

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2017 12:38 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Rocketship Education (U282M170011)

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	25
<b>Quality of the Evaluation Plan</b>		
1. Evaluation Plan	10	6
<b>Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel</b>		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	16
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>88</b>
<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>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>91</b>

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Rocketship Education (U282M170011)

## 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 demonstrates a strong history of networking across four regions in operating high quality charter schools which continually and successfully demonstrate increasing students' academic achievement. It is asserted that students who enroll in their school are struggling in academics and within a school year most grow approximately a year and a half, according to varied assessments. The applicant provides well developed charts to depict student's growth and success. It is well articulated that, in general, students' success and growth is above the national norm, as indicated on Northwestern Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments. Specifically, in 2015 it is specified that 61% of students scored above the national norm in mathematics and that 54% scored about the national norm in English Language Arts. Pages 9, 10

For example, it is documented that across all grade levels in school operated by the applicant, students grew academically at an average of 1.54 years in math and 1.39 years in reading. Pages 9, 10 The applicant clearly references a report published by SRI International which concluded that alumni from the applicant's schools demonstrate proficiency of about a year ahead of their peers

The applicant addresses the areas of retention rates specifying that in 2015-2016, that 90% of students returned to their same campus. Suspension rates in the applicant schools are noted as nonexistent. The applicant school staff is noted to have never expelled a student, but rather offers a robust Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support framework. This framework is well described as focused to create a learning environment that is consistent, positive and safe and assists youth in developing social and emotional intelligence. Page 28

The applicant adequately charts data to affirm student's positive attendance rates. The chart details data from all four regions. It is concluded that throughout the network that 94.40% attendance rate is prominent. Page 27

#### Weaknesses:

Adequate information is lacking to describe the success rate among sub groups. Information is presented as detailing the entire school population in general. Specific data is not included to articulate the success or lack of, among students challenged with disabilities, ELL students and low income students.

## Sub Question

Reader's Score: 11

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 provides a comprehensive response to the criteria clearly narrating academic achievement results for educationally disadvantaged students. This is evidenced in a concise articulation of success in serving the needs of English Language learners. The applicant clearly details a Project GLAD (guided Language Acquisition Design) for integrating language acquisition across the subject areas. The applicant well describes student's success in noting the benchmark, in 2012-2013 with nearly half of students classified in the bottom two levels of proficiency. It is specified that within four years of instruction two thirds of that same population advanced as evidenced in 400 reclassified as English Fluent. Pages 23, 24,

The applicant presents two charts which indicates student success who perform at grade level students at or above grade level, as measured by NWEA. The chart evidences that the majority of Rocketeers are above the national norm in ELA with nearly two-thirds of students above the national norm in math. With the exception of a slight dip in 2015-16, the percentage of our students above the national norm has increased in both math and ELA for each of the past 3 years. Page 10

It is noteworthy that the applicant's schools are recognized and acclaimed such as in a 2016 study conducted by Innovate Public Schools which singled out six of the applicant's schools as top performers for low income minority students in the Bay Area in California. Page 23

The applicant describes their operation in Milwaukee a city cited by former Arne Duncan as a "national disgrace" regarding test scores. The applicant specifies that schools within their operation in that city ranked #1 in math and English Language Arts on the first years of that state's new Forward Exam. A well-developed chart is presented to depict this success. The chart identifies 13% state wide student success in math as compared to 43% success among the applicant's schools' students. Pages 24, 25

### Weaknesses:

None are noted.

Reader's Score: 15

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:

It is asserted that the charter schools operated by the applicant have not been closed, nor have they experienced any noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements. It is specified that the applicant operates in four regions under seven charter authorizers and has never had any school closed, charter revoked or statutory regulations issues. It is specified that a financial operation is highlighted with no violations or issues. Page 30

**Sub Question**

**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: 25**

**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 a comprehensive response to the criteria clearly articulating an overview of the operation of the applicant' charter schools as focus on serving educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools. This is evidenced in narrating the composition of students across the applicant's network of schools which serves 87.5% economically disadvantages students, 54.1% English Language learners and 8.0% Special Educating students. Page 31. The applicant articulates the results of disaggregated student enrollment data and specified that 83% of students enrolled in network schools are African American or Hispanic, and that 8.6% are homeless. Page 31 Comparably in the DC network school 98.9% are African American as compared to 64% enrolled in DC schools. Page 3

The applicant precisely narrates and charts data demonstrating that their school serve an increase percentage of educationally disadvantaged youth and various subgroups. In addition, it is noted that nationally, 50.3% of all students in K-12 public education are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and across the entire Rocketship network of 16 schools, 87.5% of all students are from low-income families. determined educationally disadvantaged, according to free and reduced lunch data. Pages 1, 3 4

It is well charted that the applicant serves a more diverse student population as compared to the state averages in the same sub grouping. For example, in California, the applicant serve 83.8% of educationally disadvantaged as compared to the state average of 57.2%. In addition, in DC the applicant serves 100% economically disadvantaged students as compared to the state average of 24.0%. In the area of serving ELL students, in Tennessee serve 58% as compared to 22% reported in the state average.

The applicant narrates their focus on serving economically disadvantaged youth. For example data is charted demonstrating that the applicant schools serve: 83.8% economically disadvantaged in the Bay Areas as compared to 60.6 %. Additional comparative data specifies serving 100% in DC as compared to the surrounding schools which serve 76% . In Tennessee the applicant serves 100% determined to be economically disadvantaged as compared to 49.7% in the surrounding area schools. Page 31

A well-developed chart provides an overview to evident services to student populations of equally disadvantaged. It is noted that, in total, all the applicant schools serve an average population of 15. % African American students, 68% Hispanic students, 87.5 Economically disadvantaged, 54.1% English Languge learners and 8.0% Special needs youth. In reviewing disaggregated data, it is demonstrated that the Bay Area Charter School operated by the

### Sub Question

applicant served 54.6% as compared to schools in the surrounding area who serve 32.79% English Language Learners. In the Tennessee service area, the applicant schools serve 100% Economically Disadvantaged youth, as compared to Metro Nashville Public schools who serve 49.7%. Page 31

The applicant demonstrates a history of working with underserved youth in low income communities in four regions offering highly individualized instruction tailored to meet the needs of each youth. Noting that over half of students in the schools operated by the applicant are English Language Learners (54.1%), it is specified that individualized learning and differentiated instruction are enabling students to achieve proficiency in literacy skills. 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. Pages 32, 33

#### **Weaknesses:**

None are noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

### **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 effectively describes a plan for expansion which is well organized and developed and ensures adequate procedures to recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students. This is evidenced in an assertion that the first step in seeking potential new regions for expansion is the identification of high needs communities with failing schools. This approach is specified to ensure targeting recruitment and enrollment of educationally disadvantage students. Data on student demographics is also sought to support effective decision making. These encompass the number of students, the size of the failing schools and overcrowding. The applicant articulated a program management plan detailing a three-phase pan for expansion. The plan effectively details strategies in analyzing needs for charter schools in new regions and initiatives to ensure serving students with the most need. It is asserted that historically the applicant exceeds a 60% threshold for serving low income students. Pages 36-38

The applicant articulates their plan to expand and enroll educationally disadvantaged. This is evidenced in detailing a precise Growth Plan specifying an expansion endeavor to open three additional schools in 2018-2019 school year and in 2019-2020. In 2020-2021 it is proposing to open four schools and 2021-2022 open an additional four schools. Specifically, it is proposed in 2018-2019 to open; one additional school in California, one in Wisconsin and one in Washington DC during the 2018-2019 school year. In 2019-2020 it is proposed to one additional school on Tennessee and two additional schools in California. By 2022 it is proposed that applicant's network will have expanded and opened an additional 14 new schools. The applicant references serving economically disadvantaged students in each area. This is evidences in specifying that in determining which area to serve, that the geographic area must meet the criteria for need. Page 46

Finally, the applicant identifies potential sites in these areas, and will run a localized needs analysis around each potential site. Page 46

#### **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 criteria is addressed in specifying that SRI International will serve as the independent evaluator for the replication initiative, noting they are a national research organization. It is well articulated that program effectiveness will be assessed and measured against three guiding questions. The questions noted are comprehensive and encompass securing data to ascertain effectiveness of program operations. These encompass securing data related to parent engagement, personalized learning and excellence of teachers and school leaders. Each participant will be assessed regarding program implementation of core elements and how they differ from those of programs in the region. In addition, evaluation questions span addressing challenges and success and program support and student outcomes in academics, attendance and growth. Page 39

It is specified that the SRI International will implement a mixed qualitative and quantitative method to document program success and need and to synthesize the lessons learned in the replication model. Page 39. It is well articulated that qualitative data will be collected from a wide scope of responses including; interviews with staff, school site visits, parent engagement data, assessment data and data publicly available. It is specified that data will be analyzed in spring 2021 and that the independent evaluator will use such data to examine the success and needs of the implementation plan. Pages 39, 40

It is noteworthy that the evaluation plan encompasses interviews with parents and the implementation of parent focus groups. It is noted that the independent evaluator will design a rubric to assess three levels of parent engagement from low to high. Strategies to recruit parents to engage in the program evaluation include providing a \$50 gift card and arranging for food and childcare. Additional data collection will include that related to student attendance, enrollment and achievement. Formal student achievement will be assessed with data from the NWEA MAP assessment. Pages 42, 43

It is clearly identified that the external evaluator will assess program data to determine differential effects of attending a replication compared to an established school for student's subgroups. The extra evaluator will explore the appropriateness of employing a quadratic or cubic growth curve model. In addition, it is asserted in general that student outcomes will be summarized and be made publicly available. Such data will include test scores for grades 3 and above and enrollment data focused on subgroups by race, ethnicity. Page 44

A well-developed timeline is presented identifying each major deliverable aligned to a brief description and time frame. For example, program dissemination is scheduled for completion in 2021 to disseminate a research brief or conference presentation or journal detailing program data. Page 45

### Weaknesses:

The Logic model narrated fails to adequately define inputs and outputs aligned to short, medium and long term goals, to guide the program implementation and assessment of progress.

**Reader's Score: 6**

## 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—

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:**

(1) The applicant responds to the criteria in detailing an adequate five-year management plan structured to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time. The applicant identified their prior history in opening at least two additional charter schools annually across multiple regions. A Growth Plan is well developed and specifies an expansion endeavor to open three additional schools in 2018-2019 school year and in 2019-2020, In 2020-2021 it is proposed to open four schools and 2012-2022 open an additional four schools. Specifically, it is proposed in 2018-2019 to open; one additional school in California, one in Wisconsin and one in Washington DC during the 2018-2019 school year. In 2019-2020 it is proposed to one additional school on Tennessee and two additional schools in California. By 2022 it is proposed that applicant's network with have expanded and opened an additional 14 new schools. Page 46

The applicant identifies that the expansion endeavor is a cross-function effort which is coordinated by the Strategy and Scalability Team with information from other groups. These groups are identified to include; the Growth and Community Engagement team, the Talent Committee, the Facilities group and the Achievement and Operations. The three-phased process is adequately detailed panning information gathering, decision making and start up. The decision to expand into any area is dependent on copious information including the need for better education alternatives and the desire to implement an innovate educational approaches to serve the needs of low income areas. It is noteworthy that the applicant identifies critical components for data gathering in their decision making. One criteria component is the political and logistical review to indicate the area quality and competency to establish and sustain a level of operations of high quality charter schools. In addition, the development of a School Leader Development Program is well articulated focused on training future school leaders as principals. Page 46

The applicant precisely articulates a discussion on local financial environment and support in vetting potential areas for expansion. In addition potential facilities for program expansion are specified to provide safe and affordable areas. The three phases of decision making and management for expansion is well charted. To serve as a framework. It is specified that the three-phase management plan has worked successfully over the years in expanding to 16 schools across four regions, and never closing a school. Page 48

A concise Management Plan is presented specifying major activities, designating persons responsible for each and proposing a timeline for completion. Managerial responsibilities span establishing reporting procedure to updating baseline demographics. It is specified that a major managerial responsibility is the purchasing and receiving of supplies and hiring staff. In addition, it is specified that the Project Director and the School Leadership Team are responsible to disseminate the information on the goals of the project to specified agencies including community and business partners. This is noted in quarterly time frames. Pages 50, 51

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

Adequate information is lacking to specify the person or persons responsible to ensure that the Project is accomplished within budget.

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 applicant responds to the criteria as evidenced in a well-developed narration of the relevant qualifications, relevant training and experience, of the project director, chief executive officer or organization leader, and key project personnel. It is identified that the CEO and Co-founder of the applicant organization will lead the expansion initiative. Prior to founding the organization she served as a teacher, principal and director of schools. Her degree is noting as a BA in Latin American student and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. Pages 51, 52. The Project Director is identified as a person currently employed in the organization as Director and one responsible for Financial Planning and analysis, her expansive experience is detailed including financial planning and federal and state compliance of programs and requirements, including the Title Program and the National School Lunch program. Additional key personal are identified and their training and experiences well noted. They include the Chief Program Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, the Director of Standards and Scalability, and a Data Analyst Pages 52, 53

The applicant identifies the names and positions of the organizations senior leadership team. They include the VP of Human Resources, the VP of Operations and the VP of schools. Their resources are included and substantiate their training, and experience. Page 56

### Weaknesses:

None are 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:

Strengths

The applicant responds to the criteria and provides an overview of the organization's abilities to sustain the operation of the replicating and expansion program beyond the grant period. Some strong components of a management plan are narrated. For example, it is defined that the schools to be open are focused on a small enrollment and not at full capacity with approximately 450 students. It is anticipated that by the third year of operations, each school will reach full capacity. It is well articulated that the grant is proposed to fund \$822,406 of the startup costs for expansion. It is anticipated that once full enrollment has been reached, each school will have developed the ability to generate positive net assets. The applicant clearly narrates a highly-centralized model of program management. It is identified that centralized services are provided by regional and National Network Support Teams. The teams are identified to include National Support Teams (NeST) and Regional NeST with; School Leader management, regional operational support, family requirement and Parent Leadership. The national Team is specified to include Human Resources, Legal Support, Lottery management and Data analysis service. 57, 58

Operational costs are clearly detailed. For example, each school is charged 5% of revenue to the Regional NeST

### Sub Question

and 10% for the National NeST. With this structure, it is asserted that the regions reach sustainability when there is a cluster of 4-8 schools with a region, each paying 5% of their revenue. An illustration is presented depicting income, costs and the break-even point of schools currently in operation. The applicant clearly identifies that their organization hosts the fifth smallest central office. Outreach for philanthropy is articulated. It is specified that the applicant organization has raised \$1.7 million dollars from foundation and influential individuals who believe in Rocketship's Education Organization ability to close the achievement gap at scale. Pages 58-60

### Weaknesses:

Adequate information is lacking to specify the overall multi-year financial and operating model. Segment of the managerial plan fail to provide an overall view of a five year plan to implement and sustain the initiative.

Reader's Score: 2

### 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 addresses the criteria and clearly describes their high-quality charter schools program which they are proposing for replication and expansion with an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies. This is evidenced in a concise description of the Rocketship Education network of high quality charter schools which encompasses the features of; rigorous curriculum individualized learning, parent and community engagement, safety, financial and operational strength. Demographics of communities served are precisely charted demonstrating outreach and services to a diverse student population of African American, Hispanic students and youth challenged as English Language Learners and/or with disabilities. The application clearly articulated the operation of their schools across four regions spanning; California, Tennessee, DC and Wisconsin. In each of these regions is specified that their charter schools exhibit a diverse student population. For example, in 2012-2013 school year, their network of schools enrolls 2.2% African American students progressing to last school year's 15.0% enrollment. Similarly, a population of 4.9% Special Education students are enrolled and same service time frame. Pages 2, 3

### 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 does not seek consideration in this area.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not seek consideration in this area.

Reader's Score: 0

---

**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/28/2017 12:38 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/27/2017 01:07 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Rocketship Education (U282M170011)

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	37
<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	18
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	86
<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	89

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Rocketship Education (U282M170011)

## 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: 37

#### 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 provides student academic achievement data in math and reading for about 1,300 elementary grade students over a four year period, p. 9-10. This data shows increases during this period.

Several student achievement data tables are provided in Appendix G for California, NWEA, Wisconsin and Tennessee. Some subgroups show slight increases, Appx. G, p. e152-60. Examples:

- California, Grades 3-5, Low income ELA and math increased over 2 years
- Calif., Grades 3-5, Hispanic ELA and math increased over 2 years
- Calif., Gr. 3-5, Students with Disabilities ELA increased over 2 years
- NWEA RIT Low income math improved over 3 years

#### Weaknesses:

Some subgroup academic achievement scores did not increase such as:

- California Limited English math (declined from 16% to 13%, Hispanic math (no increase), students with disabilities math (no increase), page e153, Appx. G.
- ELA scores declined slightly for economically disadvantaged and ELL students over three years
- Student achievement data for Wisconsin and Tennessee are for only one year. It is not possible to determine whether these represent increases or decreases.
- During a three year period, the percent of students that were above the national norm on NWEA (in math and ELA) assessments showed little or no progress, Table 3, p. 10.

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,

### Sub Question

**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 provides positive California two year trend academic achievement data on the state test for several subgroups. For example, there was positive growth by economically disadvantaged and Hispanic students in ELA and math, p. e153.

Four year trend attendance data is provided (p. e158-59) for schools in three states and the averages are all positive, over 90 percent.

#### **Weaknesses:**

It was not possible to determine if Wisconsin and Tennessee state assessment data show student academic growth because they are for only one year, p. e156.

Neither applicant nor comparable state student attendance and retention data were located.

**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 never had any schools closed, revoked, terminated, nor any student safety issues, p. 30. They have also not encountered any statutory or regulatory compliance issues or any financial or operational management problems and have not experienced major problems with other related statutory and regulatory compliance matters.

#### **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: 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**

## Sub Question

surrounding public schools; and

### Strengths:

The applicant reports the percent of disadvantaged students served in four regions: Bay Area (CA), Milwaukee, Nashville and Washington, DC; these are: African Americans (15 %), low income (88%), ELL (54%) and students with disabilities (8%). Comparisons are provided for surrounding school districts. Rocketship serves a higher percent of Hispanics, low income and ELL.

The applicant provides a strong overall approach in serving and addressing disadvantaged students. Their success in serving disadvantaged students includes the following strategies: a comprehensive referral process, evidence-based interventions, individualized learning, online learning programs, highly trained education specialists and their response to interventions framework, p. 30-34.

### Weaknesses:

Rocketship serves a lower percent of students with disabilities compared to surrounding public schools, page 3.

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:

The applicant plan includes several effective strategies to enroll educationally disadvantaged students. These strategies include: proactive recruitment, visits, bilingual publications and recruiters, partnerships, social media, parent referrals, showcase events and direct outreach, p. 3.

The applicant will replicate effective strategies to recruit and enroll additional disadvantaged students such as multidisciplinary special education teams (p. 34), and differentiated lessons (ELL), p. 35.

### 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 evaluation plan (p. 17) and the logic model are generally aligned because they both include the long term Rocketship goals: college readiness, College Board assessments, college matriculation and development of quality Rocketship teachers, p. 39.

The applicant proposes to contract the project evaluation with SRI, a highly qualified organization who will conduct a quality and comprehensive evaluation, p. 39. Qualitative and quantitative methods will be used and are well described. These include site visits, interviews, focus groups, achievement and attendance data and other appropriate data collection strategies. SRI will compare student success, attendance and retention in replication schools to those with similar

students in established Rocketship schools.

The student outcomes are well articulated in the logic model and the evaluation plan because they include the following: eliminate achievement gap, increase student achievement, improve student attendance and maintain enrollment throughout the school year, p.37-38.

**Weaknesses:**

Some of the evaluation plan long term goals do not appear to be fully evident in the logic model; example: the logic model has three long-term goals (college completion, tutoring and quality teachers) and the evaluation plan describes identifies additional K-12 long-term goals such as closing achievement gap and student retention, p. 17-18 and p. 37-38. This is confusing.

**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 applicant provides strong objectives for the proposed project with demonstrated milestones to accomplish project tasks. The student outcomes are clear: eliminate achievement gap, increase student achievement, improve student attendance and maintain enrollment throughout the school year, p. e354.

The management plan includes clearly defined responsibilities and phases such as strategy and scalability, regional launch phase, greenlighting and school start-up, p. 46. Five thorough criteria are used to determine the likelihood of success in a region: need and community support, political environment, strong founding team, local financial environment, support and facilities team, p. 48. Table 12 provides a clear and sound overview of these phases and criteria along with timelines and milestones, p. 48. Table 13 further displays the major activities, position responsibilities and timelines, p. 50. Examples of major activities are: select project director, involve business and community partners, teacher professional development, select family engagement managers, employ new teachers and meet with stakeholders and parents.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

## Sub Question

- 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 descriptions (resumes and bios) of the qualifications of the CEO, Board Chair, Project Director, Community Engagement Officer, Program Officer, Financial Officer, Strategy/Scalability Director, Manager and other roles, P. e85-e119. Personnel have relevant training and professional experiences to manage and implement the proposed project.

### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**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 applicant has a track record and history of successfully starting and continuing over a dozen charter schools in California, Wisconsin Tennessee and Washington, DC, p. e148. This is positive evidence that they are likely to sustain the operation of their proposed two new schools after the grant ends. More than a dozen letters from state authorizers approving existing Rocketship schools are provided, p. 56-60.

### **Weaknesses:**

Letters or memos from the state entities responsible for approving public funds for charter schools were not located, p. 56-60.

The applicant financial and operating model lacks significant details because it does not provide clear financial information (i.e., revenue, expenditures, staffing, maintenance etc.) for each school over several years, post-CMO grant, p. 56-60.

**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 provides detailed and convincing evidence they are committed to serving certain diverse students such as over 80 percent of their existing students are low income which is above the national average of 50 percent, p. 1.

The Hispanic student enrollment data ranges from 68 to 85 percent over a five year period. This is convincing evidence that they are serving this population of students.

The applicant describes several effective recruitment strategies such as visits, bilingual publications and recruiters, partnerships, social media, parent referrals, showcase events and direct outreach, p. 3.

**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**

**(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 respond to this priority.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not respond to this priority.

**Reader's Score: 0**

---

**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/27/2017 01:07 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/27/2017 10:41 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Rocketship Education (U282M170011)

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	39
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	25	21
<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	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>88</b>
<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>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>91</b>

# Technical Review Form

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

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

Applicant: Rocketship Education (U282M170011)

## 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 has demonstrated some success in increasing academic achievement for all students and for each of the subgroups of students. The applicant's data indicate that students of all grade levels in their 16-school network demonstrated growth of greater than one year in both math and reading. (e29) ELLs and students of poverty made significant gains in both reading and math (e27). The application provides evidence of first year increases that exceed one year's growth in all four regions it serves (e28). The applicant includes evidence of achievement growth (graphic, e30). The application includes research that demonstrates the gains made by middle schoolers who are alumni of the program (e31) The applicant identifies multiple measures to demonstrate improvement in academic achievement (e41).

#### Weaknesses:

The application does not present growth for student with disabilities, both in terms of student growth and by comparison with the local district and the state in which the charter resides . The application provides no evidence of closing the achievement gap

The percent of students who are above the national norm on NWEA has not grown in three years of data (e30)

Reader's Score: 11

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 provides evidence that performance on statewide assessments exceeds average academic achievement results of similar students. Data on page e43 demonstrate that at least 60% of their students outperform similar students in local districts. On the California State Assessment, socioeconomically disadvantaged

### Sub Question

students had a greater percentage of students in both math and ELA that exceeded the state and local percentages (e43). Data are presented that show the large number of students who have moved from Beginner to Reclassified and ELL achievement scales (e44). In Wisconsin, the charter school outperformed the Milwaukee Public Schools in both math and ELA (e44). The applicant provides evidence that students at their schools outperform the schools they would have attended (similar students in local districts) (e43). A chart on page e154 displays growth years in reading and math. Students generally exceed one year's growth and some approach 2 years growth in one school year. Students in Milwaukee exceed the state and local proficiency percentages in all subgroups for math and for economically disadvantaged, Hispanic, and ELLs in ELA (e156). Students with disabilities gained over one year of growth for the past three years (e54).

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide evidence that compares attendance and retention rates either locally or statewide. Data demonstrate that achievement for students with disabilities in California does not exceed either the district or the state in ELA (e153). Students in Milwaukee did not outperform the state in ELA for the categories all students and Special Education. The state outperformed the Rocketship school in Milwaukee in the categories all students (e156.)

Reader's Score: 13

- 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 provides evidence that there have not been any revocations, financial problems, or significant issues related to student safety (e50-51). The applicant has successfully sustained other charter schools and has been approved at all renewals. The applicant presents clean audits for all programs in the three states (e50).

#### Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses observed for this criterion in the application.

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: 21

### 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**

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The applicant provides ample data on the composition of their enrollments. The applicant serves a greater percentage of their student bodies than the local system in their Bay Area schools for African American, Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students. In Milwaukee, Washington DC, and Nashville, Rocketship's enrollment of Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, exceeds the local system. In addition, The schools in Nashville and DC exceed enrollment percentages of African American students in their local systems. (e51).

### Weaknesses:

Students with disabilities make up a smaller percentage of students of enrollment than in all the districts they serve (e51). In Milwaukee, African American student make up a smaller percentage of the student body In DC, the public schools serve students who are Hispanic and who are in special education at higher rates than Rocketship.(e51). The applicant states that overall, the percent of the student body comprised of students with disabilities in the state and local systems far exceeded the enrollment percentages in all four regions (e51)

**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 program takes extra steps to recruit and enroll disadvantaged students (36). They have instituted a process to identify communities where the targeted students are most likely to enroll. All students are admitted on a first come/first serve or lottery basis without entrance criteria (38). The applicant provides evidence that parent outreach and word of mouth within the targeted communities have been an effective tool for enrollment (22, 37). Attending community and cultural events also aids in providing a wide outreach (22)

### Weaknesses:

The applicant is silent on outreach to students with disabilities. Other than state that the program will serve all students, including those with an IEP, there is little evidence. In addition, there is no discussion of how the school manages students who require high-intensity services who are selected in the lottery or enroll. The application also does little to mention any policies by which students may be removed from the program, either for academic or behavioral challenges, or intensity of services.

**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 an extensive explanation of the evaluation plan for the project (e59). The applicant provides a detailed logic model built around program replication (e354). Within the logic model, outputs are listed as measurable and specific.

The applicant provides a logic model that is specific to the outcomes proposed in this application (e354).

The proposal describes a high-quality evaluation performed by SRI (39). The applicant provides evidence of the high quality nature by including a previous evaluation that is data driven and demonstrates significant gains. The evaluation

uses both quantitative and qualitative data as part of its analysis.

**Weaknesses:**

The logic model, while thorough and detailed, does not address some specific elements of the grant. In neither the outputs nor the outcomes is there any mention of the recruitment, retention, and achievement for the target population of disadvantaged students. The proposed SRI evaluation, while impressive, is not strictly linked to the logic model. While it is clear that the proposed study will provide evidence of both successfully achieved outcomes and long-term goals, there are gaps (such as teacher efficacy as a result of the professional development) in the data provided. Also, the logic model and evaluation do not address how effective the applicant is at attracting the target population. Finally, the applicant's logic model and evaluation do little to address some of the earlier concerns around enrollment and achievement for students with disabilities.

**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: 20**

**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 provided ample evidence, both in terms of qualifications and experience, that the assembled team is capable of executing the activities in this proposal. All identified staff have extensive experience, and many have worked with the organization. They have laid out clear objectives with defined timelines and milestones to achieve their tasks.

**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 management team is highly qualified to perform the activities listed in the proposal. Many of the team members have been together for several years and have a track record of successfully implementing the proposal's objectives (56)

The proposal's staffing model leverages current centralized management functions provided by the operator. As a result, fewer staff are needed and the leveraged functions have a great deal of pertinent experience. (57).

In particular, the chief executive officer has extensive experience in successfully operating charter schools that target economically disadvantaged communities with increased achievement, especially when compared to the

### Sub Question

schools to which the students would have attended if they hadn't enrolled in a Rocketship school (e86.) Each of the key personnel are highly qualified to manage this project.

#### Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses observed in this section.

**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 applicant provides an extensive multi-year financial model (e77). The grant activities allow the operator to scale up to a point of sustainability, better ensuring the long term success of the program (e79) Enrollment projections support ongoing sustainability of the sites affected directly by this application while the grant provides gap funding needed during the ramp up period (e76). The applicant clearly describes the allocations of revenue and expenses demonstrating that 85% of the funds flow to the sites, allowing each site to tailor its programming to its community (e204.)

#### Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses observed in this section.

**Reader's Score:** 5

### 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:

This proposal demonstrates an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining racially and socioeconomically diverse students. The applicant's current enrollment is 87.5% students from low-income families (e18.) The applicant "intentionally create(s) schools in neighborhoods where the vast majority of families subsist on low and very low incomes" (e21.) For the new school, the applicant plans to recruit students with visits to community sites and direct outreach to families. The application describes recruitment methods of employing local community members, partnering with community agencies and heritage groups, and hosting recruitment events (e23). The applicant will translate materials into foreign languages to attract language-minority students and ELLs (e24).

#### Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses 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

(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 application did not address this priority.

**Weaknesses:**

The application did not address this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

---

**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/27/2017 10:41 AM