

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Pataula Charter Academy, Incorporated (S282M200005)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	36
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	17
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	13
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	6
Sub Total	100	72
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	73

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - FY20 CMO - 1: 84.282M

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Pataula Charter Academy, Incorporated (S282M200005)

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: 36

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 College and Career Readiness Performance Index test-scores from 2014-2019 (page 39) and the Milestone Content Mastery Scores (page 46) document Pataula Charter Academy (PCA) outperformed five county schools and the state average for educating and servicing educationally disadvantaged students (page 46). Data proves the attendance and graduation rates for PCA are well above those of the state average (page 44). Additional data shows these schools' graduation rates higher than the state average (page 47). These reliable indicators show these schools are diligent about meeting the needs of the educationally disadvantaged students.

Weaknesses:

The applicant admits PCA has too few qualifying ELL students to create a subgroup because they do not serve an area where many school-age children lack English acquisition. The other charter school for this CMO was opened in 2019 (page 49); therefore, there is no data on student test scores and statewide assessments serving the educationally disadvantaged. It is hard to conclude if the model will be replicable. The applicant reasons test scores showing no growth are flawed (page 42), but there is no data to prove they are, in fact, flawed. No data is available to compare retention rates with surrounding districts or the state average.

Reader's Score: 6

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:

According to the application on page 49, the Pataula Charter Academy, Inc has had no school closures, no charter revocations, and no affiliates revoked or terminated, including voluntarily in their ten-year history.

The full report of all the operational management standards is in Appendix 1.

This documentation is evidence that this projected expansion school will have a high level of accountability for implementing with fidelity.

Weaknesses:

No weakness 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's narrative states on page 49, the CMO had been operating a fiscally responsible and sustainable school the past ten years ago. The authorizer, State Charter Schools Commission, analyzes both schools' financials and financial safeguards using a Comprehensive Performance Framework (CPF), which reviews Academic, Financial, and Operational performance. PCA has met or exceeded standards in the financial section every year.

This strength ensures the high level of expected accountability in both the financial and operational management pieces. If these financial and operational management practices are replicated at the same efficiency as the model, then the focus of the school's leaders is likely that of ensuring success for the students.

Weaknesses:

No weakness 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 charter management organization has received large start-up grants which positioned the school to have a healthy surplus, thus giving "greater flexibility as enrollment growth occurs" (page 52).

The application states they will take a pay-as-you-go philosophy by not adding additional positions or committing to significant expenses unless there are funds to cover these expenditures. The surplus finding is located in Appendix 3, and a 5-year budget can be found in Appendix 4.

It is evident there are sound financial practices in place, and the budgeting process will likely lead to successful replication of the project.

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted

Sub

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: 17

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:

Since the CMO operates two separate charter schools, it is best to review the information for each school. As shown in the chart on page 55, PCA has performed higher in the areas of ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies than the local districts and state average test scores for educationally disadvantaged students. Documentation also shows the success of PCA with regards to the academic performance of the student with disabilities in the areas of ELA and Math (page 59). Additionally, PCA validates the success of their EL program (8 students) by documenting the scores of the ACCESS test (page 60). Students who had initially qualified for EL services to test with proficient scores to move out of EL designation (page 60). The newly opened Spring Creek school enrollment numbers are aligned with the sending district in all three subgroups, students with disabilities, EL, and educationally disadvantaged (pages 60, 61).

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 9

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:

PCA has a robust strategic plan to offer the enrollment opportunity to all students in the attendance zone through their recruiting efforts. This plan includes creating a Parent Advisory Committee to assist in Outreach and Marketing (Page 64). The marketing of these expansion schools will consist of as many media platforms as possible with an emphasis on reaching both families of diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds (page 64-65). Additionally, key leaders within the minority communities have been contacted to enlist their support and network contacts (page 65).

It is likely that the successful reputation of the schools will be a positive recruiting tool.

Serving educationally disadvantaged students is critical in the effort to close the achievement gap between urban

Sub

and rural schools across economic levels.

A strategy to create a bus service for rural students is a part of the plan to recruit and enroll more rural poverty students (page 65).

Weaknesses:

There is no comprehensive plan to recruit and enroll students from rural areas except for a bus route. This application would have been more robust if there have been more strategies to meet their long-term goal of reaching more rural students and thus closing the achievement gap (page e16).

There is no evidence the marketing and recruiting materials will be printed in other languages, which would have enhanced the recruiting efforts.

Reader's Score: 8

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: 13

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:

PCA plans to use the constructivist theory as its framework for student achievement (page 13). They did provide articles that show this is a research-based curriculum, and means of teaching this content can be beneficial to their student population. In theory, the constructivist framework is reliable and high quality.

Weaknesses:

There is no documentation on how the applicant will approach the implementation of the many frameworks or any of the other numerous strategies they propose to use. These strategies include expeditionary learning (page 9) Constructivist Theory (page 13) and Project-Based Learning (page 16)

There is no evidence showing the precise alignment between the conceptual framework and the objectives of their planned project. Additionally, there is no data to support this framework has worked in any of their established schools or why it is appropriate to meet the needs of their student population.

Even in a well-planned and strategic plan, there needs to be more than one well-trained person to implement. This narrative has an inherent weakness by only listing one person who is being trained specifically to carry through with the replication and expansion process. No succession plan or other leader engagement could be found (page 66).

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

Sub

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

Strengths:

PCA has included a logic model with the intent to evaluate the identified goals. Furthermore, they intend to get quantitative data through test scores and qualitative data through surveys staff and parents (pages 68-73). The applicant has outlined the goals for replication in three different areas: Academic, School Culture, and Financial and Operational (pages 69-73). Finally, the applicant understands the needs for goals and provides a timeline to accomplish these goals.

Weaknesses:

The logic model inputs and activities do not match with the outputs, outcomes, and long-term goals (pages 66-68). There is no direct alignment. This makes it difficult to determine if the project will achieve impact. It is unclear how to understand which evaluative measures go with which objectives and how the applicant intends to assess or measure the effectiveness of these goals. When there is no specific measure attached to a goal, it is unclear how to determine its effectiveness. There is not a clear table/diagram to understand the logic model.

Reader's Score: 3

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 provides an outline chart for the goals for expansion and replication (pages 69-72). These goals focus on Academic, School Culture, and Financial and Operation, along with the objectives for each. There is documentation showing all objectives are specific, and there are assessment measures offered. An effective objective will guide the leaders in making data-driven decisions to ensure the replication/expansion is implemented with fidelity to the model.

Weaknesses:

For goals to be practical, the results need to be attainable. Many of the inputs found in this application have outcomes that are highly unlikely to be achieved (69-72). It may be challenging to maintain a 100 percent participation of classroom teachers to participate in weekly Personalized Learning Communities and at least monthly coaching sessions (page 70). Furthermore, it will be hard to reach, much less maintain 90 percent of 3rd graders scoring on grade level by year 5 (page 70).

Reader's Score: 4

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 makes it clear the data will be the driving evaluation tool for this project. Therefore, the applicant plans to contract with a research company to assist with the comprehensive evaluation process (page 66).

Weaknesses:

Since there is not a complete evaluation plan in place, it is highly unlikely there will any be any suitable data to be replicated. There is no plan for dissemination of any data or the sharing of best practices outside of the network schools. It is unclear if the organization would be able to contract with a consultant who has not been in the planning of the

Sub

data strategies.

There is no plan for the sharing of information with other charter school leaders that are not in their network.

Reader's Score: 3

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: 6

Sub

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

Strengths:

The six top leadership positions, at this point, are staffed. The only remaining leadership position to be named is the Director of Marketing. To have a working leadership team already in place who are collaborating on daily will be a strength when implementing expansion and opening new schools as planned. (pages 78-83)

Weaknesses:

On page e15, short terms goals include replication by 2025 to a K-12 school. Among the Leadership Team listed in the application, there is no one with secondary credentials. This is a weakness, because there will need to be a secondary educator's voice to guide that expansion.

There are no resumes provided, therefore no documentation of qualifications.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

This applicant recognizes the importance of utilizing data for feedback and continuous improvement purposes.

They are proposing to contract with a research analyst (page 66), and they provide a chart outlining which stakeholder will be responsible for which data points and this chart shows a timeline for the different data collection points. By using this chart (page 73-75), all stakeholders understand their level of engagement.

Another strategic effort is when the applicant proposes to engage other stakeholders such as parents by creating a Parent Advisory Board (page 77).

Sub

Weaknesses:

There is no description of how data is to be disseminated or analyzed, and there is no comprehensive plan for feedback and continuous improvement to external entities.

Reader's Score: 3

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 states they will expand to a K-12 model by 2025 (pages e15, e16).

Weaknesses:

There is no detailed plan to prepare students for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions, support student enrollment in these institutions, or assess the success of this program with measurable tools.

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:

No strengths noted.

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:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Pataula Charter Academy, Incorporated (S282M200005)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	36
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	17
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	12
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	6
Sub Total	100	71
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	72

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - FY20 CMO - 1: 84.282M

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Pataula Charter Academy, Incorporated (S282M200005)

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: 36

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 information that compares student performance with the local school district and the state (pg. e56 – e60). On page e72, the applicant presented the 2019 Milestones Content Mastery Score for Economically Disadvantaged Students showing that PCA students outperformed students in the local school district and state in the areas of English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The applicant included adequate information that illustrated positive attendance and graduation rates.

Weaknesses:

The applicant indicated that in the 2018- 2019 school year, the scores dropped below the state average due to a flawed system but did not include any data to support this assertion. The applicant also indicated on page e59 that Content Mastery Scores remained steady or have increased in many areas, the Progress and Closing Gaps scores decreased, citing “flaws in the system” but did not include any data to support this claim. Without this information, it is difficult to determine if the school, have indeed, exceeded the average academic achievement rates.

Reader's Score: 6

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.

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant noted that they have not had any charter schools operated or managed that have closed or had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements (pg. e66 and e101).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted in this section.

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 included copies of their annual audit, tax returns, and financial statements which demonstrate that the applicant has processes and procedures in place to ensure compliance with financial reporting requirements (page e66). Since the applicant has a track record of compliance there is a greater likelihood that the applicant will not have significant problems with statutory or regulatory requirements.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted in this section.

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 provided information that illustrated how the school currently manages its resources using existing funding. The plan indicates that the applicant has sustained itself through public funds and private funding (pg. e69). In the 2019 Audit Report, the school shows a surplus which will be helpful in sustaining project activities when Federal funding ends. Additionally, the applicant indicated that they have refrained from excessive spending in order to increase the surplus (pg. e69.)

The applicant has received large start-up grants that will help ensure that salaries for staff are sustained after the grant ends (pg. e52).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted in this section.

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: 17

Sub

- 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 e78 and e79, the applicant included a detailed chart that describes projected and actual enrollment targets for educationally disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English Learners (EL). The chart illustrates that the applicant has consistently served over sixty percent of economically disadvantaged students. Additionally, the school has served approximately nine percent of students with learning disabilities and approximately two percent of EL students.

Weaknesses:

The comparative data presented on page e79 illustrates that the applicant has a lower percentage of Special Education students than that of the sending school districts. Since the rates are lower than that of the sending districts, the applicant does not fully satisfy this criterion.

Reader's Score: 9

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

Strengths:

The applicant described the recruitment strategy for the school that includes a variety of events to engage with families within the community (pg. e81). The applicant has engaged an Outreach and Marketing Committee to assist with developing a plan which will allow stakeholders to be involved in marketing efforts. The applicant included information about implementing RTI efforts to support struggling students. Additionally, the applicant has a detailed transportation plan that will remove barriers for families in rural communities in getting students to school (pg. 82).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not describe if the marketing and enrollment materials would be printed in various languages. Enrollment efforts may be hindered if parents who speak other languages do not have the option of reviewing materials in languages that they understand.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan

- 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: 12

Sub

- 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 described an innovative instructional model that will be used during the project. Using the academic data on pg. e87, the applicant has experienced success using this model. Since the applicant has experience using this model previously, there is a stronger likelihood that the applicant will have similar success in the proposed project.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide a clear conceptual framework for the proposed project. While there are stated goals and objectives, there is no clear alignment between the activities, outputs, and outcomes. It would be helpful to have a comprehensive plan that describes how the project activities will directly support the project outcomes. It is not clear how the framework will be implemented with fidelity throughout the project.

Reader's Score: 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 included a logic model as required by the selection criteria. The applicant intends to implement an evaluation plan that will include an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data (pg. e91 - e94) which helps support requirements to satisfy the selection criteria.

Weaknesses:

The logic model was not organized in a manner that allowed the reviewer an opportunity to fully understand the relationships between the inputs/activities. There was no direct correlation between the project inputs and activities with the outputs, outcomes, and long-term goals listed within the logic model (pg. e83 - e85). It's difficult to determine if the project will achieve its intended inputs.

Reader's Score: 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 objectives on pages e86 - e90, are clear and measurable. The applicant included a timeline (pg. e90 – e93) that describes which data will be collected at various intervals to ensure a continuous cycle of improvement.

Weaknesses:

On pg. e87, the applicant indicated that there would be 100 percent of classroom teachers and instructional support staff will participate in two weeks of orientation and professional development on the school's model upon hiring. Additionally, the applicant indicated that 100 percent of classroom teachers would participate in weekly PLCs and at least monthly coaching sessions on the school's model and/or instructional/assessment best practices with

Sub

Instructional Coaches. It is unclear how the applicant plans to accomplish 100 percent compliance with these goals.

Reader's Score: 4

- 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:

There was information included that described a detailed plan for collecting various data throughout the grant (pgs. e90-e93). The plan adds the greater assurance that the applicant will obtain a variety of feedback at appropriate intervals, which will help inform the project evaluation.

Weaknesses:

Given the extensive nature of the proposal, the involvement of an external evaluator during the preparation of the application would have added valuable insight into fully developing the evaluation plan. Without involving the external evaluator, it is difficult to determine if the data collected will be sufficient in informing the evaluation. The applicant did not include a plan that describes how project activities, strategies, and project outcomes would be disseminated to guide possible replication of the project. The impact of this grant should have implications for other charter schools that are looking to replicate successful models of high-quality charter schools. The applicant should consider ways to share information about the project in a variety of ways to have a more significant impact.

Reader's Score: 3

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: 6

Sub

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

Strengths:

The key personnel identified in the application (pg. e95-e100) appear to have clearly defined roles within the organization. The applicant included information that described exceptional professional qualities regarding the involvement in the organization.

Sub

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not include resumes for the key personnel, which would be helpful in the understanding of all key staff members are experienced in managing similar projects of this scale in their anticipated capacity. The staff does not have secondary education experience which could impact the quality of the project implementation.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

On page e93, the applicant expressed the understanding of utilizing data to support continuous improvement. The applicant is committed to sharing the data with all stakeholders in an effort to help them better understand when new strategies are put in place. Engaging stakeholders in the decision-making process will ensure that all stakeholders buy-in to new strategies when they are implemented.

Weaknesses:

The applicant indicated that they would share data with stakeholders in a variety of settings but did not describe what data would be shared and how this data would be shared (pg e94). Data will likely need to be shared differently when engaging with different stakeholder groups.

Reader's Score: 3

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:

On page e15, the applicant indicated that grant funds would be used to expand the current charter school from K-6 to K-12 which will serve low-income families in a rural community.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not include a detailed plan that will be used to prepare disadvantaged students for post-secondary education. The applicant also did not include any information that describes how the efforts to ensure college persistence rates increased for disadvantaged students. The applicant did not include any data that includes annual performance targets for disadvantaged learners who are interesting in pursuing post-secondary degrees. These requirements were necessary to satisfy this priority.

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:

No strengths noted in this section.

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:

No strengths noted in this section.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not respond to this priority.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 02/12/2020 04:35 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2020 04:35 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Pataula Charter Academy, Incorporated (S282M200005)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	37
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	18
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	13
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	6
Sub Total	100	74
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	75

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - FY20 CMO - 1: 84.282M

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Pataula Charter Academy, Incorporated (S282M200005)

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: 37

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 evidence of student academic achievement. In 2018, Pataula Charter Academy's growth rates were higher than their peers in local districts and state averages in both ELA and mathematics (p. e 60). For 2018-2019, Pataula Charter Academy's graduation rates exceed the state and district averages for five years (p. e61). The Content Mastery and Progress Scores (CCRPI) show that Pataula Charter Academy's (PCA) rates outperformed the state except for middle school and outperformed the local counties (p. e57). The application provides a summary of PCA comparison scores, milestones progress rates, milestones content mastery rates for economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities (pp. e56- e68).

Weaknesses:

The CCRPI's rates for PCA students dropped below the state average (p. e60).

The Milestones Progress Scores for PCA dropped below the state in 2019. The applicant associates the problem to the test (p. e 60).

Student's retention rates are not provided.

Reader's Score: 7

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.

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant reports that Georgia State Charter Schools Commission gave approvals for their charters and that they have gone through two successful renewals (p. e65). The first school was approved in 2009. The second school was approved in 2018 and opened 2019 (p. e66). The applicant clearly states that the "schools have had no school closures, no charter revocations, for any reason, including noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements, and no affiliations revoked or terminated, including voluntarily"(p. e66).

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 2019 financial audit report verifies that PCA has no internal control reporting, material weaknesses identified, significant deficiencies identified, and no noncompliance material to financial statements noted (p. e160). The 2017-2018 Pataula Charter Academy report shows that it met academic (98), financial (85), and operation standards (98) at least 75% of the time in three out of 4 years of a 5- year contract term. The applicant says their charter schools have been fiscally sound for 10 years. The evidence shows PCA as being financially stable.

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 states both schools received grants for start-up costs (page e52). This gave them a surplus in the first few years. The funds allowed them to have greater flexibility as enrollment rolls grew. They will continue to use private funds until enrollment growths allow public funds to cover the cost (p. e69). They believe their ability to create a two million dollar surplus for the past 10 years demonstrate their organizational ability and shows fiscal stability.

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: 18

Sub

- 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:

PCA provides evidence showing their track record of academic success with economically disadvantaged students (p. e71). The 2019 Milestones Content Mastery Scores for Economically Disadvantaged Students chart shows PCA students excelling at higher rates than their peers in local districts and the state (p. e64). PCA students with disabilities had higher graduation rates than their peers in local districts and the state (p. e 64). Students with disabilities rated higher in content mastery than their peer in local districts and state (p e64). The applicant reports to have a strong success record of serving ELA students and that their school serves more than a proportionate share of EL students than local districts (p. e65). PCA's ELA students are shown to have a greater level of success in English acquisition proficiency than peers in local districts and state. The 2018-2019 Comparison of CCRPI Mastery Scores for all students indicated that PCA students rated higher in reading than their peers in state and district. This information shows PCA commitment in educating disadvantaged students.

Weaknesses:

Achievement rates tend to focus on economically disadvantaged rather than special education and ELA students (p. e61- e62).

Reader's Score: 8

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

Strengths:

PCA provides a variety of services for educationally disadvantaged students. Demographic data are displayed on pages e78 and e79. It provides a chart of local schools and the demographic percentages of children attending those schools. They have an enrollment period and provide guidelines for enrolling and recruiting students(p. e 80), which includes a marketing and outreach plan, transportation, and lottery process (p. e81-e83). The program provides services for both ELA and special education students to accommodate their needs in school. Services are IEP, pull-out and push-in model, Multi-Tiered System of Support and student support team (p. e72-e73). Some outreach strategies are informational meetings, local media, flyers, and posting flyers (p. e 82). The program does have a parent advisory committee (p. e83). The enrollment and recruitment process focus on increasing students and with emphasis on providing services to all students.

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: 13

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 uses the logic model to describe the implementation of the school model (p. e 83). A sound logic model is likely to aid in project implementation.

Weaknesses:

In the logic model, the applicant does not explain how it will collect, analyze, and disseminate data (p. e 83). Inputs and activities (input) and are not clearly aligned with the long term goals (p. e83-e84)

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 goals and objectives are located in the proposal (p. e83-e87). The applicant states the collected data will be used to inform the effectiveness of replicated and expansion efforts (p. e90). Using data in this way is likely to improve the impact of the project.

Weaknesses:

Data analysis is not described. Clarity is needed about the project-based mode. On page e33, the project-based learning was described as method of teaching to be taught at the charter school. It is not identified in the logic model or in the list of goals and objectives.

Reader's Score: 3

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 and objectives are clearly specified and measurable (page 69-72). This attention to details will help ensure the project achieves its goals.

Weaknesses:

On page e83, based on the description of the project model further clarification is needed on its implementation in the school. The applicant does not provide a clear understanding of the model and how it should be used.

Sub

Reader's Score: 4

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 states that each year they will collect and analyze data to determine progress, provide a narrative of programmatic activities in an annual summary, and record lessons learned and adjust for program implementation (p. e. 90). This is likely to aid in replication.

Weaknesses:

According to the applicant, the project plan, data and the fidelity of implementation of the model will be used to inform implementation at each school (p. e90). This statement is unclear about the applicant's plans to share the data outside of their schools. The applicant did not describe how it plans to share information beyond their schools to broaden the knowledge base on best practices for developing and maintaining highly effective charter schools.

Reader's Score: 3

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: 6

Sub

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

Strengths:

The proposed project includes a leadership team currently in place, consisting of six top leaders. The applicant plans to hire a director of marketing (page 78-83). Because leadership is currently working there and understand their culture, they will be able to collaborate easily.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not include resumes. It is unclear if key project personnel will be qualified and experienced.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant states that each year they will collect and analyzed data to determine progress, provide a narrative of programmatic activities in an annual summary, and record lesson learns and adjust for program implementation (p. e. 90).

Weaknesses:

According to the applicant, the narrative and data and the fidelity of implementation of the model will be used to inform each school (p. e90). This statement is unclear about the applicant' plans to share the data outside of their schools. The applicant should consider sharing the information beyond their schools to broaden the knowledge base on best practices for developing and maintaining highly effective charter schools.

Reader's Score: 3

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 plans to expand to a K-12 model (page e15-16).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide a comprehension plan for enrollment, postsecondary preparation, and did not provide performance measures to assess.

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:

No strengths noted.

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:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this priority

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2020 04:35 PM