

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/30/2017 01:03 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Hiawatha Academies (U282M170045)

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	41
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	25	23
<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	88
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity</b>		
1. CPP 1	3	0
<b>School Improvement through Turnaround Efforts</b>		
1. CPP 2	5	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	8	0
<b>Total</b>	108	88

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Charter Management Organization - 3: 84.282M

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

Applicant: Hiawatha Academies (U282M170045)

## 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: 41

#### 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 has increased Grade 3-4 reading proficiency from 36% to 54% over the last three school years. (e28) Proficiency in math has ranged from 69% to 81% for grade 4 and 48% to 65% for grade 8. (e27) Both of these math scores exceed state averages. (e27) ELL students at the applicant's schools have outperformed their peers statewide. (e27) Additionally, economically disadvantaged students outperformed their peers in reading by 6 percentage points (grade 4) and 8 percentage points (grade 8) in reading. (e27) The proportion of black students who achieved proficiency in grade 3-4 math was four times higher than the proportion of their peers at Minneapolis Public Schools. (e29) In reading the applicant's students more than tripled the district. (e29) Hispanic students also consistently scored proficient at a significantly higher rate than the state average in both math and reading. (e31)

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not report on the achievement of students with disabilities. (e31)

Reader's Score: 14

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:

In the last two years the applicants students have outperformed the state average in grade 4 math and for the last year they outperformed the state in grade 8 math. (e34) The applicant's black students outperformed peers state wide by a significant margin in grade 4 reading and math. (e35) Hispanic students outperformed the state by 25 percentage points in math and by 7 percentage points in reading. (e35) For the last three years ELL students and students eligible for free and reduced lunch have outperformed their peers across the state in math and reading. (e37-38)

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

Overall, the applicant's students have not outperformed the state average in reading. (e34) Black students in grade 8 did not outperform their peers across the state in reading or math. (e35)

**Reader's Score: 12**

- 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 schools closed or had a charter revoked. Moreover, there have been no issues with compliance or operational or financial management. (e38) The school has a variety of systems in place, including annual reviews and outside audits to ensure this success is sustained. (e38-39) 83% of parents agree or strongly agree that their students are safe at school. (e43) Additionally, the school conducts annual inspections of their facilities and conducts numerous safety drills throughout the year, including lockdown, fire and tornado. (e42-43)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses 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: 23**

**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 schools serve black or Hispanic, ELL and Free or Reduced lunch students at rates exceeding surrounding public schools. This is consistent across all their schools and appears to be a solid trend.(e45)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant's schools serve less students with disabilities than the surrounding public schools. (e45)

**Reader's Score: 8**

- 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 hosts booths at community events to recruit students. Additionally, they use postcard mailings to specific neighborhoods and door-to-door communication. The applicant also translates recruitment materials into Somali and other languages as needed. This year they have hired two Somali recruiters. They also partner with local community organizations. Moreover, the schools utilize current parents to conduct multi-language recruitment. (e52) They work with early childhood programs for students with disabilities to bolster their population of those students. (e53)

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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's evaluation plan is closely aligned to both the intermediate and long term outcomes in their logic model. (e55) The evaluation plan includes detailed performance measures, baselines and rationales, performance targets and targeted data collection. (e56-59) Both qualitative and quantitative data is being collected throughout the project period. (e60)

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant seems to be relying on only internal evaluation and is not partnering with an external evaluator. Without an external evaluator there's risk of potential biases in data collection and reporting. (e56-59)

**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 management plan includes clear milestones and tasks, with a written plan reflecting who is responsible and under what timeline it will be accomplished. (e63-65) The applicant plans to monitor and adjust financial plans as needed on a quarterly basis while achieving financial stability at full enrollment. (e64)

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

The plan lacks information about how they will accomplish some of their network services. (e64)

**Reader's Score:** 4

- 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 key project personnel have diverse experience in managing projects similar to this one. Several members of the team have supported the applicant in previous expansion efforts. Their experience includes work with a variety of organizations, some of significantly larger size than the applicant's organization. (e66-70). Additionally, the personnel are each assigned to areas of the project where they have previous experience in successfully performing similar work. (e66-70)

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 10

- 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 year after the applicant's schools are fully enrolled they are fully sustainable on their public funds. (e71) In addition over a two and half year campaign the applicant has raised 4.1 million dollars and they have established long term relationships with a number of major funders. (e71)

### Weaknesses:

The applicant's financial model does not go beyond 2018. (e273)

**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:

No strengths noted.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not address this competitive priority.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**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:**

No strengths noted.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not address this competitive priority.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Hiawatha Academies (U282M170045)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Quality of Applicant	45	39
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	25	24
<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	87
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity</b>		
1. CPP 1	3	0
<b>School Improvement through Turnaround Efforts</b>		
1. CPP 2	5	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	8	0
<b>Total</b>	108	87

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Charter Management Organization - 3: 84.282M

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

Applicant: Hiawatha Academies (U282M170045)

## 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: 39

#### 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 asserts that for three consecutive years, Hiawatha has advanced academic achievement for its students. (page e 26).

Black students traditionally achieved academically within proficiency rates that exceeded their district peers. Black students, who are enrolled at Hiawatha, in grades 3 and 4 had proficiency scores that consistently outperforming their district peers in both math and reading - 4th Grade: Math HA: 83%; District 29%; Reading HA 92%; District 20%. Similarly, Black students in grades 7 and 8 had proficiency scores that exceed their district peers: Math HA: 88%; District 15%; Reading HA 71%; District 20%. (2015 – 2016 proficiency data) (page e30)

Hiawatha's Hispanic students' proficiency also surpassed their district peers. Hispanic students, who are enrolled at Hiawatha, in tested grade 4 had proficiency scores that consistently outperformed district peers in both math and reading - 4th Grade: Math HA: 70%; District 23%; Reading HA 42%; District 23%. Similarly, Hispanic students in grade 8 had proficiency scores that exceed their district peers: Math HA: 64%; District 28%; Reading HA 42%; District 27%. (2015 – 2016 proficiency data) (page e31)

English Language Learners are also producing academic gains that outpaced their district peers. ELL students, who are enrolled at Hiawatha, in tested grade 4 had proficiency scores that consistently outperformed district peers in both math and reading - 4th Grade: Math HA: 51%; District 21%; Reading HA 18%; District 9%. Similarly, ELL students in grade 8 had proficiency scores that exceed their district peers: Math HA: 54%; District 11%; Reading HA 15%; District 20%. (2015 – 2016 proficiency data) (page e32)

Hiawatha Collegiate High School is growing, and has yet to graduate its first cohort of 12th grade students.

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

There were two weaknesses identified. The first is due to limited evidence available to assess academic outcomes. As outlined on page e31, the applicant was not able to show the academic results for student with diverse learning. The applicant attributes this to low enrollment for this subgroup. The other minor deficiency is regarding 4th grade ELL student proficiency scores when compared to the state. While in all other categories, ELL students' scores far exceeded the state, in 4th grade reading results are on par with their district peers. (page e32)

Reader's Score: 13

- 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:

On page 29 of the proposal, the applicant reveals that the network has achieved "value-add growth" on the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) that outpaces the national norm.

Three-year proficiency trends vary among total population as well as subgroups. Review of these three-year math proficiency trends demonstrates that Hiawatha's 4th grade students traditionally outperform their state peers.

During the three-year period, Hiawatha's 4th grade math proficiency ranged from 69% to 81%, while the state range for the same period was 69% to 70%. (page e 27, e34) Proficiency rates for Hispanic, English Language Learners, and economically disadvantaged students traditionally are better than their state peers in both math and reading for tested grades 4 and 8. (page e 36, e 37) Over the same period (i.e., 2013 to 2016), Black students outperform their state peers in 3rd and 4th grades math and 7th and 8th grades reading. (page e35)

### Weaknesses:

A review of the proficiency scores overtime, reveal a few minor weaknesses. Hiawatha's 4th grade three-year math trend is commendable, however, the network's 4th grade math proficiency scores dropped from 81% in 2014-2015 to 72% in 2015-2016. The network's 8th grade math proficiency scores do not consistently perform better than the state.

For three consecutive years, Black students' proficiency rates lag versus their state peers in 8th grade math. This same group had reading scores that were virtually equal to their state peers. (page e35). Additionally, when comparing annual proficiency scores (from 2014-15 to 2015-16) for grade 4, the economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and Hispanic subgroups all experienced losses rather than academic gains in both math and reading. (pages e35, e37, e38).

During the three-year period, Hiawatha's ELA proficiency ranged from 38% to 55%, while the state range for the same period was 55% to 58%. (page e27, e34)

As noted previously, there is no evidence for students with diverse learning needs. (page e31)

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:

Hiawatha Academies reports that the network has not had issues with compliance. Further, the school has not faced revocation due to non-compliance. No financial, operational, academic, and school safety issues have been identified. (page e38)

The proposal includes evidence from the authorizer, the University of Saint Thomas, which affirms that Hiawatha Academies is in "good standing". (pages e123 and e124.)

#### Weaknesses:

No weakness 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: 24

### 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:

As previously noted, Hiawatha Academies is focused on accelerating academic outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students. The network actively recruits in underrepresented communities. (page e12) The community residences are traditionally low-income minorities who do not have access to high quality seats. In 2015-16, 98% of the students enrolled at Hiawatha are Hispanic and African-American. Sixty-five percent of the students are English Language Learners. Ninety-three percent of the students participate in free and reduced lunch. (page e13). When compared to the neighboring schools, the network serves more Black, Hispanic, English Language Learners, and free and reduced lunch students.

#### Weaknesses:

While there are several strengths, most of the schools in the network enroll far fewer students with diverse learning needs. Page e45 shows a comparison among independent school, the state, and the district.

Reader's Score: 9

- 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:

Hiawatha plans to recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged communities is appropriate. To diversify the student body, the recruiting team translates materials so that communities surrounding the school are aware of the educational program. The network translates marketing materials languages such as English, Spanish, and Somali. To attract traditionally untapped ethnicities, Hiawatha enlisted a culturally astute public relations firm to assist the

## Sub Question

network in reaching East African, African-American, Latino, and Native American families. Employees attending culturally relevant community events such as Juneteenth, Native American, Somali festival, and Mexican Independence Day. (pages e 14, E51 – E53)

Recruiters canvass communities where targeted student demographics reside. Post ads through printed magazines, newspapers, and social media. Targeted radio and TV advertising is also used to market to perspective families. The network also collaborates with preschool and early childhood programs. (pages e 14, E51 – E53)

To attract more students with diverse learning needs, Hiawatha hired sufficient staff to support and meet the students' educational needs. In 2016-17, the network hired two Somali recruiters. (page e52)

Recruiters canvass communities where their target student demographic reside. Post ads through printed magazines, newspapers, and social media. Targeted radio and TV advertising is also used to market to perspective families. The network also collaborates with preschool and early childhood programs. (pages e 14, E51 – E53)

To attract more students with diverse learning needs, Hiawatha hired sufficient staff to support and meet the students' educational needs. In 2016-17, the network hired two Somali recruiters. (page e52)

### Weaknesses:

No weakness 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:

To date, Hiawatha operates two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Hiawatha's goal is to scale the network to a fully formed K – 12 school. There are five objectives outlined in the proposal: replicate a new middle school (~ 360 seats), expand the existing elementary school (~78 seats), expand the existing high school (~400 seats), building an evaluation program, and financial solvency. (page e54).

The logic model aligns to the proposed plan, including following inputs to Hiawatha's approach, intermediate outcomes, and long-term outcomes. Pages e 55 to e 61 demonstrates the action steps that will be taken to fulfill the grant requirement. Aligned to each objective are a metric, rationale, target and timeline. Additionally, project owners, tasks, and timelines are outlined accordingly (page 63 to e 65). Performance measurements are guides by the project goals.

Throughout the five-year grant period, the applicant will annually assess its progress toward the stated goals. Qualitative and quantitative data included, but not limited to: interim assessments, attendance, suspension, retention, performance reviews, and financial audits will be examined, summarized, and presented to the board of directors. (page e 60). The director of data analytics will be responsible for managing the data collection process (61).

**Weaknesses:**

The proposal did not identify an external evaluator who will assist in measuring the objectives in the logic model. (pages e51 to e61)

**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 network staff includes the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Talent Officer, Senior Director of Operations, Senior Director of Community Engagement, Director of Data Analytics, and Director of Development (project director). (page e66). The tasks identified in the timeline will be completed by 1) network staff, the school, school principal, and/or school director of operations. As outlined above, the proposal details the timelines, milestones, etc. (page e63 to e65).

Pages e66 to e70 includes mini-bios of each network staff member and their project responsibilities.

**Weaknesses:**

The management timeline on pages e63 to e65 does not include the milestones, responsibilities, and timeline for the high school expansion; however, the organization's plans around the expansion are not clear. Further, several tasks include the responsibility of the network yet the proposal does not identify who in the home office is ultimately responsible for overseeing the task.

**Reader's Score: 4**

- 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 director of development has been identified as the project director, who will be responsible for tracking and reporting on the progress toward the goals. (page e 70). The director of development has experience with non-profit project management. Further, she is currently responsible for all development initiatives for the network. This includes overseeing the state department of education's charter expansion grant, which was award expand the high school.

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

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 network's standard growth model predicts that, once fully enrolled, new, expanded or replicated schools will be able to operate on the per-pupil allocation (without philanthropic funding leveraged to support the schools in its start-up years). (pages e70 to e72)

### Weaknesses:

The proposal does not include a financial model beyond 2018. (page e273) There is no evidence to confirm to organization's sustainability over time.

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:

Hiawatha Academies is a network of four charter schools that intends to serve educationally disadvantaged students. The network actively recruits in underrepresented communities. (page e12) The individuals in the community are traditionally low-income minorities who do not have access to high quality seat. In 2015-16, 98% of the students enrolled at Hiawatha are Hispanic and African-American. Sixty-five percent of the students are English Language Learners. Ninety-three percent of the students participate in free and reduced lunch. (page e13)

To effective recruiting strategies include, but are not limited to: spreading the educational program's success by word of mouth, hiring staff that represent and serve students with diverse and language needs, attending community meetings/events, targeting media advertisements, and mailing communications. Marketing materials are translated into languages such as English, Spanish, and Somali. Further, the network has hired a public relations firm to assist with recruiting underrepresented student populations. (pages e13 – e14).

Hiawatha Academies reports a retention range between 69% and 84%. The network retained 88% of its Hispanic and African-American students. (page e15)

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:**

Hiawatha Academies vision mission is to recruit educationally disadvantage students. The student population is not racially and socioeconomically diverse. (page e12)

**Reader's Score: 0**

**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:**

No noted strengths. The applicant does not address this criterion on page e25 of the proposal.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address competitive priority number two in the proposal. Page e25 of the proposal only addresses the competitive priority number three.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/30/2017 01:20 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/29/2017 02:04 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Hiawatha Academies (U282M170045)

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	42
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	25	23
<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	18
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	90
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity</b>		
1. CPP 1	3	0
<b>School Improvement through Turnaround Efforts</b>		
1. CPP 2	5	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	8	0
<b>Total</b>	108	90

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Charter Management Organization - 3: 84.282M

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

Applicant: Hiawatha Academies (U282M170045)

## 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: 42

#### 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 narrative indicates that the applicant educates a larger population of educationally disadvantaged students than both the local district and the state. The percentage of Black and Hispanic students attending the charter school is 97% compared to the state and district which have percentages of 19% and 54% respectively. Even with this high percentage of disadvantaged students, the charter school has managed to steadily increase the student proficiency on the state reading test over the past three years in 4th grade – 36% passing in 2013-14 up to 54% passing in 2015-2016. Pg. e26 – e28

Appendix F outlines the passing percentages for state tests for the last three years. The overall school population has scored higher than the entire state population in math for the last two years. 81.3% passing in 2014 – 2015 compared to 57.8% for the state and 71.8% passing in 2015 – 2016 compared to 68.7% passing. Pg. e270

#### Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 15

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:

When a comparison is made of the proficiency rates between the subgroup populations of the charter school to both the local district and the state, there is compelling evidence that the charter school is outperforming both entities by a large percentage in all major subgroups. The largest achievement gap is in the Black subgroup where the charter school outscored the state anywhere from 40% - 61%. Pg. e30 and e270 - 271

### Sub Question

There is only one year of data available for the special education subgroup due to small numbers in the charter school, but in that one year the applicant outscored the state average by 23%. Pg. e270

#### **Weaknesses:**

The narrative indicates there is attendance, retention, suspension and expulsion information in Appendix F, but the reader was not able to locate this information. These criteria would have made this section stronger in that a positive outcome would indicate the applicant is working on outcomes other than academics. Pg. e73

**Reader's Score: 12**

- 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:**

As reported by the applicant, there have not been any compliance issues nor have any schools within the network been closed for noncompliance or regulatory issues. Pg. e38

#### **Weaknesses:**

None 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: 23**

### 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 table on page e45 indicates that the applicant has a much larger population of educationally disadvantaged students than either the local district or the state in all subgroups except special education. The largest discrepancy occurs in the black/Hispanic group where the applicant averages 97% across the charter schools and the state and district are significantly less. (district is 54%) pg. e45

The English Language Learners subgroup comprises 65% of the average student population for the charter schools and the district schools have only 25% of this subgroup population. Pg. e45

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

The percentage of special education students across the charter school enrollment is significantly less than either the state or the district schools. The narrative has some insight into this comparison, and is working to change this demographic to more closely mirror the state and district percentages. Pg. e45

Reader's Score: 8

## 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 location of the charter schools within this entity is predominantly Hispanic and Latino neighborhoods. Word of mouth and parent referrals account for many new students that enroll in the charter schools. Additionally, the applicant has multilingual materials available for distribution at community events, church events and throughout the neighborhoods. Pg. e52

The applicant indicates they will contract with a public relations firm to help increase the visibility in the African American, East African, Native American and Asian communities. Additionally, the applicant will have materials translated into Spanish, Somali and other languages as needed to help reach individuals in these neighborhoods. Pg. e52

Due to enrollment of special education students being low compared to the local district schools, the applicant will make a concerted effort to reach the families of students with disabilities to inform them of the breadth of educational opportunities for their students at the charter schools. Most notably will be partnerships with early childhood educational providers including Head Start, and local language immersion preschools. Pg. e53

### Weaknesses:

None 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 provides a well thought out set of five goals that are aligned to the Logic Model and the performance measures. Each piece is interconnected to the other providing continuity through the project. The plan provides performance measures with a baseline measurement and targets and a list of quantitative and qualitative data measurements that will be collected throughout the project. Pg. e54 – e61

The narrative indicates that the leadership team will dissect the information and use the Performance Indicators Framework that tracks organization viability and financial benchmarks along with school culture, parent engagement and academic achievement to determine if the charter school is making significant progress. This information will be disseminated as the opportunity arises. Pg. e61

**Weaknesses:**

The performance targets are vaguely worded. In order to determine if the overarching goals and the long term outcomes in the Logic Model have been met these targets must be more specific. Pg. e55 – e61

There is no indication that an outside evaluator will be used for this project. The use of an outside evaluator would bring more validity to the findings that will be shared with other operators.

There is a discrepancy in the narrative relative to the number of additional seats that will be added with the expansion of Hiawatha Collegiate High School. Page e54 claims “at least 400 high-quality seats”, while p. e57 states in objective 3 that 300 high-quality seats will be added.

**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:** 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 management plan is outlined with project tasks and milestones along with a timeframe and a responsible party designated. These tasks and milestones are related to the goals and performance objectives found in the Evaluation Plan on pages e56 – e59. The management plan also includes a designation of which performance tasks will be reported upon during each year of the grant project. Pg. e63 - e65

**Weaknesses:**

The Management Plan does not include any information about objective 3 from the Evaluation Plan – “Create at least 300 high-quality seats for students from educationally disadvantaged communities by expanding Hiawatha Collegiate High School to serve grades 9 – 12”. This omission causes concern because of the lack of consistency between the Evaluation and Management plans. Pg57 and e63 – e65.

**Reader's Score:** 4

- 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:

Each member of the management team will bring necessary skills to the fruition of this project. The narrative outlines how these duties will be divided. Each team member has relevant experiences and qualifications to ensure that this project is well done. The project manager has led the entity's development work for two years and under her direction, the charter school has secured 50% more funding than in previous years. Pg. e66 – e70

The management structure for the grant project includes several individuals supporting each step of the process with one person responsible for managing the grant and reporting to the USDE. This structure provides a check and balance system throughout the duration of project. Pg. e63 – e65

### Weaknesses:

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

- 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 model presented allows for charter schools that are in the growing phase – just opening with one or two grades levels and still adding one per year – to operate at a deficit. The CMO provides the charter school with start-up money to furnish the new classrooms and purchase curriculum for the grade level added each year. During this time the school's funding is supplemented by private philanthropic dollars. Once each charter school has expanded out to include all intended grade levels and has full enrollment, the charter school will be sustained on public funding. Pg. e70 – e71.

### Weaknesses:

The financial projections listed on page e273 do not extend past 2018. It is difficult to determine if the applicant is able to meet the needs of a growing school without providing future budget information.

**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-201111.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf)).**

### Strengths:

The applicant did not address this criterion.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address this criterion.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**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>).

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**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 this criterion.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address this criterion.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/29/2017 02:04 PM