

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools Inc. (S282M200003)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	40
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	20
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	28
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	9
Sub Total	100	97
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
CPP 3: High School Students		
1. High School Students	2	2
CPP4: Serve Native American Students		
1. Native American Students	4	0
CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools		
1. Reopening Schools	2	0
Sub Total	8	2
Total	108	99

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - FY20 CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools Inc. (S282M200003)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources

1. 1. Quality of the Eligible Applicant and Adequacy of Resources

In determining the quality of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 40

Sub

1. a. The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments, 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 served by other public schools in the State.

Strengths:

The applicant provides an overall summary and detailed school-level summary report of the 19 active charter schools/contracts that it currently operates in the Houston metro area (Appendix E page 2-4). These schools serve students in grades 6-12, have a student enrollment ranging from 155-1,051, 71.4% economically disadvantaged students, more than 90% minority student enrollment (mostly Hispanic students), a range of 11.4%-53.6% of students being English Language Learners, and a range of 3.2%-9.4% receiving special education services (Appendix E page 2-4).

Compared to the Houston ISD and the state of Texas, YES Prep serves higher percentages of economically disadvantaged, African-American, Hispanic, English language learners, and students with intellectual disabilities (page 30-31).

The applicant provides a detailed STAAR academic achievement results for both middle and high school students for all students and by sub-groups in 14 subject areas, including math, ELA, science, and social studies. The data charts show strong academic performance comparisons for the most recent school year with YES Prep students meeting or surpassing Houston ISD and the state of Texas for almost all subjects for economically disadvantages and ELL students (page 18-19).

The applicant provides comprehensive school report card summaries for the past three school years that compare each YES Prep school to district and state metrics for attendance rates, race, student sub-groups, mobility rates, class sizes, financial information, state assessment results by grade level, subject, and race, dropout rates, graduation rates, college and career readiness, and standardized test scores. Based on the most recent data available, YES Prep surpassed both Houston ISD and the state of Texas on several state-wide assessments in reading and math, particularly among English language learners (page 34-35, Appendix F page 70-225).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. **b. The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation.**

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that they have not had any school closures or charter revocations in their 19-year history, and all 19 schools are currently in operation without any restrictions. In addition, the applicant is clearly prepared and presents the procedures that they would follow in the event of a school closure (page 24, Appendix H page 35).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

3. **c. The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter.**

Strengths:

The applicant has not presented any significant issues in compliance, financial management, or operational management. They have maintained an active and accredited status, received Unqualified Opinions for the past four years from independent audits, received the highest possible state financial rating every year except one year out of 19 years, and have a low federal financial risk level (page 24-25).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

4. **d. The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides all financial information including a detailed snapshot with information about each school in the charter network and their per student expenditures (Appendix G).

The applicant holds itself to a more stringent debt ratio and cash-on-hand financial targets than bank, state, and federal standards and provides a comprehensive financial summary for two fiscal years (page 26-27).

The applicant provides a comprehensive multi-year financing and operating model highlighting project revenue, capital fundraising, and income for the next 10 years, with more than 80% of their revenue coming from state and federal funding sources (page 27-28).

Sub

The applicant clearly demonstrates the potential for strong continued support for the project after federal funding ends, in that they have raised nearly one-third of the funds from an [REDACTED] fundraising campaign in less than one year. These funds include donations from individuals, foundations, and fundraising events (page 29).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students

1. 2. Significance of Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

The Secretary considers the significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students for the proposed project. In determining 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, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

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

Strengths:

For the most recent school year, the applicant provides detailed comparisons with Houston ISD and the state of Texas on percentages of educationally disadvantaged students (economically disadvantaged, African-American, Hispanic, English language learners, special education, at-risk youth, and students with disabilities). Compared to the Houston ISD and the state of Texas, YES Prep serves higher percentages of economically disadvantaged, African-American, Hispanic, English language learners, and students with intellectual disabilities (page 30-31, Appendix E).

The applicant clearly indicates how it is serving educationally disadvantaged student by providing a detailed three-year summary table of percentages of sub-groups, and it appears that the applicant is increasingly serving more educationally disadvantaged students, given that the percentages of English language learners and special education students have been increasing over time for the past three school years (page 30).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

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

Sub

students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.

Strengths:

The applicant intentionally recruits and serves educationally disadvantaged students and will continue to serve at least 80% educationally disadvantaged students based on growth trends and demographics of the surrounding school areas (page 29-30). There is a detailed plan for recruitment and outreach, including multi-language community outreach to recruit English Language Learner students. The applicant also plans to recruit educationally disadvantaged students by purchasing Facebook ads targeted to local zip codes (page 38-39).

The applicant clearly describes how they will effectively target and serve English language learners through their elementary school’s bilingual education program and its components, including having at least two bilingual classrooms for each grade level. On the secondary level, the applicant details strategies and activities such as the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) at each school and the requirement that all English teachers become certified in teaching ESL (page 33-34).

The applicant clearly discusses high quality and specialized programs to effectively serve autistic students and other students with disabilities, including the YES Student Transition and Enrichment Program (Y-STEP) as well as the Adult Community Transition (ACT) program for students older than 18 years (page 36-38).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan

1. 3. Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan for the Proposed Project

The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 28

Sub

1. 1. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

The applicant presents a high-level table of its five strategic priorities and core charter school model components that are specifically aligned to evidence-based references and initiatives (page 43).

The applicant clearly describes its comprehensive 5 Pillars of College Initiatives Program for high school students which is based on a 2013 randomized control trial and has been validated for effectiveness by the What Works Clearinghouse (page 5-7, 43-45).

Sub

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not adequately present a high-quality comprehensive conceptual framework that clearly and thoroughly explains the project theory of action or present evidence of effectiveness for all students served by the project, not just high school students (page 47).

Reader's Score: 3

- 2. 2. 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 project, as described in the applicant's logic model, and that will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the grant period.**

Strengths:

The project logic model presents a detailed and thorough set of inputs and activities, processes, outputs, and short- and long-term outcomes, results, and impacts. The five project outcomes and 28 performance measures are clearly aligned to the logic model outputs, outcomes, and results (page 48, Appendix H page 8-9).

The applicant presents a data collection and analysis table that is clearly aligned with the objective performance measures and includes the data tools to be used and frequency of data collection for each of the types of quantitative data that will be collected (page 50).

The applicant proposes several research-based process evaluation methods of collecting qualitative data and establishing logic model fidelity throughout the grant period, including semi-structured interviews, site visits, and reviewing activity logs with project staff members (page 51-52).

The provides a detailed discussion of the outcomes evaluation, including the analysis designs and methods that will be used, potential threats to internal and external validity, and relevant control variables to be included in multivariate analyses (page 53-54).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 3. 3. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

Strengths:

The goals, objectives, and performance measures of the project are closely aligned to the logic model, and each of the five project objectives have 4-8 specific and measurable performance measures with baseline data and performance targets for each of the five years of the project (page 47-50).

The applicant clearly thought through and projected specific, achievable, and reasonable year-over-year increases in their performance measures for each project objective that will more than adequately culminate in the results and impacts presented in the project logic model (page 47-50).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Sub

Reader's Score: 5

4. 4. The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

Strengths:

The applicant includes a thorough explanation of how annual reports will be used to measure the achievement of project objectives, how the development of an Executive Dashboard will monitor performance measures and outcomes on a bimonthly basis, and how information from the process and outcomes evaluations will present detailed information about the effectiveness of project strategies and initiatives (page 54-55).

In the last year of the grant, the applicant plans to publish a talent white paper that catalogs the best practices they have learned in employee inclusivity, retention, and development. This may include lessons learned from implementing the detailed plans for recruitment, marketing, and hiring of teachers and school personnel through their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plan (page 43, 58, 59, Appendix H).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

1. 4. Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

In addition, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. 1. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed overview of its CMO management and operations structure, including brief descriptions of its six school support departments, and highlighting the fact that more than 50% of the executive leadership team consists of gender and racial minorities (page 56).

The applicant provides detailed resumes of key leadership personnel and school-level staff that highlights relevant charter school experience and training. Nearly all of the YES Prep personnel and staff have more than 10 years of relevant education management and administration experience, with at least half of the staff having at least 5 years of experience with YES Prep, either as teachers, administrators, and/or management positions (Appendix B).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. 2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates plans for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement of the project through annual process and outcomes evaluations from an independent evaluator, quarterly goals-based evaluation from the internal Data and Analytics team, bimonthly reporting in the Executive Dashboard, as well as monthly meetings of various steering committees (page 42, 43, 45, 52, 60).

The applicant provides a detailed data collection and analysis table that highlights the project outcomes data that will be collected, the data type, the source of the data, and the frequency of collection with clear aligned to the project goals and objectives (page 50).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not adequately discuss how project personnel, particularly parents and teachers, will provide feedback, be incorporated into the collection and review of project outcomes data, and use the data feedback to continually improve the project's process and make course corrections (page 59).

Reader's Score: 4

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP 3: High School Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: High School Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must propose to --

- a. Replicate or expand high-quality charter schools to serve high school students, including educationally disadvantaged students;
- b. Prepare students, including educationally disadvantaged students, in those schools for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions through activities such as, but not limited to, accelerated learning programs (including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses and programs, dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college high schools), college counseling, career and technical education programs, career counseling, internships, work-based learning programs (such as apprenticeships), assisting students in the college admissions and financial aid application processes, and preparing students to take standardized college admissions tests;
- c. Provide support for students, including educationally disadvantaged students, who graduate from those schools and enroll in postsecondary education institutions in persisting in, and attaining a degree or certificate from, such institutions, through activities such as, but not limited to, mentorships, ongoing assistance with the financial aid application process, and establishing or strengthening peer support systems for such students attending the same institution; and
- d. Propose one or more project-specific performance measures, including aligned leading indicators or other interim milestones, that will provide valid and reliable information about the applicant's progress in preparing students, including educationally disadvantaged

students, for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions and in supporting those students in persisting in and attaining a degree or certificate from such institutions. An applicant addressing this priority and receiving a CMO grant must provide data that are responsive to the measure(s), including performance targets, in its annual performance reports to the Department.

Note: For purposes of this priority, postsecondary education institutions include institutions of higher education, as defined in section 8101(29) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA), and one-year training programs that meet the requirements of section 101(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA).

Strengths:

The applicant currently operates 14 high schools in which more than 80% of students are economically and/or educationally disadvantaged, and they are proposing to expand three high schools and to replicate one high school with students that have a similar demographic and academic profile (page 4, Figure 1.4).

The applicant clearly describes its college preparation program in which high school students have access to Advanced Placement courses and exams, college counseling, standardized test preparation, and career and technical education programs (page 5-8).

The applicant provides a thorough discussion of its alumni support programs, in that YES Prep alumni are offered ongoing support and coaching throughout college such as senior seminars, college visits, scholarships, and one-on-one coaching (page 7).

The applicant clearly presents five project-specific performance measures with annual target increases related to preparing high school students for post-secondary education that are aligned with the project logic model (page 49).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP4: Serve Native American Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Opening a New Charter School or Replicating or Expanding a High-quality Charter School to Serve Native American Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

a. Propose to open a new charter school, or replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that—

- 1. Utilizes targeted outreach and recruitment in order to serve a high proportion of Native American students, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws;**
- 2. Has a mission and focus that will address the unique educational needs of Native American students, such as through the use of instructional programs and teaching methods that reflect and preserve Native American language, culture, and history; and**
- 3. Has or will have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Native American organizations located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school;**

b. Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Native American organization located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school; and

c. Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Native American organization(s) from which the applicant has received a letter of support in a timely, active, and ongoing manner with respect to the development and implementation of the educational program at the charter school.

Strengths:

The applicant did not address CPP4.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address CPP4.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools

1. Competitive Preference Priority 5: Reopening Academically Poor-Performing Schools as Charter Schools.

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

a. Demonstrate past success working with one or more academically poor-performing public schools or schools that previously were designated as persistently lowest-achieving schools or priority schools under the former School Improvement Grant program or in States that exercised ESEA flexibility, respectively, under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; and

b. Propose to use grant funds under this program to restart one or more academically poor-performing public schools as charter schools during the project period by—

1. Replicating one or more high-quality charter schools based on a successful charter school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success; and

2. Targeting a demographically similar student population in the replicated charter schools as was served by the academically poor-performing public schools

Strengths:

The applicant did not address CPP5.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address CPP5.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools Inc. (S282M200003)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	40
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	20
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	28
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	9
Sub Total	100	97
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
CPP 3: High School Students		
1. High School Students	2	1
CPP4: Serve Native American Students		
1. Native American Students	4	0
CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools		
1. Reopening Schools	2	0
Sub Total	8	1
Total	108	98

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - FY20 CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools Inc. (S282M200003)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources

1. 1. Quality of the Eligible Applicant and Adequacy of Resources

In determining the quality of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 40

Sub

1. a. The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments, 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 served by other public schools in the State.

Strengths:

The application provides extensive data demonstrating student academic achievement growth. Data presented demonstrates success in significantly increasing academic achievement results of educationally disadvantaged students compared with Houston ISD and the state of Texas (e42-43). Specifically, in the most recent state assessment scores, applicant schools earned an A (93, Exemplary) in School Progress. This rating is earned when at least 76% of students have made a year's worth of academic gains or the district's achievement is far above average compared to similar districts (e38). In addition, their B (80) rating in Academic Growth substantiates student growth over time, including narrowing the achievement gap. Student attendance and retention rate was 96.4% for SY18-19 and significant progress in retaining students is noted in the application- from 82% in SY06-07 to 91% in SY18-19 (e44). Application data provide evidence that annual graduation rates are higher than, and dropout rates are lower than, Houston ISD and state averages (e45). In addition, application data demonstrate among the Class of 2018, 68% of graduates earned a 3 or better on at least one AP exam compared with 30% statewide and 24% nationwide. Finally, in the area of college attainment, the application details and provides data demonstrating that applicant students are graduating from college at four times the rate of their peers with similar economic backgrounds nationwide (e36-47).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. b. The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or

Sub

regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation.

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates no significant compliance or management issues since initial charter reward on March 2, 2000 at any of their 19 charter schools. There is no evidence of compliance issues related to closure, charter revocation due to statutory or regulatory compliance, or affiliation revocation or termination, including voluntary disaffiliation. The applicant details policies and procedures to assist students to attend other high-quality schools in the event of a school closure or loss of charter (e48).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 3. c. The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter.**

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates no significant compliance or management issues since initial charter reward on March 2, 2000 at any of their 19 charter schools, including in the areas of student safety and finance. In the FY2019 Financial Statement Audit, neither material weaknesses nor significant deficiencies were found. Applicant audits have received Unqualified Opinions for the past four years. The application documents an A-Superior rating which considers cost ratios, debt loads, financial oversight, and error-free reporting (e49-50).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 4. d. The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.**

Strengths:

The application sufficiently documents evidence supporting the project after Federal funding ends. The applicant provides a multi-year financial and operating model (e51- e53). The applicant's Board of Directors and Executive Leadership Team provide close and appropriate financial oversight, supporting statutory and regulatory compliance (e50). The application provides evidence of strong philanthropic support for school growth, capital projects, innovation, and program enhancement (e53). The applicant's project will grow new schools one or two grade levels at a time, leading to a ramp-up period before achieving financial sustainability within four years. For example, the applicant launched a five-year fundraising campaign in August 2019 and has already raised \$ [REDACTED]. Letters of support are provided in the application (e51-53).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students

1. 2. Significance of Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

The Secretary considers the significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students for the proposed project. In determining 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, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

1. 1. The extent to which charter schools currently operated or managed by the applicant serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools or, in the case of virtual charter schools, at rates comparable to public schools in the State.

Strengths:

The application thoroughly documents current educationally disadvantaged student achievement data demonstrating rates at or above comparable surrounding public schools (e46-47). For example, Figures 2.25-2.27 show a greater percentage of African American and Hispanic students take AP exams than these subgroups both district and statewide. Also, a significantly higher percentage of applicant students earn a passing score. Among the Class of 2018, 68% of applicant graduates earned a 3 or better on at least one AP exam compared with 30% statewide and 24% nationwide. The application also presents documentation comparing students with disabilities enrollment percentages with surrounding public schools. Although the applicant percentage of students with disabilities is slightly lower than surrounding public schools, the applicant percentage of students with disabilities has increased by 1% over the past three years (SY17-18 - SY19-20) (e54). The applicant's English learner percentage is greater than surrounding traditional school districts and three times greater than Houston ISDs (e53-e62).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. 2. The quality of the plan to ensure that the charter schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.

Strengths:

The application provides sufficient evidence of effective recruiting, enrolling, and serving educationally disadvantaged students. The application notes aggressive, systematic, and multi-language community outreach (e15-16). For example, the applicant partners with local community organizations (e.g. Families Empowered), pitches news stories to local print and television media, staff participate in community events to explain admission policies and lottery procedures to the public, staff canvas communities with flyers, and recruitment events are held at high-traffic community-based locations (e62-63). Social media is used to target zip codes in which schools will be located. The applicant will use a random, automated lottery (e63). Applicants are not prioritized due to race or ethnicity, socioeconomic status or special needs. Every applicant school has a full-time Student Support Counselor whose primary role is to ensure all students receive the academic support and wraparound services they need to be successful (e56). The applicant provides sufficient detail for supporting educationally disadvantaged students. These include tutorial, compensatory, and behavioral support services. For example, the applicant has established

Sub

a short term and flexible disciplinary alternative education program called Thrive (e56).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan

1. 3. Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan for the Proposed Project

The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 28

Sub

1. 1. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

The application includes research to support a theory of action (e68-69). The applicant cites a 2013 study conducted by Caroline Hoxby and Sarah Turner, providing evidence that the core YES Prep practice – intensive college counseling – leads to the relevant outcome of increasing college attainment, particularly college acceptance and college matriculation (e68).

Weaknesses:

The application addressed a theory of action in terms of project goals and not a conceptual framework (e71). It is hinted at throughout the application but an actual framework is missing (e420-421, Slides entitled, "Leading Houston Forward" and "What's New in FY20).

Reader's Score: 3

2. 2. 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 project, as described in the applicant's logic model, and that will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

The application provides evidence of comprehensive methods of evaluation (e71-78). Objective performance measures are clearly stated along with intended outcomes of the proposed project. Project specific performance measures are aligned to the application logic model. The logic model contains both quantitative and qualitative data points which will produce data during and by the end of the grant period (e71-79). For example, a six member Evaluation Team will systematically conduct both a process and an outcomes evaluation of the project as well as continuous monitoring (e71-79, Attachment H, p. 52).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 3. 3. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

Strengths:

The application appropriately and clearly identifies goals, objectives, and outcomes. Each outcome is measurable and realistic. For example, the applicant objective, "Increase the percentage of college-ready students by 20% by the end of the grant period" is aligned with four performance measures which include progress over the five year grant period in state assessments, both reading and math achievement gains, and percent of students who agree/strongly agree with "Most of my teachers do not let me give up when the work gets hard" (e70-73).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

- 4. 4. The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.**

Strengths:

The application provides exhaustive details for both implementation and evaluation of the proposed project (e74-78). The applicant's Data and Analytics Team will conduct quarterly goals-based evaluation to ensure the project remains on track and fulfills grant reporting requirements. In addition, the applicant has hired an external evaluator, Durand Research and Marketing Associates, LLC, to conduct both a process and outcomes evaluation of the project. Findings will also be reported to the public, charter schools, CMOs, traditional public schools, and other entities to guide replication of project activities and strategies (e79).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

1. 4. Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

In addition, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. 1. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The applicant supplies names and information relating to key personnel and provides a summary of their qualifications (e79-83, e697-700). For example, the application narrative states proposed Project Co-Director experience which includes serving in senior leadership roles in Texas's two largest traditional school districts and leading aggressive human resources turnaround efforts (e697). The application includes a system-level organizational chart (e694). Each key personnel are discussed in terms of how their training and experience is relevant to the project. Proposed project personnel training and experience align well with project goals. For example, the other Project Co-Director's experience includes overseeing the planning and launching of Thrive, the first charter disciplinary alternative education program in Texas, as well as directing a turnaround initiative resulting in "notably improved teacher satisfaction and the school's highest scores in standardized tests and AP exams" (e698). The application details internal leadership development for school leaders, teachers, and non-instructional staff. The applicant has launched a comprehensive DEI plan (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) in SY 2019-20 that embeds DEI beliefs throughout all levels of the organization from Board to students (e697-700).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. 2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The application presents an extensive plan for how data is received (e45). The application briefly explains that data will be used to make mid-course correction. The proposed Executive Dashboard, updated at least bimonthly, provides needed data feedback for ongoing reflection and adjustments (e69-76).

Weaknesses:

Although the application presents an extensive plan for how data is received internally, there is limited information concerning making data public to stakeholders. For example, the application states the proposed Dashboard will prompt frequent discussions between the Evaluation Team and Project Co-Directors but doesn't address how this will inform all stakeholders (e76-77).

Reader's Score: 4

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP 3: High School Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: High School Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must propose to --

- a. Replicate or expand high-quality charter schools to serve high school students, including educationally disadvantaged students;
- b. Prepare students, including educationally disadvantaged students, in those schools for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions through activities such as, but not limited to, accelerated learning programs (including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses and programs, dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college high schools), college counseling, career and technical education programs, career counseling, internships, work-based learning programs (such as apprenticeships), assisting students in the college admissions and financial aid application processes, and preparing students to take standardized college admissions tests;
- c. Provide support for students, including educationally disadvantaged students, who graduate from those schools and enroll in postsecondary education institutions in persisting in, and attaining a degree or certificate from, such institutions, through activities such as, but not limited to, mentorships, ongoing assistance with the financial aid application process, and establishing or strengthening peer support systems for such students attending the same institution; and
- d. Propose one or more project-specific performance measures, including aligned leading indicators or other interim milestones, that will provide valid and reliable information about the applicant's progress in preparing students, including educationally disadvantaged students, for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions and in supporting those students in persisting in and attaining a degree or certificate from such institutions. An applicant addressing this priority and receiving a CMO grant must provide data that are responsive to the measure(s), including performance targets, in its annual performance reports to the Department.

Note: For purposes of this priority, postsecondary education institutions include institutions of higher education, as defined in section 8101(29) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA), and one-year training programs that meet the requirements of section 101(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA).

Strengths:

The application successfully documents the plan to replicate and expand four high-quality charter high schools in geographic areas which overlap with three different Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZ locations provided from the U.S. Department of Treasury's CDFI Fund website); (e27). The application provides a comprehensive "Postsecondary Education Strategy: Five Pillars of College Initiatives" which includes a variety of specific initiatives both during and post high school. For example, all four proposed high schools provide AP and CTE programs which allow educationally disadvantaged students access to postsecondary preparation (e31). In addition, the applicant's IMPACT Program is a noteworthy alumni persistence strategy where applicant school alumni partner with new graduates to support post high school endeavors (e31). Thirty selective colleges across the country partner to recruit and enroll economically disadvantaged alumni. In addition, these college partners structure support programs to complement the applicant's College Initiatives program (e31).

Weaknesses:

The application does not provide clear project-specific performance measures that will provide valid and reliable information about the applicant's progress in both preparing all students for postsecondary education and supporting student persistence to degree or certificate completion. The applicant explains strategies for supporting alumni postsecondary education, but does not provide performance measures to assess project efficacy (e31, e73).

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP4: Serve Native American Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Opening a New Charter School or Replicating or Expanding a High-quality Charter School to Serve Native American Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

a. Propose to open a new charter school, or replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that—

1. Utilizes targeted outreach and recruitment in order to serve a high proportion of Native American students, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws;

2. Has a mission and focus that will address the unique educational needs of Native American students, such as through the use of instructional programs and teaching methods that reflect and preserve Native American language, culture, and history; and

3. Has or will have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Native American organizations located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school;

b. Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Native American organization located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school; and

c. Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Native American organization(s) from which the applicant has received a letter of support in a timely, active, and ongoing manner with respect to the development and implementation of the educational program at the charter school.

Strengths:

CPP4 is not addressed in the application.

Weaknesses:

CPP4 is not addressed in the application.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools

1. Competitive Preference Priority 5: Reopening Academically Poor-Performing Schools as Charter Schools.

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

a. Demonstrate past success working with one or more academically poor-performing public schools or schools that previously were designated as persistently lowest-achieving schools or priority schools under the former School Improvement Grant program or in States that exercised ESEA flexibility, respectively, under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; and

b. Propose to use grant funds under this program to restart one or more academically poor-performing public schools as charter schools during the project period by—

1. Replicating one or more high-quality charter schools based on a successful charter

school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success; and
2. Targeting a demographically similar student population in the replicated charter schools as was served by the academically poor-performing public schools

Strengths:

CPP5 is not addressed in the application.

Weaknesses:

CPP5 is not addressed in the application.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 02/07/2020 05:41 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/07/2020 02:13 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools Inc. (S282M200003)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	40
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	20
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	28
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	10
Sub Total	100	98
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
CPP 3: High School Students		
1. High School Students	2	2
CPP4: Serve Native American Students		
1. Native American Students	4	0
CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools		
1. Reopening Schools	2	0
Sub Total	8	2
Total	108	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - FY20 CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools Inc. (S282M200003)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources

1. 1. Quality of the Eligible Applicant and Adequacy of Resources

In determining the quality of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 40

Sub

1. a. The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments, 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 served by other public schools in the State.

Strengths:

The applicant has provided substantial evidence to determine the extent to which the academic achievement results for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school exceed the average academic achievement results for similar populations served the other public schools and the State. The applicant provides comprehensive data based on the State Rating and STAAR (e38).

For example, the applicant notes it has received a grade of A (93) in School Progress for exemplary progress indicating that at least 76% of students made a year's worth of academic gains, or the district's achievement is far below average compared to similar districts (e38). As further evidence of the school's position, the applicant reports that the school received a grade of B (80) in Academic Growth substantiates the school growth over time leading to increasingly narrowing the achievement gap (e39).

The applicant provides data from multiple measures to demonstrate student success along with an explanation of the significance of the data and how YES Prep students rank when compared to students from the district and the State. Details tables are provided to substantiate the degree to which the YES Prep students meet and exceed the district and the State (e44-48).

Based on the State Rating and STAAR data provided, YES Prep has exceeded the district in two of the three domains measured. Data presented by the applicant shows that YES Prep earned exemplary progress an A (93) status by demonstrating that its students made a year's worth of growth in the 2018-19 school year.

The applicant provided data to support the claim that YES Prep's college attainment has shattered the status quo, and supports this with data that shows that the SAT scores for Economically Disadvantaged, African American and Hispanic students exceed the State and Houston ISD based on the data provided in Figure 2.20 (e45).

The applicant provides results that show that African American and Hispanic students are taking AP courses and exams with a significant number of students passing when compared to state and nation (e46) based on 2015-2018 data. This demonstrates the educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school have exceeded the

Sub

average academic performance of children in the state and Houston ISD.

To further support the impact of YES Prep on their students, the applicant provides data regarding the success rate of their graduates who are graduating from college at four times the rate of their peers with similar economic backgrounds nationwide.

While the data provided by the applicant show that data collected from the STAAR assessment show that Special Education is behind in performance measures but, the fact has made significant growth to close the achievement gap.

YES, Prep supports its assertion that the school college attainment results have shattered the status quo and raised the bar for what is possible in public education. The applicant provides highlights that support their claim that YES Prep students are graduating from college at four times that rate of their peers with similar economic backgrounds nationwide (e47).

Overall, based on the detail data, the applicant has demonstrated the ability to meet and exceed the selection criteria.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 2. b. The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation.**

Strengths:

The applicant clearly states that there have not been any significant or management issues since being awarded a charter on March 2, 2000, at any of the 19 charter schools. The schools have met statutory and regulatory compliance in the areas of student safety and finance(e48).

The applicant clearly states that YES Prep has not had to resolve any compliance issues with closures, revocations, or voluntary disaffiliation (e48).

The applicant provided copies of the renewal contracts to validate their compliance with the selection criteria.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 3. c. The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter.**

Strengths:

The applicant has indicated that there are no compliance issues and has provided data to support this assertion. Operating since March 2, 2000, the 19 schools in operation have not had to resolve any issues leading to closure, revocation of the charter, voluntary termination or noncompliance with any statutory or regulatory laws and guidelines (e48). Furthermore, YES Prep provided copies of signed Charter Renewal Contracts through 2025 illustrating that the schools are in good standing with the authorizer (e49).

In the areas of finance, the applicant noted that TEA award the CMO a grade of A-Superior on its 2018-29 Charter FIRST Rating, an indication that the school practices high-quality financial management practices, noting that it has

Sub

received the highest possible rating in all but one year (2014-2015) (49).
The applicant has provided high-quality evidence to support its regulatory and statutory compliance with all laws and policies governing charter schools.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

4. d. The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

Strengths:

The applicant states that the YES prep has a five-year fundraising campaign that launched in August 2019. Based on the supporters of the campaign, length of years as a supporter, gift status and current gift amount, the school has shown evidence of continued support after the Federal funding ends. (e53). For example, in Figure 2.33-Growth Campaign Demonstrated Commitment as of December 2019 shows that YES Prep has already received approximately [REDACTED]. As noted by the applicant, YES Prep has received letters of support on behalf of the Charter School Growth Fund, for example noting that the entity has been investing in the YES Prep since 2005. Other letters of support are provided that speaks to the CMO's impact on educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students

1. 2. Significance of Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

The Secretary considers the significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students for the proposed project. In determining 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, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 20

Sub

1. 1. The extent to which charter schools currently operated or managed by the applicant serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners, at rates comparable to surrounding public schools or, in the case of virtual charter schools, at rates comparable to public schools in the State.

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that YES Prep is intentional about recruiting and serving educationally disadvantaged students, English Language Learners, students with disabilities and other at-risk populations (e53) to eliminate educational inequity in Houston. As a result, that applicant notes that 88% of the students are from low income families as defined by the Texas Education Association (e 27).

Figure 3.2 – 2018-2019 Educationally Disadvantaged Percentages Comparison-Subpopulations, shows that YES Prep exceeded the State and Houston ISD in the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged, African American and Hispanic children enrolled.

To assist educationally disadvantaged students, the applicant lists several comprehensive programs and services for its at-risk subpopulations, such as Dyslexia, Homebound, Section 504, Pregnant & Parenting, and Homeless. For additional support, every YES Prep school has a full-time Student Support Counselors whose purpose is to ensure that all students received the academic and wraparound services needed to be successful.

The applicant has programs and resources in place to address the services needed for its ELL population in its secondary school (e57). To support ELL students, YES Prep proposes to address the needs of English learners beginning in elementary school through its bilingual education program. In the secondary schools, YES Prep provides an ESL Program that develops English as a medium for the acquisition of academic content (e57). Additionally, YES Prep plans to support its ELL population by hiring dedicated Literacy Specialist who will be responsible for coordinating support of English Learners.

Figures 3.5-3.7 (e58-e59) show that YES Prep students are among the top performers on STAAR for English learners when compared to the State and the District.

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 10

2. 2. The quality of the plan to ensure that the charter schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.

Strengths:

To address this selection criterion, the applicant has provided clear details about the plan to recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners. The applicant states that YES Prep has maintained an intentional focus on only opening charter schools in underserved communities which has resulted in 88% of its students coming from individuals from low-income families.

Specifically, the applicant states that recruitment events will take place in high-traffic, community-based locations such as School Choice Fairs, community festivals, United Way of Greater Houston events, and neighborhood churches.

The applicant plans to purchase Facebook ads targeting Zip Codes in which the schools will be located, along with radio and billboard advertising.

YES, Prep uses a random, automated lottery if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated. To ensure that all student applications are considered, the applicant states that applications are not prioritized due to race or ethnicity, socioeconomic status, special needs, and other diverse learning characteristics (e63).

To further ensure that their replication, expansion, recruitment, and enrollment process embraces all learners, the applicant noted that entry interviews or exams are not administered nor are past academic and behavior records requested (e63).

Sub

The applicant provided details regarding how they will ensure that all disadvantaged children will receive a free appropriate education (e56-e58).

For example, the applicant noted that students who are Beginning Language Learners will be given the accommodations and modifications may include the Sheltered Instruction approach. The applicant also discussed services and interventions that will be available in the schools to support students in need of tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan

1. 3. Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan for the Proposed Project

The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 28

Sub

1. 1. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

The applicant states the theory of action that students, particularly disadvantaged students who attend YES Prep will achieve better academic outcomes (e70).

To test the theory of action, that applicant included project-specific performance measures aligned to the grant goal and five objectives outlined on pages e71-74.

The applicant provides specific details regarding the framework grounded in theory-driven, utilization-focused evaluation that will require close collaboration between the evaluator and project stakeholders. YES, Prep will follow Patton’s Development Evaluation framework as the instrument for assessing the quality of the project as the results from other charter schools that have used this framework yielded the outcomes anticipated by the applicant.

The applicant references and includes documentation of the work of evidence-based research from published researchers such as Hoxby and Turner (e68) to justify their theory of action.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. 2. 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 project, as described in the applicant's logic model, and that will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the grant period.

Sub

Strengths:

The expected intended outcomes of the proposed project are evident in the excerpt of the Logic Model presented in the application.

The applicant has identified a Data and Analytics Team that will be responsible for conducting a quarterly goals-based evaluation to ensure that YES Preps remains on track for meeting and fulfilling grant reporting responsibilities. The applicant has also identified an external evaluator who will conduct both process and outcomes evaluation of the project to analyze the inputs, process, and outcomes noted in the Logic Model to actual practices (e69).

As further evidence of addressing the criteria, the applicant has identified relevant personnel and teams who will be responsible for conducting continuous monitoring of the achievement of each project's objectives and performance measures (e70).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 8

3. 3. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

Strengths:

The applicant has provided goals that are all clearly identified within the application, measurable, and achievable. The applicant provided details how each objective will be measured, the data that will be collected to measure the goal, and the timeline for evaluating the objective.

The applicant provided a detailed summary of each objective that includes the baseline data for determining annual growth as a basis for determining targets that are reasonable and achievable during the grant period.

For each objective, the applicant provides objective performance measures along with baseline data and annual projections for the life of the project. The applicant has identified Data & Analytics Teams to collect, analyze, and report data to ensure that the school is on track for achieving the goals and/or departures of project implementation from the logic model (e75).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

4. 4. The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

Strengths:

The applicant has provided a clear and achievable plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the approaches and strategies employed by the project to the end that relevant information will result from the project that can be used to guide possible replication. To achieve this criterion, the applicant proposes that a six-member team will be

Sub

responsible for conducting both process and outcomes evaluations to gather information about the effectiveness of the approach employed by the project to achieve intended goals and objectives (e74).

The applicant has identified ways to both Process and Outcomes and will design research appropriate to measure each objective. According to the applicant, the results of the process evaluation will be used formatively to modify planned operations as it relates to the utilization of staffing and other resources to the end that project objectives are achieved (e78).

The applicant provided clear details regarding how the evaluation results will be used summatively with the expectations that both the Process and Outcomes evaluations will produce high-quality quantitative and qualitative data at the end of the grant project that can be shared with other charter schools (e79).

To ensure that fidelity is maintained, the applicant's Evaluation Team plans to follow the work of Mowbray who advocated for a variety of methods for establishing fidelity such as semi-structured interviews, reviews of project documents, site visits, checklists among others(e75).

The applicant proposes that the high quality quantitative and qualitative data gathered from its evaluation framework will result in information that can guide the replication of the project activities and the expansion of knowledge of charter education. Dissemination of such information, as noted by the applicant will occur through professional conferences, publications, news releases, and posting on findings on the YES Prep website.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

1. 4. Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

In addition, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

1. 1. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The applicant provided bios and resumes of key personnel that reflect the education, experiences, and background needed to carry out the proposed project. The applicant has identified Project Co-Directors due to the scope and scale of the project. Both Co-Directors have extensive charter school experience as a result of their years of experience with YES Prep. The CMO's Chief Financial Officer brings 21 years of experience in financial and business management in the nonprofit and private sectors.

The applicant provides data to support that they hire a greater percentage of minorities than the state average, and

Sub

their percentage of male teachers is 31% higher than the state average of twenty-four percent. (e82).
The applicant provides a comprehensive table that shows not only the key personnel relevant to the project but other members critical to the success of the project(e93-e94).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

To ensure plans and procedures are available to ensure continuous feedback, the applicant will rely upon the Strategic Investment Plan developed in December 2017 to guide feedback and improvement. Figure 5.3 (e84) provides a framework that will guide the applicant's procedures for ensuring continuous feedback and improvement. For example, the applicant indicates that the procedures identified in the grant accountability project (Figure 5.3) will be utilized to ensure that the proposed project is being continually monitored (e84).

The framework identifies the group & project-related facilitator, meeting frequency, group purpose, meeting structure, and meeting activities and the tools and delivery methods.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP 3: High School Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: High School Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must propose to --

- a. Replicate or expand high-quality charter schools to serve high school students, including educationally disadvantaged students;
- b. Prepare students, including educationally disadvantaged students, in those schools for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions through activities such as, but not limited to, accelerated learning programs (including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses and programs, dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college high schools), college counseling, career and technical education programs, career counseling, internships, work-based learning programs (such as apprenticeships), assisting students in the college admissions and financial aid application processes, and preparing students to take standardized college admissions tests;
- c. Provide support for students, including educationally disadvantaged students, who graduate from those schools and enroll in postsecondary education institutions in persisting in, and attaining a degree or certificate from, such institutions, through activities such as, but not limited to, mentorships, ongoing assistance with the financial aid application process, and establishing or strengthening peer support systems for such students attending the same institution; and
- d. Propose one or more project-specific performance measures, including aligned leading indicators or other interim milestones, that will provide valid and reliable information about

the applicant's progress in preparing students, including educationally disadvantaged students, for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions and in supporting those students in persisting in and attaining a degree or certificate from such institutions. An applicant addressing this priority and receiving a CMO grant must provide data that are responsive to the measure(s), including performance targets, in its annual performance reports to the Department.

Note: For purposes of this priority, postsecondary education institutions include institutions of higher education, as defined in section 8101(29) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA), and one-year training programs that meet the requirements of section 101(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA).

Strengths:

Strengths: The applicant states that funding is being requested to replicate and expand their model that will provide 8990 seats in 14 high-quality charter schools (e22). The applicant plans to replicate one and expand three secondary schools (e27). The CMO provides a comprehensive plan that shows the grant period expansion and replication schedule leading to the creation of 1990 seats over the five year period (e28). Through the replication and expansion, the applicant projects to provide 2560 seats to educationally disadvantaged students at scale (e28). The applicant provided an extensive list of opportunities available to all students to ensure that they have a productive postsecondary life. For example, every student will have access to rigorous Advanced Placement aligned curriculum and instruction, seven years of personalized college counseling resulting in college acceptance, and required AP courses and exams and SAT exam preparation to name a few. The applicant has an established partnership that provides support programs to complement the YES Prep College Initiatives program that strive to meet the full financial need of students. The applicant provided detailed charts and graphs that show a comparison of YES Prep students to the State and District. In many cases, the data show that the applicant is preparing students for postsecondary education. For example, the applicant provides data to support the claim that YES Prep students have higher participation rates and scores than those of the Houston ISD and the state for educationally disadvantaged students (e.45).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP4: Serve Native American Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Opening a New Charter School or Replicating or Expanding a High-quality Charter School to Serve Native American Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

a. Propose to open a new charter school, or replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that—

- 1. Utilizes targeted outreach and recruitment in order to serve a high proportion of Native American students, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws;**
- 2. Has a mission and focus that will address the unique educational needs of Native American students, such as through the use of instructional programs and teaching methods that reflect and preserve Native American language, culture, and history; and**
- 3. Has or will have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Native American organizations located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school;**

b. Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Native American organization located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school; and

c. Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Native American organization(s) from which the applicant has received a letter of support in a timely, active, and ongoing manner with respect to the development and implementation of the educational program at the charter school.

Strengths:

The applicant does not address CCP 4.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address CCP 4.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools

1. Competitive Preference Priority 5: Reopening Academically Poor-Performing Schools as Charter Schools.

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

a. Demonstrate past success working with one or more academically poor-performing public schools or schools that previously were designated as persistently lowest-achieving schools or priority schools under the former School Improvement Grant program or in States that exercised ESEA flexibility, respectively, under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; and

b. Propose to use grant funds under this program to restart one or more academically poor-performing public schools as charter schools during the project period by—

1. Replicating one or more high-quality charter schools based on a successful charter school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success; and

2. Targeting a demographically similar student population in the replicated charter schools as was served by the academically poor-performing public schools

Strengths:

The applicant does not address CCP 5.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address CCP 5.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/07/2020 02:13 AM

Status: Draft

Last Updated: 02/05/2020 10:45 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools Inc. (S282M200003)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	38
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	15
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	26
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	9
Sub Total	100	88
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
CPP 3: High School Students		
1. High School Students	2	2
CPP4: Serve Native American Students		
1. Native American Students	4	0
CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools		
1. Reopening Schools	2	0
Sub Total	8	2
Total	108	90

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - FY20 CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools Inc. (S282M200003)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources

1. 1. Quality of the Eligible Applicant and Adequacy of Resources

In determining the quality of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 38

Sub

1. a. The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments, 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 served by other public schools in the State.

Strengths:

The applicant provided student achievement results, both on a sub-group and a school-wide basis, and compared them to student achievement results for both the Houston ISD and state of Texas, demonstrating either comparable or better performance than both.

As noted on page e38 of the application, in all prior school years, the applicant's state accountability rating was Met Standard, which was the highest rating possible. Most recently, for the 2018-2019 academic year, the rating was a B (89), and each school's ratings, except one, was an A or B. The applicant exceeded Houston ISD in two of three domains. Additionally, the applicant earned an A (93) in School Progress for exemplary progress. Districts (and schools) earn an A (90-100) when at least 76% of students have made a year's worth of academic gains, or the district's achievement is far above average compared to similar districts.

On page e41 of the application, the applicant notes that over the last 3 years, its STAAR results demonstrated that it:

- improved the results every year for all Students and every subpopulation
- surpassed the state for all students and economically disadvantaged students every year
- surpassed the state every year
- showed gains in ELL student performance
- showed gains in SPED student performance

And when comparing cohorts across years, 60 of the 67 cohorts demonstrated absolute growth in academic performance. (page e42)

Sub

Weaknesses:

While ELL and SPED students achievement scores demonstrated growth year over year, across all performance levels, most performance lagged behind the state of Texas (see figure 2.8 on page e38).

Reader's Score: 9

2. **b. The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation.**

Strengths:

The applicant specifically notes that no charter schools it operates or manages have been closed, and it never had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements (page e48).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses present.

Reader's Score: 10

3. **c. The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter.**

Strengths:

The applicant specifically addresses that it has not had any significant issues related to financial or operational management (page e48). The applicant includes a copy of its audited financial statements for 2018 and 2019 that received unqualified opinions and included no material weaknesses nor significant deficiencies. The applicant provides a number of financial indicators on page e50 that indicate a strong financial position such as a 1.91 debt service coverage ratio of 1.91 and 76 days cash on hand that are supported by the audited financial statements. On a number of state assessments of financial indicators, such as MOE requirement, federal risk assessment, and overall financial health rating, the applicant indicates on page e49 positive results and provides evidence of those assessments in the appendix.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address student safety or any problems, significant or minor, related to statutory or regulatory compliance. The applicant does note its safe schools policy has been executed on page e49, lending support that the applicant has positioned itself to not have student safety related issues.

Reader's Score: 9

4. **d. The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.**

Strengths:

On pages e49 through e53, the applicant lays out a clear case for each school being financial sustainable after 4 years, beyond the horizon of the federal funding used for the proposed expansion and replication. Additionally, the applicant outlines an [REDACTED] fundraising campaign over the next 5 years, of which it offers evidence that \$ [REDACTED] has been secured and another [REDACTED] is pending, reflecting a strong likelihood that the applicant will be able to fundraise and secure additional support.

Additionally, the applicant includes its financial model, which utilizes the fundraising to address scaling schools,

Sub

facilities, and program enhancements and otherwise not perpetually subsidize ongoing school operations. This lends credence to the applicant being able to not need additional funding after the project to continue the scale up work.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses present.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students

1. 2. Significance of Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

The Secretary considers the significance of contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students for the proposed project. In determining 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, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

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

Strengths:

On pages e54 and e55, the applicant provides a number of charts that demonstrates it serves a higher number of economically disadvantaged students and intellectually disabled students, when compared to Houston ISD. When compared to Texas overall, the applicant serves more economically disadvantaged students, more minority students, more ELLs, and more at-risk students.

The applicant demonstrates an understanding of why there may be differences in the percentage of students with various disabilities when compared to Houston ISD, and it outlines a number of initiatives it is undertaking to address those challenges.

Weaknesses:

The applicant notes that its overall percentage of special education students is lower than Houston ISD on page e55. While it does have a higher percentage of students of intellectual disabilities, the applicant acknowledges that it does lag behind the Houston ISD across percentages of students with physical disabilities, behavioral disabilities, autism, section 504 plans, and dyslexia.

Reader's Score: 8

- 2. 2. The quality of the plan to ensure that the charter schools the applicant proposes to replicate or expand will recruit, enroll, and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.**

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Strengths:

On page e56, the applicant clearly lays out the various services and aspects of its program that it views as supportive to educationally disadvantaged students. Specifically, it references its tutorial, compensatory, and academic and behavior support services, including a process based on RTI. It notes the staffing of full-time student support counselors to support said students, as well as a disciplinary alternative program to assist all students including educationally disadvantaged students that might otherwise be impacted negatively by standard disciplinary programs.

The applicant outlines, on pages e57 and e58, its bilingual and ESL programs meant to support ELL students.

The applicant outlines its recruitment and enrollment strategies and processes for each school on page e62 and e63 that involves partnerships with local community organizations, the use of local print media, community canvasses, and social media.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly articulate how specific recruitment or enrollment efforts will specifically target or assist educationally disadvantaged students or advertise opportunities and resources that are available to educationally disadvantaged students. The applicant demonstrates the open nature of the lottery and enrollment processes, as well as evidence of its schools being in high demand on page e62, but the applicant does not connect broad recruitment efforts or its reputation to making its schools more accessible to educationally disadvantaged students per se.

Reader's Score: 7

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan

1. 3. Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan for the Proposed Project

The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 26

Sub

1. 1. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

On pages e67 through e69, the applicant proposes to expand its proven educational model that focuses on college readiness at 14 new schools, implementing the College Readiness program. The applicant provides study results and support that indicates that this model, including intensive college counseling, leads to better outcomes across a variety of fronts, including rates of application, acceptance, and matriculation to college. The applicant crosswalks a number of its core model components and how that translates to specific academic gains.

Sub

Weaknesses:

The conceptual framework is implied, but it is not explicitly identified.

Reader's Score: 4

2. **2. 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 project, as described in the applicant's logic model, and that will produce quantitative and qualitative data by the end of the grant period.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides and outlines a robust set of clear, objective performance measures that are linked to intended outcomes on page e71 and e72. The applicant proposes to conduct quarterly, goals-based evaluations on page e69. The applicant proposes to leverage its Data & Analytics team to support this evaluation work. Additionally, the applicant proposes to leverage a separate firm, Durand Research, to conduct process and outcome evaluations to correlate results, the theory of action, and the applicant's logic model.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses present.

Reader's Score: 10

3. **3. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**

Strengths:

On pages e71 through e74, the applicant identifies 5 clear objectives with several specific, quantifiable measures for each objective with goal scores or measures for each year. The applicant provides adequate detail around the data sets and frequencies to be used through Figure 4.4 found on page e74 and provides sufficient assurance that the performance towards these goals, objectives, and measures can be regularly and accurately tracked.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses present.

Reader's Score: 5

4. **4. The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.**

Strengths:

The applicant describes an evaluation framework it intend to use to collect data regularly, aligning data collections to specific objectives and outcomes and then distributing that data throughout school and project teams. (page e76). The applicant describes ways it will ensure how it will evaluate the different Objective results and data on page 78 and establish control and baseline measures.

Sub

The applicant provides a general intention to use the evaluation and outcome results to modify planned operations regarding staff and other resources. (page e79)

The applicant demonstrates interest in supporting future replication strategies by proposing to distribute evaluation results and key lessons internally and externally with other charter schools, CMOs, and other entities interested in replication. The applicant notes this may take the form of published reports, data sets, as well as disseminations through professional conferences, publications, news releases and general findings. (page e79).

Weaknesses:

The applicant doesn't include anything specific to the project or otherwise provide certain required conditions when data collected related to the project would require corrective action, just that it would be generically used to modify planned operations. (page e79). The applicant does not offer any specific examples which might trigger a specified action.

Reader's Score: 7

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

1. 4. Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

In addition, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. 1. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The two identified project managers on page e57 are key employees within the leadership structure of the applicant. Additionally, their work experience and resumes indicate they possess the requisite experience and expertise to manage and track against the proposed goals, objectives, and outcomes. Additionally, the applicant provides evidence of a strong support network to tangentially support the project, like the CFO vis-a-vis his qualifications (see page e82)

Weaknesses:

The applicant doesn't provide any discussion of relevant training or specific experiences with similarly-situated federal funding programs and projects. While the two project managers are likely to be successful in their roles as it relates to the proposed school replications, the federal funding and associated spending and reporting compliance may add a new element of responsibility to their respective workloads, and the applicant does not address if there is any training or experience that will directly allow them to address this specific aspect of the project.

Sub

Reader's Score: 4

2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant provides both an abbreviated grant accountability framework on page e84, as well as a more extensive grant accountability framework in the Appendix, that it proposes to implement. The framework identifies clearly responsible parties, the frequency of feedback, the tools to be used, and how information and results will be subsequently delivered. The applicant also articulates clearly how this framework will be used to provide project managers specifically feedback and insight on an ongoing basis into the project.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses present.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP 3: High School Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: High School Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must propose to --

- a. Replicate or expand high-quality charter schools to serve high school students, including educationally disadvantaged students;
- b. Prepare students, including educationally disadvantaged students, in those schools for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions through activities such as, but not limited to, accelerated learning programs (including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses and programs, dual or concurrent enrollment programs, and early college high schools), college counseling, career and technical education programs, career counseling, internships, work-based learning programs (such as apprenticeships), assisting students in the college admissions and financial aid application processes, and preparing students to take standardized college admissions tests;
- c. Provide support for students, including educationally disadvantaged students, who graduate from those schools and enroll in postsecondary education institutions in persisting in, and attaining a degree or certificate from, such institutions, through activities such as, but not limited to, mentorships, ongoing assistance with the financial aid application process, and establishing or strengthening peer support systems for such students attending the same institution; and
- d. Propose one or more project-specific performance measures, including aligned leading indicators or other interim milestones, that will provide valid and reliable information about the applicant's progress in preparing students, including educationally disadvantaged students, for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions and in supporting those students in persisting in and attaining a degree or certificate from such institutions. An applicant addressing this priority and receiving a CMO grant must provide data that are responsive to the measure(s), including performance targets, in its annual performance reports to the Department.

Note: For purposes of this priority, postsecondary education institutions include institutions of higher education, as defined in section 8101(29) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA), and one-year training programs that meet the requirements of section 101(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965,

as amended (HEA).

Strengths:

The applicant provides evidence of its plan to replicate and expand its network to serve high school students, including a significant number of educationally disadvantaged students, specifically by adding four high schools. It proposes to implement its five pillars of college initiatives - advising, student opportunities, seminar classes, IMPACT Partnerships, and alumni support - strategies to address student achievement at the applicant's schools and beyond in their postsecondary education institutions. It proposes a number of performance measures on page e72 and page e73 tied towards assessing its progress in preparing students for enrollment and persistence in postsecondary education, including but not limited to an increase in students passing AP exams, an increase in students earning college-ready SAT scores, a 100% acceptance to college goal, an increase in student matriculation to college, and a persistence measure applicant alumni to stay in and graduate from college within 6 years/

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses present.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP4: Serve Native American Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 4: Opening a New Charter School or Replicating or Expanding a High-quality Charter School to Serve Native American Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

a. Propose to open a new charter school, or replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that—

1. Utilizes targeted outreach and recruitment in order to serve a high proportion of Native American students, consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws;
2. Has a mission and focus that will address the unique educational needs of Native American students, such as through the use of instructional programs and teaching methods that reflect and preserve Native American language, culture, and history; and
3. Has or will have a governing board with a substantial percentage of members who are members of Indian Tribes or Native American organizations located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school;

b. Submit a letter of support from at least one Indian Tribe or Native American organization located within the area to be served by the new, replicated, or expanded charter school; and

c. Meaningfully collaborate with the Indian Tribe(s) or Native American organization(s) from which the applicant has received a letter of support in a timely, active, and ongoing manner with respect to the development and implementation of the educational program at the charter school.

Strengths:

None.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools

1. Competitive Preference Priority 5: Reopening Academically Poor-Performing Schools as Charter Schools.

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must --

a. Demonstrate past success working with one or more academically poor-performing public schools or schools that previously were designated as persistently lowest-achieving schools or priority schools under the former School Improvement Grant program or in States that exercised ESEA flexibility, respectively, under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; and

b. Propose to use grant funds under this program to restart one or more academically poor-performing public schools as charter schools during the project period by—

1. Replicating one or more high-quality charter schools based on a successful charter school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success; and

2. Targeting a demographically similar student population in the replicated charter schools as was served by the academically poor-performing public schools

Strengths:

None.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this priority. Additionally, the applicant's model for opening schools is tied to new charter schools, not restarts of existing academically poor-performing public schools.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Draft

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