but each school is also replacing three or more teachers in year two and more than that in out years.

Reader's Score: 3

- 3. A multi-year financial and operating model for the organization, a demonstrated commitment of current and future partners, and evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success (4 points).**

Strengths:

The application includes a significant list of strategic partners from across Louisiana and Mississippi, including potential funding partners, elected officials, and a variety of other stakeholders. (e107-131)

In appendix G, the applicant provided a 4 year financial model. Additionally, the applicant provided a table of revenue grown/debt dependence to show the trend towards overall sustainability over time. (e66)

Collegiate has a track record of fundraising success, and it is worth noting that the letter of support from CSGF includes the statement that Collegiate has already been vetted and met all benchmarks.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

4. The plan for closing charter schools supported, overseen, or managed by the applicant that do not meet high standards of quality (2 points).

Strengths:

While the applicant does not provide a closure plan, there is significant detail on the turnaround activities that will be employed as corrective actions for underperforming schools. (e69)

Weaknesses:

The application does not include a CMO-based closure plan.

It is not clear how the network will maintain the high-touch monitoring (including weekly walkthroughs) when the C level staff are not in the same city as all schools. (e69)

The application does not address authorizer authority to close school.

Reader's Score: 1

5. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, chief executive officer or organization leader, and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project (6 points).

Strengths:

Collegiate's central office includes a highly qualified staff. Not only are members of the founding team that has grown the school to a small network in place, other c-suite staff have previous experience in the charter office at LDE, at high performing charter schools and networks. Their experience is broad and includes significant experience overseeing multimillion dollar budgets, recruiting staff for networks of schools, and overseeing portfolios of schools. (e70-73)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 6

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, 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 project.

Strengths:

An external evaluator, McREL International, will provide third-party services. (e73)

The application includes a variety of evaluation questions that will guide the work of the evaluators, and identifies the data inputs that will be examined in answering each of these critical questions. (e75)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students**

1. This priority is for projects that will serve high-need students through one of the methods described below. An application may receive points for only one of the three parts of Competitive Preference Priority 1, and should specify which part it is addressing. If an applicant addresses more than one part of Competitive Preference Priority 1 and does not specify whether it is addressing part (a), (b), or (c), the application will be awarded priority points only for the part addressed in the application that has the highest maximum potential point value, regardless of the number of priority points the application is awarded for that particular part of Competitive Preference Priority 1.

This priority is for projects that will serve high-need students through element (a), (b) or (c) as described below:

(a) Supporting High Need Students. (0 or 5 points).

Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes, learning environments, or both, for students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

(b) School Improvement. (0 or 4 points).

To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that its proposed replication or expansion of one or more high-quality charter schools (as defined in this notice) will occur in partnership with, and will be designed to assist, one or more LEAs in implementing academic or structural interventions to serve students attending schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, closure, or restructuring under section 1116 of the ESEA, and as described in the notice of final requirements for School Improvement Grants, published in the Federal Register on October 28, 2010 (75 FR 66363).

Note: Applicants in States that are exercising flexibility under the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, in the 2015-16 school year may partner with LEAs to serve students attending priority or focus schools (see the Department's June 7, 2012 guidance entitled, "ESEA Flexibility," at www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility, and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's (OESE's) December 18, 2015 Dear Colleague Letter at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/transition-dcl.pdf>). Applicants in all States should review OESE's January 28, 2016 Dear Colleague Letter at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/transitionsy1617-dcl.pdf>, for information on interventions required in 2016-2017.

(c) Promise Zones. (0 or 1 point).

This priority is for projects that are designed to serve and coordinate with a federally designated Promise Zone.

Note: As a participant in the Administration's Promise Zones Initiative, the Department is cooperating with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Agriculture (USDA), and nine other Federal agencies to support comprehensive revitalization efforts in 20 high-poverty urban, rural, and tribal communities across the country. Each application for Replication and Expansion grant funds that is accompanied by a Certification of Consistency with Promise Zone Goals and Implementation (HUD Form 50153), signed by an authorized representative of the lead organization of a Promise Zone designated by HUD or USDA supporting the application, will meet this priority. To view the list of designated Promise Zones and lead organizations please go to www.hud.gov/promisezones. The certification form is available at https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUD_Form_50153.pdf.

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

While CA presents a compelling case for the need in both Jackson and East Baton Rouge (EBR), they do not present evidence of partnership or collaboration. There is no evidence, for example, that they intend to apply for a Type 2 conversion. Additionally, CA is explicitly applying to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and its Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (LBESE) (e24) instead of the EBR Parish School System or Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) for authorization, which indicates not only an absence of a partnership but also explicitly that they are opting not to partner with an LEA. Additionally, MS has only one authorizer, a statewide commission and there is no evidence of interest from the Jackson LEA.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity

1. This priority is for applicants that demonstrate a record of (in the schools they currently operate or manage), as well as an intent to continue (in schools that they will be creating or substantially expanding (as defined in this notice) under this grant), taking active measures to --

- (a) Promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation;**
- (b) Serve students with disabilities at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area; and**
- (c) Serve English learners at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area.**

In support of this priority, applicants must provide enrollment data as well as descriptions of existing policies and activities undertaken or planned to be undertaken.

Note: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 2 is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project will encourage approaches by charter schools that help bring together students of different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body. The applicant should discuss in its application how it would ensure that those approaches are permissible under current law.

Strengths:

Collegiate has an extremely well developed Special Education program. Their program has two elements explicitly designed to serve students whose needs are classified as severe, the Essential Skills and Journey Programs. (e10-11) Collegiate currently operates only in NOLA, and participates in the separately run One-App system, therefore their primary means for increasing diversity and inclusion is through recruitment. Collegiate translates all materials and provides free translation services for families on its campuses. (e11)

Collegiate serves a population on the whole that is 92% FRL, 99% minority/mixed, 11% ELL and 20% SWD. NOLA and the state both have 11% SWD populations. (e24) NOLA has a 4% ELL population, the state is only 2%. (e26) Notably, Collegiate graduates 71% of SWD compared to 60% in the city and only 36% across the state. (e25)

Each school has its own director of interventions, responsible for supporting teachers in differentiation for all students. (e25)

The application clearly identifies Spanish and Vietnamese as the two languages that are native to ELLs at Collegiate. (e26) Further, Collegiate clearly serves less white students than both OPSB and all charters (RSD and OPSB) in the city. With about double the non-black minority population representation of the rest of the city, even with less white students Collegiate schools are likely more diverse. (e27)

Collegiate also explicitly fosters diversity of staff and a culture that values and promotes diversity. (e27)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/03/2016 10:22 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Collegiate Academies (U282M160021)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Eligible Applicant		
1. Quality of Applicant	50	47
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	10	8
Quality of the Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	8
Quality of the Management Plan & Personnel		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	17
Quality of Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	90
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Supporting High-Need Students		
1. CPP 1	5	0
Promoting Diversity		
1. CPP 2	3	0
Sub Total	8	0
Total	108	90

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Charter Management Organization - 2: 84.282M

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Collegiate Academies (U282M160021)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

1. In determining the quality of the applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors--

Reader's Score: 47

Sub Question

1. The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (20 points).

Strengths:

The applicant provides data for the network's general achievement in years 2013, 2014, and 2015. In 2013, the network outperforms local Louisiana schools (even the Recovery School District [RSD]) on the Algebra I and Geometry end-of-course exams. In 2014, one of its schools (Sci Academy) ranked #2 among Louisiana high schools by US News and World Report.

On page e32, the applicant provides a table profiling the testing performance of its students (in years 2013-2015) as compared to students being served by the RSD and State of Louisiana. Out of 36 data points, the network outperformed RSD in all but three areas.

Weaknesses:

A critical distinction made by this applicant is this network enrolls high school students who are "up to five grade levels behind" (indicated on page e32). This distinction is essential in making the point about the organization's impact (as opposed to simply enrolling higher performing students); however, without the percentages of the students who are behind (and the degree in which they actually are behind), the applicant has not yet proven this impact (although it has been suggested).

Reader's Score: 19

2. (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant, or

(ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111 (b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant and to which significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of

Sub Question

students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (15 points).

Strengths:

The applicant generally demonstrates the network's ability to close the achievement gap by profiling the performance (in the table presented on page e34) of students (per two distinct subgroups) and contrasting their students with students who are served by other districts (RSD, EBR, and the state) for years 2013-2015. In every year, and in every category, the network outperformed the others. The two distinctions profiled (economic disadvantaged students and African American students) are only samples of how their subgroups outperform subgroups in other districts. The applicant provides additional information in Appendix F but in that the network primarily serves low-income and African Americans students, the information provided in this section of the application is significant.

Weaknesses:

As stated in the previous section (Element 1), the true impact of the network is not adequately supported without providing data on students' prior achievement (in previously enrolled programs). Without this additional information, it is not clear if the school had an impact on students or if they simply, but successfully, marketed/attracted higher performing students who happen to fit the stated classifications. Adding specific information on the grade levels of students upon enrollment (particularly if they are behind two or more years) would have adequately addressed this gap.

Reader's Score: 13

- 3. The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including performance on statewide tests, annual student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates where applicable and available) for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State (15 points).**

Strengths:

Based on the data provided on page e34, as discussed by reviewer in the previous section (Element 2), the applicant has fully addressed this criterion (specifically because the network primarily serves low-income African American students). In terms of specifically outperforming the state, the point difference is as almost as high as 40 points.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted in this section.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

- 1. The contribution the proposed project will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged students served by the applicant to meet or exceed State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, and to graduate college- and career-ready. When responding to this selection criterion, applicants must discuss the proposed locations of schools to be created or substantially expanded and the student populations to be served.**

Note: The Secretary encourages applicants to describe their prior success in improving educational achievement and outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners. In addition, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how they will ensure that all eligible students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education and how the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students, including students with

disabilities and English learners, in mastering State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.

Strengths:

The applicant has demonstrated the network's ability to serve educationally disadvantaged students. For example, the network has (as discussed on page e14) increased graduation rates (85% of all students graduated high school in 4 years and 100% of all graduates are accepted into 4-year colleges). This coupled with the information about high level of economic and racial disadvantages enrolled at the school (discussed in the previous section—Element 2) and their accelerated academic performance show this network's effectiveness to serve this category of students.

There is additional data provided in the application that shows more ways the network is competitive (although not as competitive as they are with testing). For example, over the past three years, the network outperformed other districts on the ACT composite score averages in five data points out of nine (as discussed on page e37). In 2013 and 2014, data shows that the network's students have higher college enrollment rates than those in the Recovering School District and the state (discussed on pages e37-38). Although no comparative data provided, the applicant shows the network as having a college persistence rate among its graduates at 74% (2013); 63% (2014); and 74% (2015).

All of the network schools are located in poorer communities (as compare to the national average). On pages e39-40, the applicant outlines various poverty rates for New Orleans (based on families with/without children), where they are higher than the national average, indicating a clear commitment to continue serving these communities (as stated on pages e17 and e20).

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided specific locations of existing schools and has talked about the cities in which they seek to expand/replicate; however, the applicant has not provided the location of these schools (neither by a specific address or a specific neighborhood). This oversight negatively impacts the competitive quality of this section of the application.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the 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 extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and attainable. Applicants proposing to open schools serving substantially different populations than those currently served by the model for which they have demonstrated evidence of success must address the attainability of outcomes given this difference.**

Strengths:

The applicant makes several points about its project design. First, it outlines the replication/expansion process in a table presented on pages e45-46. In this table, you see the network moving from three schools in 2016-17 to eight schools in 2020-21. Second, the applicant shows (in the table presented on page e46) the trajectory of seat expansion in the network (totals and per school) starting from 1,385 in 2016 to 3,559 in 2020. Third, the applicant provides (on pages e47-48) three specific goals (and metrics) that the project aims to achieve: 1) improve student achievement; 2) improve college readiness, matriculation, and success; and 3) improve operational effectiveness. Each goal is supported by baseline data and the projected improvements over five years. For example (on page e48), for Goal 3 (improving operational effectiveness), the applicant starts with base line teacher retention of 78 and shows how, over the course of the project, the network will grow to have teacher retention of 80 (by 2021). Fourth, the applicant provides a logic model as to how it will tackle the previously stated objectives.

Weaknesses:

There are a few minor weaknesses affecting the competitive nature of this section in the application. First, the three objectives of the projects do not include growth/achievement in central office operations. At first glance, the third objective appears to provide this focus but after further inspection, the objective focuses on student enrollment, teacher retention, and school activation counts. There are other operational considerations that will impact the success of the project and will require involvement of the central office (such as transportation, facilities and finances). Including these additional operational areas will provide for a better understanding of and focus within the project; thereby, increasing the network's success.

The second minor weakness in this section relates to the baseline data. It would help to have a rationale for these numbers so as to appreciate the inherent impact of the goals as they materialize in the fifth year.

The third weakness in this section (not as minor as the other two) relates to the logic model. It is unclear as to the rationale of the text provided. To strengthen this section, a narrative explaining each section and why the selected information is critical to the design.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan & Personnel

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate and substantially expand high-quality charter schools (as defined in this notice). In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers-

Reader's Score: 17

Sub Question

- 1. 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 (4 points).**

Strengths:

The applicant outlines major activities and milestones, timelines and positions responsible on pages e51-52. These activities and milestones address areas such as financial reporting, leadership development, and evaluation.

Weaknesses:

To increase the strength of this section, it might have helped for the applicant to align the major activities and milestones outlined on pages e51-52 with the goals and objectives of the project as outlined on pages e47-48. This would have given a stronger appearance of project cohesiveness. As it stands, it appears that the major activities/milestones are generic activities and do not relate to the specific uniqueness of the project. For example, under the second milestone, it is written that the CEO and CLD will support school leaders in building their leadership team (etc.). It is not clear what is specifically meant by "support" nor does it indicate the unique ways the leaders will be engaged to fulfill a unique project.

In an earlier section titled "Operational Safeguards" (page e50), the applicant talks about an analysis conducted on the potential risks effecting the network's plan for growth. It would have strengthened this section had major

Sub Question

activities and milestones also reflected the network's strategy to use this information and avoid the potential risks.

Reader's Score: 2

- 2. The business plan for improving, sustaining, and ensuring the quality and performance of charter schools created or substantially expanded under these grants beyond the initial period of Federal funding in areas including, but not limited to, facilities, financial management, central office, student academic achievement, governance, oversight, and human resources of the charter schools (4 points).**

Strengths:

The strongest response to this part of the application is the applicant's discussion of the business plan to ensure quality facilities (page e64) and to provide financial support and oversight (page e64-65). This information is significant because it gives attention to material structures that will remain after the grant has expired. For example, the central office will take on the burden of facilities by locating and offering local school facilities that are affordable and already feasible for the school's operations. The central office will also help local schools secure the additional funds and protect existing funds needed for sustainability. In the next section, on page e66, the applicant provides a chart and description of how the network will incur debt for the central office in earlier years of the grant but after the grant period (and its intended growth) will have the needed funds as based on per pupil and fundraising dollars.

The applicant list additional structures within the network positioned for its growth and success: Board of Directors, a National Advisory Council, the Create & Support Team (the network's Central Office), and School Teams. In addition, the applicant outlines the resources that are available per the central office and the local schools (provided in the table on page e53). The applicant also discusses the critical role of teachers in student/school achievement and spends time discussing how the network will commit to hiring and supporting great teachers (pages e56-59), such as: a teacher apprenticeship program, a teacher residency program, individualized professional development plans, and additional professional development hours/exposure. Finally, the applicant outlines additional smaller, more nuanced, program features that will contribute to its success (on pages e59-63): culture and an organizational focus on college readiness.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 4

- 3. A multi-year financial and operating model for the organization, a demonstrated commitment of current and future partners, and evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success (4 points).**

Strengths:

As mentioned in the previous section (Element 2), the applicant identifies a funding model for sustainability after the life of the grant. This model is based on potential partners that have been outlined on page e67. In addition to these potential partnerships, the applicant has identified community advocates (listed on page e68) critical to the sustainability of the project and has begun cultivating relationships with these individuals/organizations for this end. In Appendix C, the applicant demonstrates the exact nature of the support provided through these partnerships.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 4

4. **The plan for closing charter schools supported, overseen, or managed by the applicant that do not meet high standards of quality (2 points).**

Strengths:

The applicant provides information on how the Network will evaluate itself in terms of school performance: weekly, twice monthly, interims (every six weeks), quarterly, and annually.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address the core aspect of this criterion. It does not present a process for the school's closure in case it fails to meet high standards of quality. While a strong evaluation process is significant, it does not make room for the unintended but real possibility of closure (especially within a high accountability climate).

Reader's Score: 1

5. **The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, chief executive officer or organization leader, and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project (6 points).**

Strengths:

It is important that the network has decided to have a separate person responsible for the project other than persons already employed in the network. Dedicating funds in this way creates a structure for the project to be prioritized while other structures within the organization are prioritizing the maintenance and success of existing schools.

The person designated to assume this role has substantial leadership experience serving as an Assistant Superintendent (Louisiana Department of Education) and Deputy Superintendent (Louisiana Recovery School District).

A second position created to work directly with the leaders of each academy is filled by a person with experience in student achievement at the classroom level and at the school administrative level. He also has start up experience which will aid in the support of leaders in founding schools.

Additional positions have been created, again adding to the strength of this application in that key personnel will be able to focus specifically on the success of the project. These positions are as follows: Director of Talent Operations, Director of Teacher Development, Director of Student Support, Director of Resident Teacher Development, Director of Communications, and Director of Data Management.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 6

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Evaluation

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, 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 project.**

Strengths:

In addition to the evaluation plan outlined by the reviewer in the previous section (Element 4-Strengths), the network has secured an external evaluator for the Collegiate Academies and has outlined this organization's 50-year experience: assessing the fidelity of implementation, examining educational interventions, conducting site-based studies, etc. In addition to this experience, the applicant outlines (page e75-76) strategies in which the evaluator will specifically use within the network: surveys, focus groups, interviews, and school records.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students**

1. This priority is for projects that will serve high-need students through one of the methods described below. An application may receive points for only one of the three parts of Competitive Preference Priority 1, and should specify which part it is addressing. If an applicant addresses more than one part of Competitive Preference Priority 1 and does not specify whether it is addressing part (a), (b), or (c), the application will be awarded priority points only for the part addressed in the application that has the highest maximum potential point value, regardless of the number of priority points the application is awarded for that particular part of Competitive Preference Priority 1.

This priority is for projects that will serve high-need students through element (a), (b) or (c) as described below:

(a) Supporting High Need Students. (0 or 5 points).

Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes, learning environments, or both, for students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

(b) School Improvement. (0 or 4 points).

To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that its proposed replication or expansion of one or more high-quality charter schools (as defined in this notice) will occur in partnership with, and will be designed to assist, one or more LEAs in implementing academic or structural interventions to serve students attending schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, closure, or restructuring under section 1116 of the ESEA, and as described in the notice of final requirements for School Improvement Grants, published in the Federal Register on October 28, 2010 (75 FR 66363).

Note: Applicants in States that are exercising flexibility under the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, in the 2015-16 school year may partner with LEAs to serve students attending priority or focus schools (see the Department's June 7, 2012 guidance entitled, "ESEA Flexibility," at www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility, and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's (OESE's) December 18, 2015 Dear Colleague Letter at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/transition-dcl.pdf>). Applicants in all States should review OESE's January 28, 2016 Dear Colleague Letter at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/transitionsy1617-dcl.pdf>, for information on interventions required in 2016-2017.

(c) Promise Zones. (0 or 1 point).

This priority is for projects that are designed to serve and coordinate with a federally designated Promise Zone.

Note: As a participant in the Administration's Promise Zones Initiative, the Department is cooperating with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Agriculture (USDA), and nine other Federal agencies to support comprehensive revitalization efforts in 20 high-poverty urban, rural, and tribal communities across the country. Each application for Replication and Expansion grant funds that is accompanied by a Certification of Consistency with Promise Zone Goals and

Implementation (HUD Form 50153), signed by an authorized representative of the lead organization of a Promise Zone designated by HUD or USDA supporting the application, will meet this priority. To view the list of designated Promise Zones and lead organizations please go to www.hud.gov/promisezones. The certification form is available at https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUD_Form_50153.pdf.

Strengths:

No strengths identified in this section.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant provides important data (pages e21-e24) to demonstrate a need for intervention (particularly by showing students' performance rates in grades 3-8 in Jackson Mississippi and Baton Rouge, Louisiana), there is no established partnership with an LEA. The applicant discusses a pending partnership with Louisiana Department of Education as Type 2 authorizer (and other organizations like NSBR) to implement academic or structural interventions to serve students (page 6); however, no support is referenced in this section to prove that partnership is pending. In addition, no information is provided as to the structural nature of this partnership.

It is also important to note that there is a hint of a potential partnership with another LEA when discussing the interest of RePublic Schools (a CMO serving students in grades 5-8) for Collegiate's presence in Jackson, Mississippi; however, only this CMO's interests is referenced. There are no agreements, goals, or joint activities discussed or evidence shown.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity

1. This priority is for applicants that demonstrate a record of (in the schools they currently operate or manage), as well as an intent to continue (in schools that they will be creating or substantially expanding (as defined in this notice) under this grant), taking active measures to --

- (a) Promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation;
- (b) Serve students with disabilities at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area; and
- (c) Serve English learners at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area.

In support of this priority, applicants must provide enrollment data as well as descriptions of existing policies and activities undertaken or planned to be undertaken.

Note: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 2 is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project will encourage approaches by charter schools that help bring together students of different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body. The applicant should discuss in its application how it would ensure that those approaches are permissible under current law.

Strengths:

No strengths identified in this section.

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant demonstrates that the network enrolls students of diverse backgrounds differently than its counterparts (page e27), enrolls students with special needs at a higher rates than counterparts (e24), and enrolls students identified as English language learners at a rate (e24), the applicant does not provide disaggregated achievement data for students based on racial/ethnic classifications or for students classified as English language learners (as was provided for students with special needs). Such data will demonstrate this network’s ability to not only enroll these learners but to adequately serve them as well.

In addition, the notion of promoting diversity is more than providing instruction to diverse populations. Promoting diversity is to understand, include, and address the nuanced conditions of the diversity (socio-politically and culturally). Students are the products (and producers) of very specific/unique social conditions. Promotion cannot be void of this specificity.

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/03/2016 10:22 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/03/2016 11:25 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Collegiate Academies (U282M160021)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Eligible Applicant		
1. Quality of Applicant	50	28
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	10	10
Quality of the Project Design		
1. Project Design	10	8
Quality of the Management Plan & Personnel		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	15
Quality of Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	71
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Supporting High-Need Students		
1. CPP 1	5	4
Promoting Diversity		
1. CPP 2	3	3
Sub Total	8	7
Total	108	78

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Charter Management Organization - 2: 84.282M

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Collegiate Academies (U282M160021)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

1. In determining the quality of the applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors--

Reader's Score: 28

Sub Question

1. The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (20 points).

Strengths:

Appendix F provides a thorough summary of increasing student achievement during the past three years in Algebra, Biology, English, Geometry, and History, p. 13-17.

Consistent significant achievement (in English) was demonstrated during 3 years by their economically disadvantaged students.

Weaknesses:

Some student groups (economically disadvantaged and African American) did not make achievement increases during the 3 years in these subjects: Geometry, Algebra, and Biology, Appendix F.

For many disadvantaged students, their year 1 achievement was already significantly above their state results. Thus, there was no achievement gap to close over three years.

Reader's Score: 11

2. (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant, or

(ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant and to which significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (15 points).

Sub Question

Strengths:

Appendix F (p. e350+) provides a thorough summary of increasing student achievement during the past three years in Algebra, Biology, English, Geometry, and History.

Economically disadvantaged students showed consistent significant success in English during the past three years.

Weaknesses:

Some disadvantaged student groups did not clearly demonstrate success in closing historic achievement gaps during the past three years, Appendix F.

Reader's Score: 9

3. The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including performance on statewide tests, annual student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates where applicable and available) for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State (15 points).

Strengths:

Specific, concise and clear short term outcomes that include graduation rates, student persistence, academic success and college matriculation are provided, Narrative and Abstract.

All applicant schools exceed HS graduation rates in comparison to the state HS graduation rate for two years. One year HS graduation rates for educationally disadvantaged students are significantly above the state average (75% vs 70.9). (p. 20-21)

Four of the applicant schools report attendance rates above the state average, p. 20+.

Applicant college admission rates exceed the statewide rates over the past 3 years, p. 22- 23.

Weaknesses:

HS graduation rates for educationally disadvantaged students are provided for only one year, 2014-15. The criterion specifies providing the past three years of data, p. 21.

Two schools did not provide significant positive attendance results: one is slightly below the state average and another did not report, p. 20.

No specific comparable state data was reported for college persistence, p. 23.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

1. **The contribution the proposed project will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged students served by the applicant to meet or exceed State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, and to graduate college- and career-ready. When responding to this selection criterion, applicants must discuss the proposed locations of schools to be created or substantially expanded and the student populations to be served.**

Note: The Secretary encourages applicants to describe their prior success in improving educational achievement and outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners. In addition, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how they will ensure that all eligible students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education and how the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners, in mastering State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.

Strengths:

The applicant provides strong, appropriate and reasonable information about specific contributions which will be implemented to help their students (including students with disabilities and English learners) meet or exceed state standards and are college ready. p. 24+.

These are: each student has an individualized educational plan to prepare them for rigorous post-secondary outcomes (i. e., Essential Skills, REACH/Explorers, Journey Program, Bilingual Resource Groups, etc. (p.27-28) and AP courses, tutoring, and small group intervention classes

Proposed locations: Applicant has 3 campuses at New Orleans East: SCI Academy, Carver Collegiate and Carver Prep. Appendix. E. has map of all campuses. One (Livingston) is an expansion campus and 5 are replication campuses, p. 25 and Appendix. E, p. 134.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the 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 extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and attainable. Applicants proposing to open schools serving substantially different populations than those currently served by the model for which they have demonstrated evidence of success must address the attainability of outcomes given this difference.**

Strengths:

The project design includes three comprehensive and thorough goals that are clearly specified; these are improving: student achievement, college readiness/matriculation and success and operational effectiveness, scope and reach (p. 32). Moreover, the design objectives and outcomes to be achieved are clearly specified, measurable, and attainable

A sound logic model (p. 35) is provided and includes detailed and focused information about inputs, outputs outcomes

and goals.

Weaknesses:

The student goals are not sufficiently disaggregated by educationally disadvantaged students (i.e., economically disadvantaged, disabilities, migrant students, LEP students, neglected or delinquent and/or homeless students).

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan & Personnel

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate and substantially expand high-quality charter schools (as defined in this notice). In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers-

Reader's Score: 15

Sub Question

- 1. 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 (4 points).**

Strengths:

Overall, responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks are focused, thorough, reasonable and well documented because they include: a) consulting with business and community partners, b) data gathering for third party evaluation and c) various financial and management reporting, p. 34+.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

- 2. The business plan for improving, sustaining, and ensuring the quality and performance of charter schools created or substantially expanded under these grants beyond the initial period of Federal funding in areas including, but not limited to, facilities, financial management, central office, student academic achievement, governance, oversight, and human resources of the charter schools (4 points).**

Strengths:

They are currently partnering with New Schools for Baton Rouge to secure supplemental funding and facilities for expansion into that city, P. 49.

Weaknesses:

The business plan does not clearly address the details for funding and organizing facilities, financial management, central office, student academic achievement, governance, oversight, and human resources after federal funding

Sub Question

ends. Most of the discussion is about their current attributes and strengths in these areas.

Reader's Score: 2

- 3. A multi-year financial and operating model for the organization, a demonstrated commitment of current and future partners, and evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success (4 points).**

Strengths:

Appendix C provides excellent and detailed evidence of commitment of current and future partners and evidence of broad support from stakeholders such as significant involvement of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce, potential facility loans for expansion and possible funding from the Barksdale Group, Page e107+.

Weaknesses:

The multi-year financial and operating model does not include specific financial resources from partners. This gives the appearance that partners may not provide tangible financial support.

Reader's Score: 3

- 4. The plan for closing charter schools supported, overseen, or managed by the applicant that do not meet high standards of quality (2 points).**

Strengths:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not present a plan for closing their charter school(s), p. 55.

Reader's Score: 0

- 5. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, chief executive officer or organization leader, and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project (6 points).**

Strengths:

Overall, staff qualifications, training and experience are comprehensive and complete as verified in the narrative and resumes and biographies such as their CEO, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Financial Officer and Chief of Staff, p. 39+ and 55.

Qualifications are comprehensive and complete as verified in the narrative, resumes and biographies. They also describe a unique plan for cultivating new pipelines of high quality teachers through their new Teacher Residency model program and their Teacher Apprenticeship program, p. 43.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 6

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, 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 project.

Strengths:

Quality formative and summative feedback and several valid data collection methods (specific details are in the narrative and p. 61+) will be compiled and distributed related to project objectives. Performance measures, including student learning, are well aligned with the project outcomes. Moreover, McREL will be the external evaluator and has an outstanding national reputation for quality and excellence.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students

1. This priority is for projects that will serve high-need students through one of the methods described below. An application may receive points for only one of the three parts of Competitive Preference Priority 1, and should specify which part it is addressing. If an applicant addresses more than one part of Competitive Preference Priority 1 and does not specify whether it is addressing part (a), (b), or (c), the application will be awarded priority points only for the part addressed in the application that has the highest maximum potential point value, regardless of the number of priority points the application is awarded for that particular part of Competitive Preference Priority 1.

This priority is for projects that will serve high-need students through element (a), (b) or (c) as described below:

(a) Supporting High Need Students. (0 or 5 points).

Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes, learning environments, or both, for students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

(b) School Improvement. (0 or 4 points).

To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that its proposed replication or expansion of one or more high-quality charter schools (as defined in this notice) will occur in partnership with, and will be designed to assist, one or more LEAs in implementing academic or structural interventions to serve students attending schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, closure, or restructuring under section 1116 of the ESEA, and as described in the notice of final requirements for School Improvement Grants, published in the Federal Register on October 28, 2010 (75 FR 66363).

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(c) Promise Zones. (0 or 1 point).

This priority is for projects that are designed to serve and coordinate with a federally designated Promise Zone.

Note: As a participant in the Administration's Promise Zones Initiative, the Department is cooperating with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Agriculture (USDA), and nine other Federal agencies to support comprehensive revitalization efforts in 20 high-poverty urban, rural, and tribal communities across the country. Each application for Replication and Expansion grant funds that is accompanied by a Certification of Consistency with Promise Zone Goals and Implementation (HUD Form 50153), signed by an authorized representative of the lead organization of a Promise Zone designated by HUD or USDA supporting the application, will meet this priority. To view the list of designated Promise Zones and lead organizations please go to www.hud.gov/promisezones. The certification form is available at https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HUD_Form_50153.pdf.

Strengths:

B. School Improvement: The applicant states that it will open replication schools that are in the midst of a turnaround process such as in the North Baton Rouge schools (page 4). Examples: the applicant will provide a high-performing educational alternative for students who currently attend failing local district schools in collaboration with Recovery School District (p. e107), improving educational outcomes. In Jackson, five HS (71%) are rated D or F; the district overall is also rated D. While the applicant did not specifically name an LEA, they in the midst of opening schools with other partners.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity

1. This priority is for applicants that demonstrate a record of (in the schools they currently operate or manage), as well as an intent to continue (in schools that they will be creating or substantially expanding (as defined in this notice) under this grant), taking active measures to --

- (a) Promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation;
- (b) Serve students with disabilities at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area; and
- (c) Serve English learners at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area.

In support of this priority, applicants must provide enrollment data as well as descriptions of existing policies and activities undertaken or planned to be undertaken.

Note: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 2 is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project will encourage approaches by charter schools that help bring together students of different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body. The applicant should discuss in its application how it would ensure that those approaches are permissible under current law.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a solid and comprehensive record of promoting student diversity and avoiding racial isolation through a variety of sound methods such as professional development for teachers and staff. P. 8-11.

The applicant is graduating students with disabilities in excess of 11 percentage points higher than that of New Orleans (the region) and almost double the state's average.

Regarding ELLs, 11% of Collegiate students were classified as English Language Learners. The state ELL rate is 2 percent. This exceeds the state rate.

Descriptions of existing policies and activities to promote diversity include a) strategically locating schools in low-income, minority communities in order to ensure educationally disadvantaged students have access to high-quality schools (p. P. 10) and b) through an inclusive, reflective organizational culture and recruiting students and staff of all backgrounds, cultures, and abilities, p. 11.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
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