

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Chicago Charter School Foundation (S282M200023)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	23
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	20
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	30
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	10
Sub Total	100	83
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
CPP 3: High School Students		
1. High School Students	2	0
CPP4: Serve Native American Students		
1. Native American Students	4	0
CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools		
1. Reopening Schools	2	0
Sub Total	8	0
Total	108	83

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - FY20 CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Chicago Charter School Foundation (S282M200023)

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: 23

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:

Overall, the applicant currently serves a high percentage of educationally disadvantaged students with the following demographics: 63% African-American, 29% Hispanic, 84.1% qualified for Free or Reduced Lunch, 15% special education students, and 11% English Language Learners (ELL) (page 1, 5, 8, Appendix E page 2).

The applicant provides detailed tables of attainment and growth on state assessments for ELA and math by educationally disadvantaged subgroups. The data shows higher proficiency among African-American students in both ELA and math, as well as ELL and low income students in ELA, compared to the local school district and the state (Appendix E page 5).

For the most recent school year in 2019, the applicant had significantly higher graduation rates than the local school district and the state, with clear growth in 4-year adjusted graduation rates for the past four school years (page 15, Appendix E page 4, 6).

Weaknesses:

All of the state assessment data on ELA and math attainment and growth and college enrollment is lower for the applicant than both the local CPS district and the state (Appendix E page 4).

According to the 2019 subgroup assessment data, the applicant has lower percentage proficiency ratings among Hispanic ELA and math compared to the local district and state, with significantly lower ratings among IEP students in ELA and math compared to the state (Appendix E page 5).

Sub

The applicant does not provide attendance and retention rate comparisons with the local school district and the state, and the data is not stratified by subgroups of educationally disadvantaged students (Appendix E page 8-12).

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.**

Strengths:

The applicant provides a thorough explanation regarding the closure of CICS Larry Hawkins. The school changed charter operators after two years and then closed at the end of the 2015-16 school year due to low performance, violence in the community, and a delay in the construction of new public housing units in the area. The displaced students were transferred to the nearest CICS Longwood high school (see page 23).

The applicant has not had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements or had their affiliation revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation (page 23, 24).

Weaknesses:

The applicant had one high school closure due to low academic performance and financial struggles. The applicant does not discuss lessons learned during this process and how these lessons learned will be used to prevent future issues with potential school closings (page 23-24).

Reader's Score: 7

- 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 a very strong bond rating for a charter organization, and its asset ratios are well above national charter school averages (page 24, Budget Narrative).

The applicant clearly discusses its recently updated compliance management system, which includes a network-wide reporting system, weekly and quarterly accountability metrics, support services and training interventions (page 24-25).

The applicant was renewed for a seven-year charter contract, which is the longest length awarded by the state charter authorizer (page 24, Appendix G page 27).

Weaknesses:

The applicant identifies minor issues related to procedural changes and the corresponding corrective action plans, but the applicant does not provide sufficient evidence of what these minor issues are and what corrective actions were taken. The financial audit report is not included in the application nor is a detailed discussion of the financial or operational issues and how they were addressed (Appendix F).

Reader's Score: 4

Sub

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 clearly indicates the strong potential for continued government support of the project, given that they are currently communicating with the local school district and the state board of education regarding upcoming local- and state-based PreK funding initiatives (page 25).

The applicant clearly indicates that they have secured grant funding from corporate and foundation donors, such as the Walton Family Foundation, Crown Family Philanthropies, and PwC in support of their charter schools (Budget Narrative).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not present clear funding commitments or amounts from local and state funders for future expansion (page 25). It is also not clear how much funding the corporate and foundation donors provided to the CMO in the past or if these partners will continue their support after the grant period ends (Budget Narrative).

The applicant does not provide detailed information on future funding sources or funding projections beyond the end of the grant period (Budget Narrative).

The letters of support provided in the application do not document particular funding commitments from organizations and foundations after federal funding ends (Appendix C).

Reader's Score: 5

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 applicant presents detailed data for African-American, Hispanic, Free and Reduced Lunch, special education, and ELL students for each charter school and compares the charter schools in the CICS network to local district and state percentages of educationally disadvantaged students. Among the 14 network charter schools, four schools served higher percentages of ELL, special education, and Hispanic students than both the district and the state. At least 10 of the CICS schools served higher percentages of free and reduced lunch students and African-

Sub

American students (page 26-27, Appendix E page 2).

Six of the CICS charter schools serve more homeless students than the local district and state. The 4- and 5-year graduation rates for two of the schools have significantly higher graduation rates than the local district and the state (page 28, Appendix E page 7).

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 applicant thoroughly describes how they will serve educationally disadvantaged students through the MTSS/RTI prevention-focused tiers of instruction and intervention in order to accommodate individual student needs for additional time and support students through small group instruction, guided supports, reteaching and extension within the general classroom (page 29-30)

The applicant presents detailed marketing and recruitment plan with activities and timelines to recruit and enroll educationally disadvantaged students. Such activities include a recruitment committee consisting of parents, teachers, and board members; setting up a centralized Call Center; radio promotions; and reaching out to community faith-based organizations (page 37-39).

The applicant provides a comprehensive table of current elementary school enrollment and future PreK enrollment targets at the expansion schools for each of the five years of the grant period (page 39-40).

The applicant clearly presents a plan to engage parents in the expansion schools through focus groups, frequent communication, conferences, trainings, and facilitating support services (page 40-41).

For English Language Learners, the applicant clearly indicates that they will offer recruitment and enrollment materials in Spanish as well as offer translation services at the school and network level for recruitment and outreach events (page 42-43).

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: 30

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 clearly indicates the underlying foundation for its conceptual framework and elaborates on the theory of action of the project, with the goals of achieving educational equity and closing achievement gaps (page 44).

The applicant presents high-quality peer reviewed literature discussions and references about the effectiveness of closing school readiness gaps among educationally disadvantaged students through investments in early childhood education and added hours of preschool education (page 44-46).

The applicant describes a thorough plan for incorporating several evidence-based practices for PreK education into its educational model, such as parent and family involvement and connecting play and practice (page 46).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a comprehensive PreK logic model that includes inputs and processes that are clearly aligned to relevant outputs, outcomes, and results, as well as a brief description of the research-based beliefs, context, and supports that underlie the PreK program expansion (page 52-53, Appendix G page 16).

The applicant presents a detailed evaluation and analysis plan with two focus areas that culminates in a summative report on the extent to which pre-K student achievement varies across CICS elementary schools, as well as an exploratory analysis to assess whether variation in implementation of the various aspects of the CICS pre-K model is related to variation in project outcomes (page 48-49).

The applicant provides a clear evaluation framework that presents detailed evaluation questions, quantitative and qualitative data sources, and suggested data analyses for each of the four project objectives. The implementation of the evaluation framework produces both quantitative and qualitative data for the project (Appendix G page 25-26).

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.

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant presents a comprehensive table of project objectives and performance measures with specific and measurable targets by the end of the grant period. Each of the performance measures are achievable, realistic, and aligned to the outcomes and results in the logic model (page 52-53).

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 applicant clearly describes an ongoing improvement process in which key project leadership will collaborate with school-level staff to collect data and codify effective practices and conditions necessary for success. These evaluation processes will establish effective practice sharing, data-driven solutions, and continuous improvement strategies for the phased expansion of PreK schools throughout the five years of the grant period (page 54).

The applicant thoroughly discusses a project start-up and implementation plan that incorporates effective replication activities such as soliciting feedback from parents and community members and updating key stakeholders on project progress (page 53-54).

The applicant intends to participate in the Chicago Based Collaborative to stay current about effective early childhood practices for serving educationally disadvantaged youth and to share key lessons learned (page 56).

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: 10

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant thoroughly describes the relevant training and experience of key project personnel, such as the CICS CEO, Chief of Schools, CFO, Chief Learning Officer, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and the Manager of Student Recruitment (page 57-60).

The applicant includes 16 resumes of project leadership, school staff, and teachers that all have more than 10 years of experience as teachers, in school leadership and management roles, and positions in charter schools or charter management organizations (Appendix B).

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 explains how formative assessments of PreK curriculum will be used to provide insights and help inform curriculum adjustments. Teachers are expected to continuously review and provide feedback on assessment and classroom data in order to monitor student progress and to determine if changes in lesson planning, instruction, and student supports are needed (page 22, 30, 32).

The applicant clearly presents several procedures and strategies for collecting outcome data and documenting feedback and lessons learned, including staff and parent roundtables, parent and teacher surveys, professional learning communities with school staff and stakeholders, and annual town hall meetings (page 61-65).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

The applicant did not address CPP3.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address CPP3.

Reader's Score: 0

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: Chicago Charter School Foundation (S282M200023)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	24
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	20
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	30
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	10
Sub Total	100	84
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
CPP 3: High School Students		
1. High School Students	2	0
CPP4: Serve Native American Students		
1. Native American Students	4	0
CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools		
1. Reopening Schools	2	0
Sub Total	8	0
Total	108	84

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - FY20 CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Chicago Charter School Foundation (S282M200023)

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: 24

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 clear evidence for all students and for all subgroups clearly showing data comparing applicant schools with both district and State performance measures (e25-32). Applicant data includes academic achievement on statewide assessments and NWEA assessment, student attendance and retention rates, and student academic growth; and is clearly compared with both district and State data (e25-32; e44-45). SY 2018-19 data reveals that applicant elementary schools out-performed neighborhood schools on common assessments by 24% in math and 16% in English/Language Arts (e18). The applicant clearly explains academic achievement presented in the application and shows student growth over time (e30). The applicant clearly explains and details results concerning the Chicago Public Schools' common accountability system which is used for both traditional district and charter schools. Using this multi-indicator point system, educationally disadvantaged students in applicant schools compare at or above district scores (e25-26).

Weaknesses:

The applicant state achievement data comparing charter school, district and state students reveal applicant student scores are lower in ELA and math (e106). For example, the applicant charter schools' PARCC score of 23% as compared with the surrounding district score of 25% and state score of 35% for SY 18-19.

Reader's Score: 8

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 discloses that a singular charter school (Larry Hawkins High School) has closed due to low performance and financial struggles at the end of SY2015-16. The application clearly documents a rationale for the closure (e39-40).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not include lessons learned regarding the closure of Larry Hawkins High School (e39-40). The applicant states that the school was initially operated by Edison Learning for two years and subsequently operated by Charter Schools USA for the four years prior to closure due to low performance and financial struggles. The lack of charter school leadership continuity may have contributed to closure, however no further details are provided in the application.

Reader's Score: 7

- 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 provides a clear summary explaining the minor financial issue, when it began, and what the plan is to address them (e40-41). The applicant also provides a multi-year budget demonstrating sound financial planning, including enrollment trends over the years and facilities costs (e176-181).

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that a copy of their most recent financial audit contains a minor compliance issue and is provided in the application. The application does not contain a copy of their most recent financial audit. The application cites that minor procedural changes and a corresponding corrective action are delineated in detail on p. 69-70 in Appendix F. However, this citation is not provided in the application.

Reader's Score: 4

- 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 clearly provides potential support after the grant period ends. For example, beginning conversations with Chicago Public Schools and the Illinois State Board of Education confirming financial support are noted. These conversations confirming financial support align to recent state legislation passed on flow-through early childhood funding to state and district entities (e41). In addition, the applicant documents a commitment to strong budgeting practices to support the inclusion of the pre-K model into current operating budgets, aligned to budget and charter authorization approval through contract amendment (e41). The applicant notes in its budget narrative that the applicant has secured grant funding from the Walton Family Foundation, Crown Family Philanthropies, and PwC (e176).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide specific financial commitments after the grant funding period ends (e176).

Sub

Reader's Score: 5

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 applicant sufficiently provides percentage of students that are educationally disadvantaged across and within all schools (e43). The percentage of applicant educationally disadvantaged students is compared with both district and state percentages (e42). In addition, the applicant provides homeless student data comparisons with both the district and state (e44). The application presents extensive narrative and clear graphics explaining how the curriculum and school environment addresses the needs of educationally disadvantaged students using a multi-tiered support system that is developmentally appropriate (e45-47). The application provides convincing evidence of focus on children with disabilities and ELL students. Student Support teams, differentiated instruction, inclusion, and progress monitoring for students with disabilities are noted in the application (e49). The application provides extensive information related to EL student instructional supports. These include inclusion, monitoring, consultation and support facilitation, differentiated instruction, teacher modeling, language supports, vocabulary development, collaborative conversations and visual representations (50-51).

Significant and appropriate staff professional development is explained in the application, including early childhood play-based model, trauma-informed practices, creative curriculum, and culturally responsive pedagogy (e48-49).

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 applicant provides a clear and reasonable well-developed and extensive year-long recruitment and enrollment plan beginning Fall, 2020 (e53-55). The applicant's current elementary schools hold 84% of students qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch. Applicant Pre-K recruitment plans including marketing strategies, activities and outreach are poised to recruit high percentages of educationally disadvantaged families, thus striving to maintain

Sub

demographics consistent with those of applicant current student population (e52-56). The application explains in detail how parents and the community will be engaged in the implementation and ongoing support of the new pre-K program in each applicant elementary school. For example, one of the strategies for engaging families is gaining input on the implementation and operation of the pre-K program through scheduled Focus Groups (e56-58). The application includes realistic enrollment targets (e55). The proposed plan is both comprehensive and thorough.

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: 30

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 clear and comprehensive conceptual framework including a clear theory of actions and results. Equity for all students utilizing a play-based early childhood model is the underlying foundation upon which the applicant conceptual framework is based (e59). High-quality and relevant literature is appropriately documented to support this (e59-63). Three applicant schools will partner with Distinctive Schools and will leverage their experience to incorporate effective practice into pre-K plans, relying on their knowledgeable early childhood leadership team (e60).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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.

Strengths:

The applicant's logic model provided is clear and comprehensive (e151). The applicant's logic model contains inputs, activities, outputs, and both short and long term results of the project. Comprehensive key activities include recruiting at-risk high poverty pre-K students and families, hiring highly qualified staff and leadership, implementing

Sub

rigorous, personalized early childhood curriculum, developing and executing a relevant continuous improvement process and partnering with parents and community members (e14). Evaluation methods proposed are thorough, feasible, and clearly aligned to performance measures (e151). The applicant logic model performance measures are objective, measurable and clearly related to intended outcomes of the project (e160-161). The applicant documents a preliminary evaluation framework and associated performance measures (Appendix G). The proposed evaluation will produce ongoing high-quality quantitative and qualitative data, including critical student outcomes and operational processes (e63, e66-67). The applicant clearly details both qualitative and quantitative data related to the ability to roll-out a pre-K program across its ten elementary schools and the pre-K program impact on student learning (e63-69).

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 applicant extensively and clearly identifies all goals, objectives and outcomes within and throughout the application. Each goal is specific and measurable (e68-69). For example, one of the performance measures for "Drive consistently high academic performance for all students" is "An incremental increase in grade-level promotion rates in grade K, one, and two by 5% each year from SY22-23 to SY24-25" (e69).

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 applicant adequately describes the design for project implementation and evaluation, along with general plans for documenting outcome evidence and incorporating evidence into decision-making (e67). The applicant includes some actions for disseminating results and lessons learned from project implementation and evaluation (e67). The applicant explicitly states how data and lessons learned will be incorporated into the expansion process and how both programmatic and strategy-level data will be incorporated into decision-making throughout implementation (e69-72). These comprehensive strategies will result in information to guide possible replication.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Sub

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 lists key project personnel and adequately provides a summary of their qualifications, including training and experience relevant to the opening of the pre-K classes across applicant elementary schools (e72-73). The applicant plans to wisely incubate its first three pre-K classes with the Distinctive Schools cohort in Year Two of project, identifying key members of its leadership team to assume active roles in implementation, management, monitoring, and iterating on pre-K programming (e73). The applicant provides resumes of key personnel (e187-226) and an organizational chart is provided in the application (e168-169).

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 provides a general and sufficient plan for how feedback will be received and documented (e66-67). The applicant includes a general timeline across the grant cycle for collecting outcome data to make improvements to the project (e69-70). The applicant provides a thoughtful and comprehensive plan for receiving and documenting feedback that contains significant details about the steps to collect data feedback and the type of data and feedback collected, as well as how project personnel will use feedback and data to make improvements (e77-82).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Sub

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 application does not address CPP3.

Weaknesses:

The application does not address CPP3.

Reader's Score: 0

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 application does not address CPP4.

Weaknesses:

The application does 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 application does not address CPP5

Weaknesses:

The application does not address CPP5

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2020 04:41 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2020 04:41 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Chicago Charter School Foundation (S282M200023)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources		
1. Applicant and Resources	40	22
Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	20	20
Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan		
1. Project Design/Evaluation	30	30
Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan		
1. Personnel/Management	10	10
Sub Total	100	82
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
CPP 3: High School Students		
1. High School Students	2	0
CPP4: Serve Native American Students		
1. Native American Students	4	0
CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools		
1. Reopening Schools	2	0
Sub Total	8	0
Total	108	82

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - FY20 CMO - 4: 84.282M

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Chicago Charter School Foundation (S282M200023)

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: 22

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 detailed data that shows the comparison of the performance of CICS students to area schools, the district, and the state. The applicant includes a detailed narrative to support each data table presented as evidence that the organization has consistently exceeded the academic achievement results of other public schools in the state. (e26-e32).

The applicant justifies not including the attendance rates of CICS high schools as the comparison data available is not of the quality that will yield accurate data needed to get an accurate comparison. If data collected to measure the graduation cohort rates of CICS students would be skewed as a result of the high percentage of students traveling to neighborhood high school to complete their education (e26).

The applicant provides data to support that African-American, ELL and economically disadvantaged students in the CICS - Network, CPS and State PARCC performance outperform students in grades 3-8 in ELA and Math (e28-27).

To demonstrate the degree to which CICS high school students graduate when compared to the district, the 2018-2019 data shows that CICS students successfully graduated 92% of its students within 4 years and 97% in five years (e31).

The applicant provides a two-year data analysis of the attendance rates for CICS campuses. The data shows that the CICS network has the same attendance average as the City and State. The applicant notes that attendance is one area where sub-group data is not available from the district or state in a format that can be prepared (e29).

The applicant provided data for the retention rates for CICS as a network and each school where the proposed pre-

Sub

K expansion will take place. On average, the network maintains an overall retention rate of 80% (e30).

Weaknesses:

While the applicant notes that CICS schools perform at or above the neighborhood schools in nine of the ten nearest schools with similar grade levels, it is less when compared using PARCC data show that CICS is performing below the state (e106).

The applicant doesn't provide data showing a comparison of CICS schools to the district and state. To this end, it is difficult to determine the status of CICS schools when compared to the district or state when examining student attendance and retention rates. The information was not available.

Reader's Score: 8

- 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 notes that one CICS campus, Larry Hawkings, closed at the end of 2015-16 school year due to low performance. The school initially operated by Edison Learning from fall 2010 through summer 2012 after which it was operated by Charter Schools USA (e39).

The applicant explains that Larry Hawkins opened its doors in response to a request from CPS to open a middle and high school in the Altgeld Gardens community as a non-selective enrollment high school as one did not currently exist at the time. The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) planned to add several hundred new units to the public housing complex in the neighborhood, which would have theoretically housed students who would have potentially enrolled in the school.

The decision by CHA to delay the construction of new public housing units and the increased violence in the community are factors that CICS attributes to the decline and enrollment and financial struggles. To this end, the applicant states that they were not able to deliver the education promised to its students and families (e39).

The applicant provides signed charter agreements as evidence to support that all the other schools managed by CICS have charters renewed initially for a five-year term ending in 2022, which was later extended through seven years ending in 2024 (e40, e163).

Weaknesses:

While the applicant notes that low performance, neighborhood violence, and lack of housing units as factors that contributed to the closing of the Larry Hawkins School, the applicant does not address lessons learned from these experiences.

Reader's Score: 7

- 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.**

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Strengths:

The applicant contends that the CICS has historically maintained a strong financial position. Evidence, according to the applicant can be found in the most recent audit that shows another year of increasing fund balances and current and net ratios well above the national charter school averages (e40).

The applicant acknowledges that the most recent audit revealed a compliance issue that the CICS has addressed by putting a correcting action plan in place by updating the compliance management system that includes network-wide reporting system, weekly and quarterly accountability metrics, support services and training interventions (e41).

The applicant provides a multi-year with a detailed budget narrative and enrollment projections for each through 2024. The applicant notes that CICS annual budgets are constructed on a break-even or surplus basis which has helped CICS earn one of the strongest bond ratings of any charter organization in the country (e176-181).

Weaknesses:

The applicant acknowledges a compliance issue that was reported in the most recent audit which could be found in Appendix F, however, the document was not available to review the finding and corresponding response from CICS. The applicant did not provide the corresponding corrective plan.

Reader's Score: 4

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 some evidence of potential support for funding of the project once the Federal funding ends. For example, the applicant mentions that they have been working closely with the President of Ounce of Prevention to discuss advocacy and funding formula flow-through to the CICS network (e41).

The applicant notes that they are beginning to have initial conversations with CPS and the Illinois State Board of Education to confirm funding opportunities with approval from both entities regarding flow-through early childhood funding to district and state entities (e41).

The applicant notes in its budget narrative that CICS has secured grant funding from the Walton Family Foundation, Crown Family Philanthropies, and PwC in support of the innovation work the organization is doing (e176).

Weaknesses:

While the applicant mentions several potential sources of funding for the project after Federal funding ends, the response lacks specificity.

Clarification of the specific opportunities and the potential level of support that would flow to CICS would have strengthened the response. While the applicant acknowledges the receipt of grant funding from major donors, it is unclear of the amount of the grants and the period for which the funds will be allocated to support the organization (e176).

To determine the potential for continued support, more detailed information is needed to demonstrate that the applicant has definitively secured funding or letters of commitment from potential donors and sponsors indicating such.

Sub

Reader's Score: 3

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 applicant provides detailed information and data to demonstrate the extent to which schools in the CICS network serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners at rates comparable to other public schools.

The applicant notes that of the 7,868 students the network serves, 92% are students of color (63% African-American and 29% Hispanic), and 84% qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch prices (e42).

The applicant provides a detailed chart (Chart 12) that shows a breakdown by the campus that compares the percentage of children in all subgroups compared to the district and the State. The data shows that CICS network schools serve the same percentage of SPED students as the district but is higher than the State's average of 12.1% compared to their 14.6%. While the data shows that CICS network schools serve fewer ELL students, the applicant points out that four of the fourteen CICS campuses serve a higher percentage of ELL students than the district's 18.8%. The applicant notes that one of its campuses, CICS West Belden has an ELL population of 42.5% (e43). The applicant provides data that show the comparison of Homelessness by CICS Campus. Based on the data provided, CICS network schools have a collective homeless rate of 5.7% compared to 3.5 for CPS, and for the State 2.0%. The applicant reports that two CICS High School campus homeless rate is 20%. Nevertheless, the applicant shows that a comparison of the high school graduation rates for these students, CICS has an 83% rate, while CPS has a 66.4 rate of homeless students graduating and the state has a rate of 61.2% (e44).

The applicant has designed an education plan that targets all subgroups. The applicant fittingly proposes three main strategies that include MTSS as a system to provide the multi-tiered system of support to ensure that no child falls between the cracks. Another strategy is the focus on data to enable and guide continuous improvements, and robust professional development (e47-e48).

The applicant provides a detailed summary of the focus on its educational program interventions and supports for its Special Education Students, English Language Learners, and Economically Disadvantaged Students (e49-e52).

The applicant provides substantially high-quality data showing comparisons of CICS network schools to the district and the state as well as detailed education plans and intervention supports for all subgroups. The applicant has strongly demonstrated that the academic needs of all students served are being met

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are 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 applicant presents a detailed plan to expand enrollment to the ten elementary schools to include Pre-K. The plan includes a timeline of recruitment and outreach events that will take place from 2020-2021 that includes an on-the-ground community engagement in low income and underserved neighborhoods in areas that have high volumes of potential families such as community organizations, parks districts, parks, and libraries (e53).

The applicant provides a comprehensive recruitment timeline that will be managed by the school's Manager of Student Recruitment. The timeline includes a comprehensive list of activities that support the applicant's assertion of its commitment to ensuring that all disadvantaged children will receive the services they need to receive a free, appropriate, and high-quality public education (e52-e55).

The applicant lists a wide variety of effective activities that target the families of eligible students. For example, the applicant plans to create a centralized call center by September 2020, where parents interested in the pre-K program can first connect using the call center and will receive a follow-up call from the Manager of Student Recruitment for ensuring a high level of support and care for interested families (e53).

The applicant's model for recruitment includes provisions for involving parents in focus groups, conferences, and training and the community partners to help promote the school and the new pre-K program (e54).

The applicant's plan for serving its soon to be pre-K-12 schools are designed to meet the needs of the students targeted for enrollment into any of the network schools. To this end, the applicant provides a detailed plan of the three areas of focus that will drive their ability to serve children effectively and to be able to meet all state academic challenges. The applicant has identified three key strategies that will drive their effectiveness one of which is a focus on MTSS, designed to ensure that students do not fall between the cracks. The other two strategies essential to the success of the educational plan include a focus on data to inform instructional decisions for continuous improvement and robust professional development (e47-e48).

The quality of the plan provided by the applicant provides detailed evidence that supports its plan to recruit, enroll and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students as evidenced through its outreach plans targeting potential pre-K students and current families (e53-e55).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Sub

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: 30

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 that its conceptual framework for pre-K is based on expansion to add 780 pre-K seats for educationally disadvantaged four-year-olds at 10 charter schools across Chicago by implementing a play-based early childhood model to better prepare students for Kindergarten by laying the foundation for a passion for life-long learning in pre-K (e59).

The applicant has provided evidence of relevant research that supports its plan to implement a play-based early childhood model that will help better prepare students for kindergarten and lay the foundation for a passion for life-long learning. For example, the applicant cites the research of James Heckman's research on the economics of human potential as reinforcement for its commitment to its at-risk population by providing evidence that high-quality investments in early childhood education result in skills that last a lifetime and ultimately emerging as an effective way to break the cycle of poverty (e61).

The applicant also references a recent study conducted by the National Institute for Early Education Research that shows that early hours of preschool education were substantially effective in closing the achievement gap between urban children and their more advantaged peers (e61).

The applicant plans to incorporate the work of Carol Copple and Sue Bradekamp's research on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs into its Pre-K programming as their research is based on nurturing a child's social-emotional, physical and cognitive development (e62).

Overall the applicant has demonstrated that the conceptual framework that guides the activities of the project is of high quality and supported by relevant current research that connects with the project goals and initiatives.

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.

Strengths:

The applicant presents a comprehensive method for evaluation including objective performance measures that are intended to measure the proposed project objectives. The applicant included a detailed Logic Model that shows inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes, results, and impact are written in terms that will yield the quantitative and qualitative data described in the project (e151).

Sub

The inputs noted in the Pre-K Logic Model align with the focus of the evaluation. For example, one of the two areas of evaluation focuses on the ability of CICS to rollout a pre-K program across its 10 elementary schools, the logic model contains inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes, and measurable results that will produce that data needed to evaluate the impact of the project (e151).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are 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 applicant provides goals, objectives and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project that are specified and measurable as noted in the Preliminary Evaluation Framework (e160). For example, the applicant states that CICS's impact and expected results center on achieving four primary objectives, one of which is implementing a pre-K program at 10 of 10 CICS schools (e14). This objective is further developed in the organization's Preliminary Evaluation Plan that includes the objective, guiding questions, data sources, and analyses of the objective to inform CICS of the progress towards achieving the objective and impact (e160).

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 provides a detail evaluation framework and associated performance measures with proposed evaluation questions that align with the related goals of the pre-K program. The evaluation questions in the plan and related data sources and methods of analysis will provide the relevant results the organization desires to guide the possible replication of project activities and strategies. For example, the goal of implementing a pre-K program at each of the CICS existing sites, the evaluative questions are designed to require actions that will result in the production of data for analyses. Specifically, one question CICS will consider when evaluating the program is whether CICS pre-K is serving high-need students. The sources of data have been identified as network, district, and State demographic data which will result in the comparative analysis desired to produce high-quality data to meet the evaluative outcomes (e160-161).

The applicant notes that Bellwether Education Partners was consulted in designing the evaluation of the pre-K program based on their extensive early childhood expertise and prior experiences evaluating charter school programs (e67-e68).

The applicant addresses methods for reflecting upon and reporting results of the evaluation both formatively and summatively. The applicant notes that data will be used for on-going decision-making related to program implementation and enhancement.

The applicant address how the information will be disseminated both internally and to the broader community through in-person or virtual presentations, national conferences, blog posts, social media, and reports on the Bellwether website (e67).

The overall plan for project implementation and evaluation is detailed and comprehensive. The approaches the

Sub

applicant proposes in the project as designed are of high-quality and will yield the intended results desired by the applicant.

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 includes brief bios of key personnel with an explanation of how they are essential to the success of the project (e73-e76).

A review of the resumes shows that key personnel shows that each possesses the relevant training experience, and background to carry out the project (e187-e226).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are 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 has identified an extensive plan ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the proposed project that will include feedback from parents, stakeholder groups; CICS network staff, teachers, and community members.

The organization has included several assessment tools to inform decision making and improving upon the proposed pre-K program such as digital portfolios that will be used to gather and organize meaningful data, including work samples, videos, and observations to demonstrate what a child knows and can do. The applicant proposes to share data gleaned from digital portfolios with families to promote strong home-school connections. The applicant ideas other sources for data collection and processes for using the data for continuous improvement (e81).

Sub

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:

The applicant does not address CCP 3.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address CCP 3.

Reader's Score: 0

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: 02/12/2020 04:41 PM