

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2017 04:06 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Family Life Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170049)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Quality of Applicant	45	36
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	25	20
<b>Quality of the Evaluation Plan</b>		
1. Evaluation Plan	10	7
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	17
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	80
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity</b>		
1. CPP 1	3	3
<b>School Improvement through Turnaround Efforts</b>		
1. CPP 2	5	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	8	3
<b>Total</b>	108	83

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Family Life Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170049)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

1. Comments should support your recommendation according to the Selection Criteria. Please address each section and provide your scores for each section separately.

Reader's Score: 36

#### Sub Question

1. The degree to which the applicant has demonstrated success in increasing academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students and for each of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, attending the charter schools the applicant operates or manages.

#### Strengths:

The applicant addresses the criteria in detailing organizational success since 2013- 2014 school year in increasing students' academic achievement, including advancing graduation rates. In addition, the applicant specifies successful experiences in serving as the lead school in 2009 for the NYC Charter Schools' English Language Learners Consortium, in working together committed to improving the education for students who are English Language Learners. Page 11

The applicant identifies that only one of the applicant schools demonstrated a student suspension rate that is comparable to the statewide average rate of 3%. The additional two schools operated by the applicant reported a 0% suspension rate. Page 19, 20

The applicant details their track record of success in noting that the elementary school charter school, operated by the applicant, was one of only eleven schools statewide selected to be awarded the 2013-2016 New York Charter School Dissemination Grant The purpose of the grant award provided funds to disseminate effective practices and program which have been developed, test and proven successful in New York Charter Schools system. Page 11

The applicant narrates some information to document students success, as evidenced in identifying that in the 2015-2016 school year, in which the state assessment reported that 37% of FLACS I students attained proficiency, as compared to 20% in the area public school and 38% statewide average. It is noted that students in the FLACS I school are a diverse population with 99% Black/African American or Hispanic/Latino. Specifically in the disaggregated data reported the English Language Literacy Assessment shows 47% of Black students at FLACS I school scored as proficient, as compared with 26% of Black students statewide and 34% of Hispanic students scored proficient as compared with 27% of Hispanic students statewide. Page 11

#### Weaknesses:

Information is lacking to identify demonstrated success among all sub groups in all three schools involved in the

## Sub Question

proposed program. For example, success among students with disabilities is not addressed. Page e 421

While the applicant discusses a Continuous Improvement Plan for all students, information on this plan is lacking in the narrative and/or in the appendix related to progress for English Language Learners in the three schools. Page e 420

**Reader's Score: 10**

- 2. The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates, and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students in the State.**

### **Strengths:**

The applicant responds to the criteria clearly describing the academic achievement results for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter that have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students in the State. This is evidenced in the applicant adequately narrating operational success in advancing students' academic success. This is evidenced in a clear articulation of students' academic success. For example, following the 2015-2016 school year, the New York State English Language Arts Assessment identified that 37% of FLACS I students attained proficiency as compared to the area CSD 9 school with 20%. It is also identified that statewide student success is 38%, which places the applicant success level within an acceptable range of success. A similar success rate is noted in the area of mathematics with the applicant school attaining 38% success rate, as compared to the 18% of the area CSD and to the 39% statewide accomplishments. Page 9, 10, 13 and Appendix G. Pages 420-431

The applicant precisely articulates relevant attendance data focused on student promotion rates and student retention rates. This is evidenced in specifying that the attendance rate in the elementary and middle school exceed the state average. For example, the state average is reported at 95.7% and the applicant's elementary school is reported at 98.1% and the middle school at 98.4%. In addition, it is reported that the statewide average student re-entering rate is 86%. This is compared to 97% and 95% success rates in retention and the applicant's operation elementary and charter school. Page 12

### **Weaknesses:**

Due to insufficient information from the disaggregated data, describing the academic achievement for educationally disadvantaged students in the school is not a comprehensive response. Information is reported noting school wide success, but lacks specificity of success and of proficiency among sub groups.

**Reader's Score: 11**

- 3. The extent to which charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have not been closed; have not had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; have not had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation; have not had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management; have not experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and have not had any significant issues with respect to student safety.**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

It is noted that charter schools operated by the applicant have not closed nor has any noncompliance been issued related to statutory or regulatory requirements. The application references they have not had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated nor have any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management. The applicant reports compliance and not having experienced any significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the schools' charters. The schools are reported as providing a safe environment without any significant issues reported in the area of student safety.

**Weaknesses:**

None are noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students**

- 1. The significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make, the Secretary**

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Sub Question**

- 1. The extent to which charter schools currently operated or managed by the applicant serve educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools; and**

**Strengths:**

The applicant responds to the criteria in stating that their charter schools currently serve educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English language learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools. This is evidenced in detailing the charter school's demographics which identify each school and relevant data. For example, the Early Childhood Center serves 94% economically disadvantaged young leaders, with 74% identified as at-risk and 59% with Limited English Proficiency. It is noted that 62% of students are Hispanic and 33 % are African American. Similarly, in the middle school, 86% are identified as economic disadvantage and 84% as at-risk. 90% of students in the middle school re Hispanic and 8% are African American.  
Pages 18,19

**Weaknesses:**

Adequate information is lacking to demonstrate comparable or higher achievement scores among English Language Learners and low income students challenged with disabilities, in a comparison to state assessment data.  
Page e 149

Adequate information is lacking in documenting attendance and retention rates in the identified schools.

**Reader's Score: 5**

- 2. The quality of the plan to ensure that the charter schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students.**

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The applicant responds to the criteria in stating that their charter schools currently serve educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English language learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools. This is evidenced in detailing the charter school's demographics which identify each school and relevant data. For example, the Early Childhood Center serves 94% economically disadvantaged young leaders, with 74% identified as at-risk and 59% with Limited English Proficiency. It is noted that 62% of students are Hispanic and 33 % are African American. Similarly, in the middle school, 86% are identified as economic disadvantage and 84% as at-risk. 90% of students in the middle school re Hispanic and 8% are African American. Pages 18,19

### Weaknesses:

None are noted.

Reader's Score: 15

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Evaluation Plan

1. **In determining the quality of the evaluation plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the alignment of the evaluation plan to the logic model for the proposed grant project and 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 grant project articulated in the applicant's response to application requirement (c) and will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the performance period.**

### Strengths:

The applicant responds to the criteria describing a well-developed evaluation plan for the proposed project focused on expanding a high-quality model into a new middle school expanding services to address the needs of 520 educationally disadvantaged students in the target area. The evaluation plan demonstrates a clear alignment of the evaluation plan to the logic model, to educate an additional 520 students focused on serving educationally disadvantaged youth in the target area with the goal of 100% to enter top tier high schools. Pages 36, 37

Objective performance measures are clearly charted as measurable. Two objectives are well developed and focus on networking to expand current services into a new grade level (6-8) middle school and to provide services to enable middle school student to progress and achieve high standards. For example, performance measures are well developed and aligned to the Logic Model, focusing on advancing student's literacy and math skills and school attendance. It is noteworthy that a performance measure is established to outperform the New York Public Schools System's students. This is noted to be accomplished through providing high quality educational services, support and interventions to attain an Effect Size of 0.3 or above performance ranking on state literacy and math assessments, according to a regression analysis controlling of economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State. In addition, it is proposed to outperform local school district with the performance target specified of annual performance rates with a minimum of 10 percentage points above the local school district. Page 39 Page 38

### Weaknesses:

Applicant lacks detailed methods of evaluation which will produce qualitative data to assess progress and needs, by the end of the performance period.

The Logic Model is limited and fails to include any information for short term outcomes linked to addressing and serving a diverse population- an objective of the proposed program. In addition, the assessment is focused on academic progress failing to address any other area for progress. For example, in the narrative the applicant discusses social and emotional factors that serve to hinder student progress, and which will be addressed in the program, however, the applicant fails to

link and to identify these to any evaluation strategy.

While differentiated instruction is discussed in the narrative, any protocol or method to assess its impact or outcome is lacking. Page 37

**Reader's Score:** 7

### **Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel**

- 1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate or expand high-quality charter schools under 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**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant articulates a management plan adequately structured to achieve the objectives of the proposed project focused on expanding and maintaining a new high quality middle school (grades 6-8) to meet the demand for education. The applicant asserts their credibility and competency in prior and current managerial operations and advances the Single Education Corporation (FLACS Network) structure for management. This structure is clearly articulated and encompasses alignment to support the academic, organizational and fiscal success of the new school in leveraging the expertise of central office network staff and the governing board of directors. Pages 39, 40

The applicant identifies that the Education Corporation staff is structured in three domains; academics, operation and finance. The managerial structure assigns the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Operations Officer for oversight of the entire operations. Once the new school's principal is hired, he/she will report to the Chief Executive Officer and collaborate with the assistant principal during the planning phase. The Chief Financial Officer is designated as responsible for all financial aspects of the program and working with administrative staff including; the Digital Marketing and Communications manager, the Director of Facility and the Maintenance and Safety Team. In addition, the responsibility of each central office staff is identified and described. For example, the Human Resources staff is identified to be monitored in the area of certifications. Pages 41, 42

A well-developed management chart effectively structures major tasks/activities aligned to a milestone, a timeline for completion and the designated person responsible. For example, the applicant delineates a task to secure funding commitments which is the designed responsibility to the Director of Development, the Board Committee and the Middle School Principal. Pages 44-46

#### **Weaknesses:**

None are noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

- 2. 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; and**

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The applicant responds to the criteria highlighting the experience of the persons serving the organization as CEO and Project Leader. Her board experience of 40 years in education is well noted, as a teacher and administrator. It is identified that she received a Master's degree in Reading and an Administration and supervisory degree. She is identified to have served the organization as the CEO since July 2013 and is assigned to lead the proposed initiative. As the CEO, her abilities are demonstrated in management of large projects.

Key personnel are identified and their qualifications delineated. They include: Chief Operations Office Director; Chief Financial Officer, the /Director of Human Resources, the Director of Development, the Digital Marketing and Communications Manager, the Director of Professional Learning and the Network IT Manager. It is noteworthy that the responsibility of the Director of Data an Assessment is assigned to collaborate with the Director of Professional Learning in providing professional development for staff in procedures related to accessing and using a variety of "data points" to obtain information to assist in planning instruction. Pages 53-54

### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide information on the experience, expertise and education of the school principals. Resumes, biographies or a discussion in the narrative is lacking. Pages 53, 54

**Reader's Score: 9**

### 3. 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 included in the applicant's response to application requirement (g).

#### Strengths:

The applicant discusses the history of the organization in sustaining programs in a well-developed response to the criteria. It is noted that during the program has been previously replicated, during which time past experiences were drawn on to develop new programs. A "Replication toolkit" has been crafted by staff to enable replication. The tool kit is described to codify policies, procedures, and models for replication. The toolkit is noted as intended for proactive measures for expansion. Page 54

It is noted that a formal and informal audit are conducted for the purpose obtaining data to improve program sustainability and ensure high quality expansion. A comprehensive financial model for the expansion has been drafted and included demonstrating sources of public funding to support the program. It is identified that the applicant is engaged in the process of applying for an additional multiyear grant to support the program's growth plan and network expansion. Page 55-57

#### Weaknesses:

Information is lacking to clearly describe a multi-year financial and operating model. Information for sustainability is not delineated in a specific plan, spanning the five years of the grant program. Pages 55-57

**Reader's Score: 3**

## Priority Questions

### Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity



1. This priority is for projects that will provide for the replication or expansion of high-quality charter schools that have an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies (see Section 4305(b)(5)(A) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA).

**Note:** For information on permissible ways to meet this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department's Office for Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice entitled, "Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools" ([www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf)).

**Strengths:**

The applicant responds to the criteria for Competitive Preference Priority 1, specifying effective program strategies and approaches which are in place and will continue to promote diversity. It is clearly identified that the goal of the organization is to alleviate racial, ethnic and economic isolation in providing the services of their Charter School which is evidenced in enrolling a diverse student body. Page 3

It is specified that their Charter School programs provide services and resources to build strong foundations of skills and concepts in literacy, math and higher order thinking skills. The program is well positioned with a strong history of operational success in the implementation of a rigorous and holistic curriculum, infusing differentiated instructional strategies and targeted interventions for English language learners and for students challenged with disabilities. Pages 4

The applicant demonstrates that their network of operational schools reflect diversity. This is evidenced in specifying the student demographics to include: 71% as Latino or Hispanic, 27% as African American, 18% as English Language Learners, 11% as having disability and 92% qualifying for free and reduced lunch. It is noteworthy that the applicant provides services particularly focused to address the needs of underserved populations. This is evidenced in describing program strategies and protocols to serve English Language Learners. A wide scope of services to address the needs of English language learners which encompass tailored differentiated instruction, monitored outcomes for effective decision making in further instruction for each student. Page 3

Effective program strategies are clearly delineated to advance diversity. This is evidenced in an admission policy which is race neutral using a blind lottery for enrollment. In addition, the only enrollment preference noted is the acceptance of siblings of currently enrolled students and children of employees. It is clearly noted that the program conducts outreach and targeted recruitment strategies to enroll students challenged with disabilities. It is noted that the charter School currently enrolls 11% of students challenged with disabilities as compared to 22% in the target area of Bronx, New York. To effectively serve the literacy needs of youth challenged with disabilities and English Language Learner, it is noted that literacy skills development is infused across the curriculum Page 5 -8

It is specified that the project will provide for the expansion of high-quality charter schools with an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining racially and socioeconomically diverse student populations. A commitment to serving a diverse population is evidenced in a proposed program that ensures equitable access in agreement with local, state and federal guidelines. The programs to be expanded are specified as existing program that currently serve 71% Hispanic/Latino, 27% African American, 18% English Language Learners and 92% of whom qualify for enrollment in the Free and Reduced lunch program the program's goal is to alleviate racial, ethnic and economic isolation in enrolling a diverse student population to engage in higher level thinking skills. The program identifies a continued emphasis for an open enrollment and anticipates that current services to 11% of a student population diagnosed as special needs, will continue. Support for students with special needs is clearly delineated to include individualized instruction and school designed adaption of research based Sheltered English Immersion models for ELL. Integrated Co- Teaching approach is identified as an effective approach to serving youth identified with disabilities. Pages 3-6

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.

**Weaknesses:**

None are noted.

Reader's Score: 3

### Competitive Preference Priority - School Improvement through Turnaround Efforts

1. This priority is for applicants that both:

(a) Demonstrate past success in improving the academic performance of one or more academically poor-performing public schools by taking over the operation of the school or restarting the school as a charter school; and

(b) Propose to use CMO funds to restart as a charter school one or more academically poor-performing public schools during the project period, to do so by replicating a successful charter school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success, and to do so by targeting a similar student population in the replicated charter school as was served by the academically poor-performing public school. In accordance with section 4310(2)(B) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, students who are enrolled in the academically poor-performing public school at the time of restart are exempt from the charter school's lottery.

For purposes of this priority, academically poor-performing public schools may include, but are not limited to, persistently lowest-achieving schools, as defined in this notice and the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program under Title I of the ESEA (<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/02/09/2015-02570/final-requirements-school-improvement-grants-title-i-of-the-elementary-and-secondary-education-act>); and priority schools in States that exercised flexibility<sup>1</sup> under the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) (see the Department's June 7, 2012 guidance entitled, "ESEA Flexibility," at [www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility](http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility), and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's December 18, 2015 Dear Colleague Letter at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/transition-dcl.pdf>).

Note: For applicants proposing to use CMO grant funds to replicate a high-quality charter school by restarting as a charter school one or more academically poor-performing public schools, the CMO's proposed charter school must be newly created and operating under a separate charter and governance than the academically poor-performing public school.

Footnote 1: As of August 1, 2016, States may no longer exercise flexibility, except in the limited circumstances where they implemented interventions previously in priority schools under the SIG program. For additional information related to ESEA flexibility and interventions in priority schools, see section B of the Department's June 29, 2016 guidance entitled, "Transitioning to the Every Student Succeeds Act – Frequently Asked Questions," at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essafaqtransition62916.pdf>.

**Strengths:**

The applicant did not address the priority in the proposed program.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address the priority in the proposed program.

Reader's Score: 0

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/28/2017 04:06 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/27/2017 01:44 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Family Life Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170049)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
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<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	25	20
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1. Evaluation Plan	10	9
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	18
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	83
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity</b>		
1. CPP 1	3	3
<b>School Improvement through Turnaround Efforts</b>		
1. CPP 2	5	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	8	3
<b>Total</b>	108	86

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Family Life Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170049)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

1. Comments should support your recommendation according to the Selection Criteria. Please address each section and provide your scores for each section separately.

Reader's Score: 36

#### Sub Question

1. The degree to which the applicant has demonstrated success in increasing academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students and for each of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, attending the charter schools the applicant operates or manages.

#### Strengths:

Longitudinal achievement data is provided for three years (2014-17) in math, ELA and science for all students and several subgroups, Appx. F, p. e419. There are three schools: I, II and III.

Student achievement increased as follows:

- School I math, science and ELA
- School II ELA
- Schools I and II: Hispanic, Special Education, ELL, and economically disadvantaged subgroups, p. e419.
- About half of grade 8 students took the Living Environment Regents exam and 91% passed, p. 13.

School II is also the lead for the NYC Charter Schools' ELL Consortium, a group of 25 charter schools committed to improving the education of ELLs. This is another example of their high quality.

#### Weaknesses:

Some student achievement data do not show increases, as follows:

- School II did not increase in Math for all students over two years, p. e424.
- It was not possible to determine whether science achievement at school II increased because only one year data was reported, p. e425.
- Black subgroup math decreased slightly at schools I and II, p. e421-24.
- Math achievement for the economically disadvantaged subgroup at school II did not increase, p. e424,
- School III does not provide comparative district or state achievement data, as none of their students had yet taken a NYS assessment, p. 16.
- ELA proficiency target was not met, p. e460.

Reader's Score: 10

2. The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates, and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the

**Sub Question**

**have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students in the State.**

**Strengths:**

In two of the three schools, disadvantaged student academic performance exceeds state averages. At schools I and II, low income, Black, and Hispanic subgroups all exceeded their state subgroups in ELA, Science and math, Appendix F, p. e16, and Abstract.

**Weaknesses:**

No educationally disadvantaged subgroup scores were included for school III.

Attendance and retention rates could not be located for charter school disadvantaged and state subgroups.

**Reader's Score: 11**

- 3. The extent to which charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have not been closed; have not had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; have not had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation; have not had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management; have not experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and have not had any significant issues with respect to student safety.**

**Strengths:**

None of the applicant schools: have been closed, had a charter revoked, had their affiliation revoked, or had any significant financial or operational issues. Several multiyear audits and state authorizer reports are also included. Schools have not had any significant issues with respect to student safety, pages 22-23.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students**

- 1. The significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make, the Secretary**

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Sub Question**

- 1. The extent to which charter schools currently operated or managed by the applicant serve educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools; and**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides data tables for each of the three schools; these describe the charter enrollment rates compared to surrounding public schools, Appendix, p. e419. The applicant disadvantaged subgroup enrollments are:

- Low income is higher at two schools
- ELL is higher at one school

### Sub Question

- Blacks are higher at two schools
- Hispanics are higher at two schools

### Weaknesses:

The applicant disadvantaged subgroup enrollments are lower than the comparable surrounding public school subgroups as follows, p. e419-e431:

- Low income is lower at one school
- ELL is the same or lower at two schools
- Students with disabilities is lower at all three schools
- Blacks are lower at one school
- Hispanics are lower at one school

**Reader's Score: 5**

### 2. The quality of the plan to ensure that the charter schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students.

#### Strengths:

The applicant describes several effective recruitment strategies such as: a) organizing open houses and meetings with the students, families, and community members, b) developing lasting relationships with members and organizations within the various communities to support scholars and programs beyond the initial recruiting year, c) supporting bilingual leadership and staff members, d) advertising on charter website, social media and in local media outlets, e) visiting early childhood centers, f) preparing Spanish publications and applications, and g) canvassing neighborhoods, p. 34-36.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 15**

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Evaluation Plan

#### 1. In determining the quality of the evaluation plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the alignment of the evaluation plan to the logic model for the proposed grant project and 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 grant project articulated in the applicant's response to application requirement (c) and will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the performance period.

##### Strengths:

The applicant logic model is clear and sound as it includes specific contexts, inputs, activities, outputs, short term outcomes and impact, p. 36-39. Recruitment and enrollment of diverse and educationally disadvantaged students are clear priorities. These are well aligned with the overall project goals and outcomes. Abstract, p. e16.

The evaluation plan is appropriate because it consists of two focused objectives, along with several performance measures and targets; for example: Middle school will achieve high standards, 75% of students will perform at proficiency on the NY ELA exam, p. 36-39.

The lead evaluator is identified and a resume supports their qualifications, p. e109.

**Weaknesses:**

Nearly all of the evaluation data is quantitative. Very little qualitative data is clearly identified.

**Reader's Score: 9**

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

- 1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate or expand high-quality charter schools under the proposed project, the Secretary considers—**

**Reader's Score: 18**

**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**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides an overall, thorough organizational chart that includes these components: schools, CEO, COO, and network program directors/managers, p. 40. Detailed and relevant information about the responsibilities of these leadership roles is provided. Example: data and assessment information will be analyzed and reported to teachers and principals for the purpose of making quality instructional and curricular decisions. The management plan further describes appropriate and relevant project tasks, activities, milestones, timeframe and responsible persons, p. 45-47.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

- 2. 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; and**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides detailed resumes and bios for several key central office staff and roles such as CEO, HR, Marketing, Assessment and Information Technology, p. e86. The CEO will serve as the project leader; her extensive work experience, administrative certification/licenses and other professional studies are well documented and appropriate for this role.

**Weaknesses:**

Qualifications (i.e. resumes or bios) of the three principals were not located.

**Reader's Score: 9**

- 3. 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 included in the applicant's response to application requirement (g).**

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The applicant describes a multi-year plan to start the new middle school as a blueprint or replication toolkit based on starting their previous charter schools. The model states the applicant school will operate primarily on the state per pupil funding, about \$14,027 per student annually and various federal entitlement and special education programs, p. 55. The applicant provides strong evidence they will be able to sustain the operation of their proposed middle school expansion after the CMO grant ends.

### Weaknesses:

The applicant refers to a comprehensive financial expansion model in Appendix H, but the model was not located.

**Reader's Score:** 4

## Priority Questions

### Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity

1. This priority is for projects that will provide for the replication or expansion of high-quality charter schools that have an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies (see Section 4305(b)(5)(A) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA).

**Note:** For information on permissible ways to meet this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department's Office for Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice entitled, "Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools" ([www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-2011111.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-2011111.pdf)).

### Strengths:

The applicant clearly states the fundamental goal is to provide high-quality educational programs for students and families in high-needs communities, p. 1. Over 900 students attend the three schools. The applicant plans to expand to about 1,600 students if funded. High numbers of low income students have been recruited and retained because: low income is 90%, Special education is 11%, Hispanic is 71%, Black is 27% and ELL is 18%, p. 7.

A range of effective strategies are used to recruit and retain diverse students; examples: race neutral admissions process, blind lottery, rigorous literacy and math curriculum, higher-order thinking skills, holistic curriculum, differentiated instruction, direct instruction, targeted interventions, quality counseling, designed academic instruction, comprehensive IEPs, and quality character development, p. 4.

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score:** 3

### Competitive Preference Priority - School Improvement through Turnaround Efforts

1. This priority is for applicants that both:

(a) Demonstrate past success in improving the academic performance of one or more academically poor-performing public schools by taking over the operation of the school or restarting the school as a charter school; and



schools during the project period, to do so by replicating a successful charter school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success, and to do so by targeting a similar student population in the replicated charter school as was served by the academically poor-performing public school. In accordance with section 4310(2)(B) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, students who are enrolled in the academically poor-performing public school at the time of restart are exempt from the charter school's lottery.

For purposes of this priority, academically poor-performing public schools may include, but are not limited to, persistently lowest-achieving schools, as defined in this notice and the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program under Title I of the ESEA (<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/02/09/2015-02570/final-requirements-school-improvement-grants-title-i-of-the-elementary-and-secondary-education-act>); and priority schools in States that exercised flexibility<sup>1</sup> under the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) (see the Department's June 7, 2012 guidance entitled, "ESEA Flexibility," at [www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility](http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility), and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's December 18, 2015 Dear Colleague Letter at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/transition-dcl.pdf>).

**Note:** For applicants proposing to use CMO grant funds to replicate a high-quality charter school by restarting as a charter school one or more academically poor-performing public schools, the CMO's proposed charter school must be newly created and operating under a separate charter and governance than the academically poor-performing public school.

**Footnote 1:** As of August 1, 2016, States may no longer exercise flexibility, except in the limited circumstances where they implemented interventions previously in priority schools under the SIG program. For additional information related to ESEA flexibility and interventions in priority schools, see section B of the Department's June 29, 2016 guidance entitled, "Transitioning to the Every Student Succeeds Act – Frequently Asked Questions," at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essafaqstransition62916.pdf>.

**Strengths:**

The applicant did not respond to this priority.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not respond to this priority.

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

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**Status:**             Submitted  
**Last Updated:**    06/27/2017 01:44 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2017 01:55 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Family Life Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170049)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Quality of Applicant	45	32
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	25	18
<b>Quality of the Evaluation Plan</b>		
1. Evaluation Plan	10	8
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	17
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	75
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity</b>		
1. CPP 1	3	3
<b>School Improvement through Turnaround Efforts</b>		
1. CPP 2	5	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	8	3
<b>Total</b>	108	78

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Family Life Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170049)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

1. Comments should support your recommendation according to the Selection Criteria. Please address each section and provide your scores for each section separately.

Reader's Score: 32

#### Sub Question

1. The degree to which the applicant has demonstrated success in increasing academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students and for each of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(c)(2) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, attending the charter schools the applicant operates or manages.

#### Strengths:

Certain subgroups demonstrate improvement and growth in achievement. At FLACS I, overall ELA proficiency percentages rose from 2014 to 2016. Subgroups including Black, Hispanic, ELLs, and ED percentages rose from 2015 to 2016. Students who have a disability or are Educationally Disadvantaged showed increasing performance trends in Math (e421). Students at FLACS II demonstrate increasing percentages of students at levels 3 and 4 on the ELA test. While the scores consistently show improvement, with only two years of data it is difficult to describe this as a trend. Nevertheless, the scores do increase over the period (e422).

#### Weaknesses:

Overall, the data presented do not demonstrate a trend of growth for educationally disadvantaged students (e420, for example.) At FLACS I, scores from 2014 to 2016 show both decreases in scores for students with disabilities (e420). There is no clear continuous improvement in many areas, although overall the groups demonstrated increases over the three years. Students at FLACS I do not show increasing achievement in ELA. Data for FLACS II do not show increases for all groups in ELA or Math for the two years presented (e423). The applicant does not show trend data for attendance and retention rates (e37). FLACS III did not present any data.

Reader's Score: 8

2. The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates, and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students in the State.

#### Strengths:

FLACS I and II have outperformed their local school districts and NYS for the subgroups African-American, Latino, and economically disadvantaged (e36). Most targeted subgroups outperform the local school system in ELA, Math, and Science from 2014-2016. FLACS I students outperformed both the state and the local in Science in all subgroups. African-American students outperformed the local and the state in ELA and the local school system in math. Latino students outperformed the state in Math (e30). Students at FLACS II outperformed the local and the

### Sub Question

state in all subgroups in ELA, Math, and Science from 2014 to 2016. On the NYS ELA exams, students at FLACS outperformed predicted proficiency levels by 12.5% across grades 3-8 (e464.) At FLACS II, the difference was 70.2% across grades 3 and 4 (e473.)

#### Weaknesses:

Students at FLACS I do not outperform students overall than the state. In addition, ELLs and students with disabilities are less successful in outperforming the state in ELA and Math in years 2014 through 2016 (e420). Page e426 begins a series of tables labeled FLACS I ; this group has mixed results, with some groups at or slightly above the state and others below the state. Students with disabilities did not outperform their peers at FLACS I. Attendance and retention rates are not compared to local and state systems (e31). Data for FLACS III was not presented.

Reader's Score: 9

- 3. The extent to which charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have not been closed; have not had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; have not had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation; have not had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management; have not experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter; and have not had any significant issues with respect to student safety.**

#### Strengths:

The applicant has not had any of their schools close, nor is there evidence of any financial, academic, safety, or compliance issues. Authorizer reports and financial audits indicate organizational and fiscal viability (e30).

#### Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses observed for this criterion.

Reader's Score: 15

### Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

- 1. The significance of the contribution the proposed project will make in expanding educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students and enabling those students to meet challenging State academic standards. In determining the significance of the contribution the proposed project will make, the Secretary**

Reader's Score: 18

### Sub Question

- 1. The extent to which charter schools currently operated or managed by the applicant serve educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools; and**

#### Strengths:

The applicant's current charter school serves educationally disadvantaged students at rates comparable to surrounding schools. For example, in 2015/16, Black and Latino students represented 98% of enrollment as compared to 97% in the local districts. 91% of the students were economically disadvantaged as compared to 92% in the community school district (e23). There are multiple points of entry so that students from any age group can benefit from the program (e35.)

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

While the program does serve targeted subgroups at a higher percentage than the state, the local school district student body contains a higher percentage of low income, ELLs, students with disabilities and African American students than FLACS I. The local district serves a greater percentage of ELLs and students with disabilities (also a lower percentage than the state) than FLACS II (e419). FLACS III serves a lower percentage of students with disabilities and Latino students than the local district. Throughout the network, students with disabilities account for 11% of enrollment as opposed to 22% in the surrounding borough (e24.) ELLs represent 18% of the student body, less than the 20% of the enrollment in the surrounding districts.

**Reader's Score:** 5

## 2. The quality of the plan to ensure that the charter schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students.

### Strengths:

The applicant plans to add seats in communities where many educationally disadvantaged students live. There is a preference in their lottery for ELLs, siblings, and in-district residents (e23). The recruitment strategies include all students and also target outreach to communities where students with economic disadvantage, English Language learners, and families of children with special needs (e23.) The applicant provides specific recruitment strategies for students with disabilities, including emphasizing the services offered by the schools (e24). The school has specific programming aimed at ELLs (e46.) The applicant meets with surrounding school districts, faith based groups, visits pre-k classrooms and distributes flyers in communities where targeted students live (e54.)

### Weaknesses:

Despite enrolling students with disabilities at half the rate of the Bronx (11% to 22%), the school has not enacted a preference for students with special needs that is available under their charter (e24.) While the school does describe strategies for recruiting a diverse group of students, the activities are heavily weighted towards ELLs (e25).

**Reader's Score:** 13

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Evaluation Plan

### 1. In determining the quality of the evaluation plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the alignment of the evaluation plan to the logic model for the proposed grant project and 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 grant project articulated in the applicant's response to application requirement (c) and will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the performance period.

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides a logic model that focuses on many of the grant outcomes such as recruitment, academic achievement, high quality teaching, and increased options after leaving the program (e55.) The outputs in the model include outputs identified in the narrative and the evaluation (e54.) The objectives detailed and address the major elements of the CSP project (e56.) The logic model is specific in describing inputs/activities, outputs and short-term outcomes as well as the long-term outcomes of the grant (e54).

#### Weaknesses:

Some of the outcome targets such as "FLACS Middle School will meet criteria of FLACS Network Financial Performance Framework" do not describe outcomes related to an objective measure but, rather, to an internal measure. Qualitative data sources are difficult to discern (e55.) Many of the targets proposed in the objectives are modest at best (e56.) The proposal uses an internal data and assessment director to implement the evaluation rather than an objective third party (e57.)

Reader's Score: 8

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate or expand high-quality charter schools under 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

#### Strengths:

The applicant describes a transition to a group of schools now merged under a single organizational structure that provides greater efficiency and accountability (e58.) An identified staff member (e61) leads tasks listed in the proposal. The applicant presents an enrollment expansion plan that is reasonable and adequate (e35). The timeline is broken down into discreet phases (e63). Roles and responsibilities are extensive and well described. SUNY authorizers (e62) have already approved the applicant's proposal for a middle school.

#### Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses observed in this section.

Reader's Score: 5

2. 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; and

#### Strengths:

The proposal provides extensive information on the project roles and the backgrounds of those selected to fill them. The applicant provides resumes for key staff and the proposed team has much experience, including the startup/replication of charter schools. The CEO has over 40 years of experience in education, both with the local system and with the program. The COO is a long time employee with experience in the startup of new programs (e66). The CFO is also a long time employee with extensive business administration and finance management (e67). Other leaders are similarly qualified.

#### Weaknesses:

The budget narrative describes the hiring of a principal by October, 2017 (e511). Despite sharing the role that of "designs, implements, and evaluates the organizational and systemic structures that enhance the quality of teaching and learning", the applicant does not provide a job description or qualifications for the principal or assistant principal position (e61). The applicant does not describe the process for identifying nor provide any resumes for building principals. The management team is not diverse and represents only a part of the proposed enrollment demographics (e.g., e86-96).

Reader's Score: 9

3. 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 included in the applicant's response to application requirement (g).

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

“FLACS network and central office has managed sufficient organizational integrity and financial resources to deliver effective educational programs for all schools and increasingly stable finances as the network continues to grow in scale and capacity” (e30).. The program has a waiting list that ensures that full enrollment in our programs for per pupil revenue (e30). The use of a replication toolkit employs the experience the CMO has in replicating programs (e72.) The applicant states that they will “not rely on private philanthropy to run [the] schools” (e73.) The proposal indicates that several conservative projections were used to develop the sustainable budget, including cost of living adjustments for salaries and expenditures as well as federal entitlement grants (e74.)

### Weaknesses:

The applicant states that their network "does not rely on private philanthropy to run [their] schools" and then goes on to state that they will seek "fundraising and other philanthropic income for program initiatives" (e73-74). The applicant describes a comprehensive financial model but it could not be found. The budget narrative (e511) identifies grant expenditures but there is no rationale provided. For example, \$600 per student is identified as the source for supplies, but there is not explanation as to how the figures were calculated (e512.)

**Reader's Score: 3**

## Priority Questions

### Competitive Preference Priority - Promoting Diversity

1. This priority is for projects that will provide for the replication or expansion of high-quality charter schools that have an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies (see Section 4305(b)(5)(A) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA).

**Note:** For information on permissible ways to meet this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department’s Office for Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice entitled, “Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools” ([www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-2011111.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-2011111.pdf)).

### Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining a diverse student body. They state that they are “committed to providing high-quality educational options from [underserved] local Bronx communities” (e19). They have previously been named a “High Performing and Gap Closing School” The fundamental goal of the project is “to avail greater access to high-quality educational programs to students and families in high-needs communities” (e19). As evidence, their current student body is comprised of 92% low-income families (e20). Also, the student body contains 71% Latino, 27% African-American, 18% ELLs, and 11% students with disabilities (e20). This is a higher percentage compared to NY State averages. The applicant also provides evidence of high attendance and retention rates (e37).

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were observed in this section.

**Reader's Score: 3**

### Competitive Preference Priority - School Improvement through Turnaround Efforts

1. This priority is for applicants that both:

**(a) Demonstrate past success in improving the academic performance of one or more academically poor-performing public schools by taking over the operation of the school or restarting the school as a charter school; and**

schools during the project period, to do so by replicating a successful charter school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success, and to do so by targeting a similar student population in the replicated charter school as was served by the academically poor-performing public school. In accordance with section 4310(2)(B) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, students who are enrolled in the academically poor-performing public school at the time of restart are exempt from the charter school's lottery.

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**Strengths:**

The applicant did not respond to this priority.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not respond to this priority.

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

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**Status:**             Submitted  
**Last Updated:**    06/28/2017 01:55 PM