

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/17/2017 12:07 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Success Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170009)

**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	39
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	25	21
<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	19
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	85
<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	88

# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Charter Management Organization - 5: 84.282M

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

Applicant: Success Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170009)

## 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 consistently scored high on state assessments throughout its 11-year history (pg. e29-30). Although ELA and Math scores dropped in 2013, the Applicant explains that the decrease was due the State's implementation of Common Core Standards and the Applicant has again increased student academic achievement since that time (pg. e324). Overall, the Applicant has improved from scoring in the top 3% and top 6% in math and ELA respectively in 2009, to now the top 0.3% in Math and 1.5% in ELA (pg. 30).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

Overall, the Applicant's academic achievement results exceed statewide averages. In 2016, students with disabilities and ELL students drastically outperformed state averages (pg. e36). Attendance rates are higher than the citywide and last recorded state average, and the retention rate is higher than citywide averages (pg. e37-38). In particular, the retention rates for students with disabilities and ELL students are especially high, at 91% and 96% respectively (pg. e38).

#### Weaknesses:

Attendance rates are not broken out by subgroup, making it difficult to evaluate the extent to which attendance rates for subgroups have exceeded average local and state results (pg. e37, 93-96).

**Sub Question**

**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 undergoes annual audits and states that it has not had any significant compliance issues or violations within the past three years (e40). The Applicant has had a 100% record of charter renewal and has not had to close any of its schools (pg. 69).

**Weaknesses:**

The Applicant notes that the Comptroller's 2016 two-year audit criticized some of the Applicant's practices and that the Applicant refuted these claims with a formal response; however, the Applicant did not provide any evidence in the Application to support this claim (pg. e40). The Applicant also stated that it has not had any significant compliance issues within the past three years, but does not offer insight as to the implied compliance issues occurring prior to that time (pg. e40). It would have been helpful for the Applicant to provide some evidence supporting its claims of compliance.

**Reader's Score: 11**

**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**

**Strengths:**

The Applicant serves comparable rates of students qualifying for Free and Reduced Price Lunch compared with the citywide average (pg. e41).

**Weaknesses:**

The Applicant serves slightly lower rates of students with disabilities and ELL students when compared with citywide averages (pg. e41).

**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 added ELL identification to its weighted lottery policy and stated that it intends to continue to serve students from low-performing, high-poverty districts by locating strategically in these neighborhoods and through its marketing practices targeted to specialized populations (pg. e22-24, 89). The Applicant provides examples of its methods to recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students (pg. e24).

#### Weaknesses:

The plan for expansion does not explicitly describe how the Applicant will seek to increase its special education rates to be more in line with citywide averages.

Reader's Score: 13

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Evaluation Plan

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

#### Strengths:

The Applicant provides a logic model which includes both short-term outcomes and long-term impacts (pg. e43). The Applicant describes goals and objectives for academic performance, attendance, and retention, which relate to the short-term outcomes set forth in the logic model and the overall intended outcomes of the proposed grant project (pg. e43, e68-69). The Applicant also includes a goal relating to self-sustainability on public per-pupil funding for each expanding school by the time the school reaches full enrollment (pg. 69).

#### Weaknesses:

The logic model provided is minimally detailed and does not describe the methods of evaluation to be used or clear inputs and outputs (pg. e43). The Applicant does later describe various goals and objectives which further detail some of the performance measures to be used, which seem to relate to the short-term outcomes set described in the logic model; however, in particular, it is not clear how the Applicant intends to measure its short-term outcome of "Scholars develop a love of learning and academic persistence" (pg. e43, 68-69). In addition, the Applicant does not describe goals relating to expanding its enrollment across subgroups, or provide the actual plans and processes for evaluating the performance measures (e.g., parties responsible, measures for each indicator).

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—

Reader's Score: 19

### 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

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The Applicant defines responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing major project tasks, stemming back to 110 weeks prior to school opening when the principal enters the principal-in-training program (pg. e65-67).

### Weaknesses:

The milestones provided do not describe how the project will be accomplished within budget (pg. e65-57).

**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 senior team responsible for the oversight and development of the replication and expansion is clearly very experienced and the Applicant has a demonstrated history of success in replicating and expanding its schools, growing from just one school in 2006 to now 41 schools serving nearly 14,000 students (pg. e21, e70-75). With this history, the Applicant has demonstrated an ability to manage projects of this size and scope.

### 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 Applicant supplements start-up costs through philanthropy but has a model in which each school is self-sufficient on public funding by the time each expanding school reaches full enrollment (pg. e76-77). In FY17, the Applicant expects to raise approximately \$43.5 million from private donations and fundraising to support its five-year growth plan (pg. e77). The Applicant opens new schools with just kindergarten and first grade, and grows both vertically and horizontally each year thereafter (pg. e78). This gradual model helps ensure that operations and academics are implemented with fidelity. Additionally, the Applicant had more than 20,600 applications for only 3,228 seats this year, which is evidence that demand and support for the expansion are high (pg. e78).

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**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:**

The applicant has a proven track record of serving racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies. Across its 41 campuses, 74% of the Applicant's student body qualifies for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, and 93% are students of color (pg. e17). The Applicant seeks to recruit racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies by locating in high-poverty neighborhoods (pg. e22-23), intentionally marketing to specialized populations and in a manner that is effective in reaching those populations (pg. e23-24), and through use of a weighted lottery for students residing in-district and for ELL students (pg. e24, 89). Additionally, the Applicant demonstrates high scholar retention rates across all campuses, with most campuses in the high-eighty, low-ninety percent retention rate for the 2015-16 school year (pg. e95).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses 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:**

Not answered by Applicant.

**Weaknesses:**

Not answered by Applicant.

Reader's Score: 0

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/17/2017 12:07 PM



Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/17/2017 12:07 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Success Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170009)

**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	40
<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	18
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	89
<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	92

# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Charter Management Organization - 5: 84.282M

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

Applicant: Success Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170009)

## 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: 40

#### 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 proposal demonstrates how the Success Academy has a track record of student high performance on assessments. For example, the proposal lists the Success Academy's track record of students performing highly on ELA and Math assessments. (p. 11). This track record goes back 8 years and demonstrates more students each year performing highly (p. 11).

The proposal also makes comparisons between Success Academy schools and some of the wealthier schools in the area providing a favorable contrast. (p. 14).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

The proposal communicates that Success Academy's African American and Hispanic students perform better than white students from New York City on the state assessment for math and ELA. (p. 16).

In comparing the schools' performance on math and ELA achievement tests, the Success Academy schools outperformed the city and the state averages. (p. 11-13).

A similar comparison demonstrates that students with disabilities and ELL students perform higher than whites students in New York City and the state in math and ELA on the state test. (p. 17).

#### Sub Question

##### **Weaknesses:**

The proposal does not appear to share the attendance data and retention data by sub group, which would confirm the impact that the school has been having on educationally disadvantaged students.

**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 proposal states that no SA school has had any significant compliance issues or violations in the past three years. In addition, the NYC comptroller, through an audit, concluded that SA's funds were spent only on educating children. SUNY, the charter authorizer has given SA a "clean bill of health" when it comes to their financial practices. (p. 21).

##### **Weaknesses:**

The final audit carried out by the comptroller did include critiques of SA's practices.

Also, it is not clear why the school's claim of compliance only goes back for three years even though they have been open for much longer.

**Reader's Score:** 12

#### **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 proposal provides the demographic breakdowns of the students attending SA. The percentage of students that the schools serve that are African American or Hispanic is higher than the city. The percentage of students with disabilities or ELLs are slightly less than that of the city and the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch is about the same as the city. Overall, the proposal conveys that the school serves a great many educationally disadvantaged students. (p. 22).

##### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

**Sub Question**

**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 proposal states that there are some recruitment initiatives to attract a higher percentage of ELL students, such as producing bilingual flyers, non-English application forms and a weighted lottery preference for ELLs. (p. 22). This demonstrates that there is some level of an intentional strategy to reach EL students. Moreover, the proposal states where they will specifically send flyers, outreach materials and mailings (p. 5), which demonstrates that the school has an awareness how they wish to target families with ELL students.

**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 proposal includes a logic model on page 24, which includes short term and long term outcomes. This suggests that the evaluation can be guided by these intended outcomes. The proposal also includes goals, objectives and performance measures to further guide the evaluation of the schools. (p. 49-50).

**Weaknesses:**

The proposal does not make clear who will be responsible for aspects of the evaluation plan, such as collecting and storing the data.

The proposal does not specify how the outcomes of the evaluation plan will specifically be measured (p. 24).

**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—**

**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**

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

On page 46-48, the proposal provides a timeline of important activities with milestones. In addition, the plan states who will be responsible for carrying out the activity at the designated time (p. 46-48).

### Weaknesses:

The timeline does not provide enough specificity to understand when activities will begin or be completed.

Reader's Score: 3

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

### Strengths:

The proposal states, who the leadership team will be for the project (p. 52-56). This team possesses extensive experience and expertise to carry out the work in the proposal. In addition, the team's expertise represents the needed diversity to carry out all of the functions of the schools.

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were 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 proposal presents projections that show the expectation of sustaining the schools financially five years into the future. This is primarily sustained by the public money received for education. (p. 58). In addition, SA has been successful in the past in raising grant money from foundations, which suggests that they have the capacity to do so in the future to help with needed startup costs. (p. 59). The proposal has listed potential funders that the school can approach for future funding opportunities (p. 59).

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

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:**

In order to recruit a diverse student body, the school has produced its application in multiple languages. Moreover, they have engaged in extensive bilingual outreach. (p. 4-5). Their current schools are recognized for their diversity. (p. 9)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses 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:**

This priority was not addressed.

**Weaknesses:**

This priority was not addressed.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 07/17/2017 12:07 PM



Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/17/2017 12:07 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Success Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170009)

**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	37
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	25	22
<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	17
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	82
<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	85



# Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Charter Management Organization - 5: 84.282M

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

Applicant: Success Academy Charter Schools, Inc. (U282M170009)

## 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 stated that across the network math proficiency increased by 1% of tested scholars and ELA proficiency increased from by 14%. (e36)

Academic performance data was provided for multiple school sites for ELA and Math. The data provided demonstrates that SA schools show improved proficiency year over year from 2015 to 2016 (e318-e324).

#### Weaknesses:

Although the applicant indicated that academic performance in reading and math improved for all students, no data was provided to demonstrate the extent to which students in subgroups improved.

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:

ESA school retention rates for students with disabilities and ELLs are provided and are higher than the city average. (e38)

The applicant indicated that because no SA schools have 12th grade students, no graduation rate data is available for comparison to state averages (e97)

### Sub Question

#### Weaknesses:

Data specific to educationally disadvantaged students was not provided in the attendance rate, retention rate data. (e93-96)

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:

Narrative indicates no compliance issues or violations in the past three years (e40).

#### Weaknesses:

Applicant does not indicate whether any of its schools have been closed or charters revoked. Record of compliance is only for three years, applicant has operated schools for 11 years (since 2006) this leaves 8 years unaddressed by the applicant. (e40)

Additionally, the applicant reported that a two-year audit of SA was completed by the NYC Comptroller in December 2016. The applicant indicated that the final audit report included critiques of SA's practices. Although SA claims that the critiques are groundless, and has provided a formal response refuting the critiques, these issues are considered in the scoring for this element. (e40)

Reader's Score: 11

### 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: 22

### 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:

Statements and data regarding citywide percentages of students with disabilities, ELL, and FRPL were provided. The applicant demonstrated that the schools it operates serve comparable percentages of educationally disadvantaged students when compared to the average served by other schools in the city. (e41)

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 describes its process for locating facilities, which focuses on areas that have lacked quality school choice options. The applicant indicates that application information and materials are provided in a variety of languages to ensure a broad scope of families are reached. (e22-e24)

A copy of SA's admission policy was also provided. The document indicates that recruitment efforts are designed to reach all parents in the community. Emphasis is placed on ELL students through weighted lottery preference for ELL students. (e88-e89)

### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not describe a process for recruiting students with disabilities.

Reader's Score: 12

## 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 narrative provided by the applicant identifies contain quantifiable outcomes. Some of the identified outcomes align with outcomes of the grant project. (e68) Specifically, the applicant states that it has set the following academic goals: The percentage of low income SA scholars scoring at Levels 3 or 4 will equal or exceed wealthy New York school districts.

The percentage of special needs and ELL students at SA scoring at Levels 3 or 4 will be greater than the percentages of surrounding schools.

The applicant provided a timelines and milestones (e46-48) that identifies the timeline, people responsible, and specific goals and actions.

#### Weaknesses:

Although the applicant provided an evaluation plan, a logic model that identified key components of the proposed process, product, strategy, and describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes, was not found in the documents provided. Without a logic model it is not possible to determine whether it is aligned with the evaluation plan.

Outcomes and impacts are identified (e43) however no quantitative or qualitative data were identified to evaluate the proposed project. Outcomes were general and not specific to the project, but rather SA system goals for all the schools it operates.

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—

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:

A table identifying timelines and goals was provided. (e65-67)

#### Weaknesses:

The timelines and goals are general and not specific to this project, but rather identify timelines and goals for currently operating schools. No budget and/or financial goals or targets are described to indicate how grant funds will be used as part of proposed project. (e65-67)

Reader's Score: 2

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:

Leadership team members identified have relevant expertise and experience to successfully launch a replication school. (e70-e74). The founder and CEO has provided oversight of the growth of SA from one school over ten years ago. The Chief Academic Officer began with SA as a classroom teacher and overtime has advanced within SA to oversee all areas of academics. In addition to holding CPA certification for over 40 years, the CFO has experience in both private and public companies.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified

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).

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

Budget overview demonstrates financial capacity beyond project period. (e77)

Applicant indicates that philanthropy is used for start-up costs (e77) Specific foundation partners are identified (e78)

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

Applicant describes intentional processes for creating diverse communities – including weighted admission policies for ELL. (e24). The applicant indicates that it seeks out neighborhoods to create mixed income and integrated school communities and provides the enrollment application in multiple languages (e23). This demonstrates an intentional plan for developing a diverse body of students at the school.

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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>

by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) (see the Department's June 7, 2012 guidance entitled, "ESEA Flexibility," at [www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility](http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility), and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's December 18, 2015 Dear Colleague Letter at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/transition-dcl.pdf>).

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

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant did not address this priority.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address this priority.

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

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