

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2020 04:40 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Grimmway Schools (S282M200028)

Reader #1: *****

| | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| Questions | | |
| Selection Criteria | | |
| Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources | | |
| 1. Applicant and Resources | 40 | 35 |
| Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students | | |
| 1. Disadvantaged Students | 20 | 16 |
| Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan | | |
| 1. Project Design/Evaluation | 30 | 28 |
| Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan | | |
| 1. Personnel/Management | 10 | 9 |
| Sub Total | 100 | 88 |
| | | |
| 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 | 89 |

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - FY20 CMO - 2: 84.282M

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Grimmway Schools (S282M200028)

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: 35

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 student academic clearly documenting levels of improvement. On the 2019 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) students in grades 3-8 nearly matched the State proficiency rates, with 46% met/exceeded standard in ELA versus 50% and 33% met/exceeded in math versus 41%. Students in grades 3-5 achieved similar results with 48% met/exceeded versus 50% and 36% met/exceed versus 44% in math. Hispanic/Latino and SED student subgroup performance information showed students outperforming their grade level peers in surrounding district, county, and state across most metrics. (page e34-36)

The applicant provided attendance data indicating that both schools are slightly above the state average. Student retention rates have been 95-97% at the flagship school at 90% at GAS. (page e38) They note that their dropout rate is 0% noting that families moving out from the area impacted the retention rates. (page e37-40)

The application further notes zero student suspensions or expulsions in 2018-19. There have been few suspensions in their 8 years history versus the 4% average across the County and State. (page e40) The data shows steady improvements in proficiency in both schoolwide in each subgroup. (page e38)

Weaknesses:

The applicant falls slightly below state average in both ELA and Math. (page e34-35)

There is only one year of data presented therefore it's difficult to determine if they are narrowing the achievement gap without data comparison

Sub

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 clearly states that no charter schools closed or charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements, and has not had affiliation with any charter school revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation. (page e26-37)

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses.

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 clearly states that no charter school has had any significant issues in the areas of financial or operational management or student safety, nor have they otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the schools' charters. (page e41) The financial and operational information noted in their most recent audit.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 10

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides detailed experience and funding activity. Their operations and financials have been fully vetted by entities involved during the awarding funds to the first two schools. (page e43) These include grants from the USDOE Charter Schools Program sub-grants for initial planning and implementation of both schools, the Walton Family Foundation, and New Schools Venture Fund. (page e43) [REDACTED] in tax-exempt bond financing was secured for the other schools.

The grant will be used to supplement, not supplant, any federal, state or local funds, and not be used to pay for existing levels of service funded from any other source.

Weaknesses:

No letters of support from foundations or financial institutions documenting ongoing relationships or discussions about funding for the new school. Additional information needed as it pertains to how they continue after the grant ends.

Sub

Reader's Score: 7

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: 16

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 clearly details information about the school population served. The schools currently enroll educationally disadvantaged students, including Special Education (SpEd) and English Learners (EL) at higher or comparable rates than State (and County) averages. They serve more Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED) 85% versus 61%, English Learners (EL) 35% versus 19% and Hispanic/Latino (H/L) 92% versus 55% because of the demographics in the surrounding area. (page e43)

Weaknesses:

The application notes surrounding schools enroll 17.1% migrant students however, they don't see much enrollment despite outreach. (page e44) They acknowledge not having sufficient migrant services programs to offer to that specific market being targeted. (page e45)

They are serving 8% versus the State average of 12% of SpEd students but believe that their MTSS and personalized learning programs result in fewer referrals for SpEd services. (page e44)

Reader's Score: 7

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

Strengths:

The application details activities that ensure that they are able to replicate, expand, and enroll and serve educationally disadvantaged students. (page e51-52) The model will be used as the infrastructure for expansion in local communities. The current model will be deployed and expanded to ensure goals are reached. (page e52) Outreach plans are to commence prior to the school launch. Activities are in both Spanish and English and include different levels of potential engagement. These efforts include but limited to flyer distribution at local schools, churches, businesses, laundromats, parks, recreational facilities, community learning centers, libraries, fairs and service organizations.

Sub

Existing schools engage the community through week-long summer camps, community cooking classes, Wellness Fair, and Winter Carnivals which is a model that will be replicated. The detailed recruiting/outreach plan is included in the application. (page e52)

The applicant is its own Local Education Agency (LEA) and member of a SELPA. And pledges to work in corporation with all local and state agencies to ensure educationally disadvantaged children will receive a free appropriate education. This includes meeting requirements mandated within the student' Individual Education Plan (IEP). (page e54) They will follow SELPA child-find procedures identifying all students who may require assessment determine related services. The SPED Team which includes SpEd Resource Specialist, School Psychologist, Speech Therapist, and School Counselor will administer the SpEd program.

Weaknesses:

The application does not address recruitment activities to increase enrollment for students with disabilities.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan

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

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

Reader's Score: 28

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant details the success of their current schools which represent two out of the eight existing in Kern County with a population of 890,000. The population is steadily increasing and college degree attainment is well below State average. The proposed research and planned activities support the project. (page e56)

The application notes that replication of their existing model will be research based driven by data at every level. (page e67) Outcomes and objectives detailed in its Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) include both Absolute Measures (enrollment, standardized test data, graduation rates) tied to objective data and Comparative Measures, tied to their comparison schools/districts' performance outcomes. (page e57)

Weaknesses:

Insufficient research information is presented in the application.

Reader's Score: 4

2. 2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the proposed project, as described in the applicant's logic model, and that will produce quantitative and qualitative

Sub

data by the end of the grant period.

Strengths:

The application includes a logic model detailing how grant activities are aligned with outcomes and objective performance indicators that have been identified as part of strategic planning process with Bellwether an external evaluation agency. (page e58) They focus on the ability to expand the model while maintaining fidelity during implementation.

The evaluation framework will leverage existing data collected and the applicant's approach at both the macro and micro level. This includes organizational milestones for expansion, college credits earned, ESY learning assessments and stakeholder surveys. (page e60)

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses.

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's Logic Model included goal setting which aligned with California's state priorities. The goals, objectives and performance measures are part of a strategic growth planning process that has included Bellwether an independent evaluator who has been engaged for purposes of this project. (page e59) The indicators include student academic outcomes, health and wellness outcomes, and operational processes. (page e59)

Weaknesses:

The logic model has insufficient performance measures for students classified as have disabilities. Insufficient performance measures for students classified as have disabilities and EL.

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's model is data driven and operates autonomously from its authorizers. The design for project implementation includes thorough plans for documenting outcome evidence and lessons learned using a comprehensive data management system. This will continuously drive improvement initiatives across the organization and impact Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for students. (page e67)

The application details reporting formatively (quarterly and annually) and summatively (project end). Additionally, the group will assess progress toward longer-term goals including project milestones, implementation variables, and student outcomes. (page e68)

This activity, along with evaluations reports, dissemination and communication of results and presentation of findings demonstrate the ability to replicate project activities and strategies.

Sub

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

1. 4. Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

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

In addition, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant's staff is culturally diverse and reflective of the population serviced. As evidenced by the resumes provided the leadership personnel have the qualifications and depth of experience to carry out the proposed project. (page e68-69) Their resumes reflect longevity with the organization and depth in the field which translates to the success of the organization. (page e66-85)

Weaknesses:

The chief administrative officer position is currently vacant with the search in process. The area of responsibility is critical monitoring achievement data for teaching and principal coaching and PD needs.

Reader's Score: 4

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

Strengths:

The application details data drivers across the organization starting from the student level to school-wide. This includes tech-based tools to support analysis and reflection. The application includes a schedule of activity surrounding the feedback and continuous improvement operations model. (page e57-59)

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP 3: High School Students

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3: High School Students

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

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

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides student academic clearly documenting levels of improvement. On the 2019 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) students in grades 3-8 nearly matched the State proficiency rates, with 46% met/exceeded standard in ELA versus 50% and 33% met/exceeded in math versus 41%. Students in grades 3-5 achieved similar results with 48% met/exceeded versus 50% and 36% met/exceed versus 44% in math. Hispanic/Latino and SED student subgroup performance information showed students outperforming their grade level peers in surrounding district, county, and state across most metrics. (page e34-36)

Attendance data indicates that both schools are slightly above the state average. Student retention rates have been 95-97% at the flagship school at 90% at GAS. The dropout rate is 0% and families moving out from the area are impacting the retention rates. (page e37-40) The application further notes zero student suspensions or expulsions in 2018-19. There have been few suspensions in their 8 years history versus the 4% average across the County and State. Parent engagement is strong with a variety of options available to them including online access to information about their child. The School Site Council (SSC), Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), educations workshops and other activities are part of the model. (page e39-40) Surveys are conducted annually to assess their satisfaction. (page e40) Growth data included in the application finds 8th graders out performing 3rd graders because of the time spent in the systems. The data shows steady improvements in proficiency in both school wide in each subgroup.

Weaknesses:

Comparison against the state average falls slightly below however they outperformed their grade level peers in the surrounding Districts in Kern County in both ELA and Math. (page e34-35)

No clear plan to recruit students with disabilities.

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:

The application did not specifically address this competitive preference priority.

Weaknesses:

The application did not specifically address this competitive preference 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:

The application did not specifically address this competitive preference priority.

Weaknesses:

The application did not specifically address this competitive preference priority.

Reader's Score: 0

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Reader #2: *****

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| Selection Criteria | | |
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| Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan | | |
| 1. Project Design/Evaluation | 30 | 29 |
| Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan | | |
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| 1. High School Students | 2 | 1 |
| CPP4: Serve Native American Students | | |
| 1. Native American Students | 4 | 0 |
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| 1. Reopening Schools | 2 | 0 |
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| Total | 108 | 91 |

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Panel #2 - FY20 CMO - 2: 84.282M

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Grimmway Schools (S282M200028)

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: 35

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 and extensive student academic achievement results for all students and for subgroups that clearly show strong academic achievement, including annual student performance on statewide assessments (pp. 17-23). State test data, for example, students in grades 3-8 outperformed their peers at the local District and county, and nearly matched the State proficiency rates. For example, Mean Scale Scores (MSS) for the applicant's 3-4th graders outperformed their grade level peers in the surrounding districts and county in both English Language Arts and Math.

These results are even more convincing given the fact that 85% of the student population is socioeconomically disadvantaged (p. 1). The applicant also provides strong evidence that the data shows that their students are closing the achievement gap (p. 19). Attendance data, student retention rates, and growth data similarly demonstrate strong outcomes (pp. 21-22). For example, Average Daily Attendance (ADA) at both of the applicant's schools was above 96% in the past three years compared with a state ADA average of 95% (p. 21). Additionally, in 2018-19, 60-70% of students met their annual growth goals in Reading and Math (p. 23).

Weaknesses:

The data provided was for only one year which does not provide for trends and sustainable outcomes.

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

Sub

terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation.

Strengths:

The applicant confirms that none of the charter schools it operates or manages have closed for any reason (p. 25). Additionally, there has been no voluntary disaffiliation. Both of the applicant's schools have been renewed by the authorizer (p. 25).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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 provides convincing details that it has no significant financial or operational issues or problems with statutory or regulatory compliance (pp. 26-27). In fact, fiscal reserves are reported to exceed 36% of operating expenses, which is well in excess of the 5% reserve required by the state (p. 26). Annual external audits also reported as evidence of financial stability.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides how CSP grant funds will be used to supplement, not supplant, any federal, state or local funds, and will not be used to pay for existing levels of service funded from any other source such as Title I or Title II or any non-allowed costs (p. 27). Additional evidence of continued support is the fact that for the newly built facilities, Grimmway secured a total of almost [REDACTED] financing (p. 27). The applicant also indicates a strong track record of securing grants from private entities [REDACTED] 2016-2017, including peer reviewed grants from the CA Department of Education (p. 27).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not fully outline a detailed fiscal plan to fund the project beyond the Federal grant program. Without such plans there is limited knowledge how the project will be sustained other than through per pupil state funding, which is cited as lagging behind other states (p. 27).

Sub

Reader's Score: 7

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:

The applicant provides extensive details how they are currently serving educationally disadvantaged students using a multi-tiered system approach (MTSS) (p. 29). As described, the design is comprehensive, and at the proposed high school level the same MTSS model, along with Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) will be in place (p. 31). For example, MTSS aligns with academic standards and behavioral expectations to accelerate each student's performance to meet and/or exceed proficiency (p. 29).

The applicant does discuss how the school will ensure services to English Learners using a full-inclusion model taught by appropriate certified teachers who have received extensive professional development (p. 32).

All of the student demographic data are comparable to surrounding public schools. (p. 28). However, Grimmway's school serves more educationally disadvantaged students (85% v. 61%), English language students (35% v. 19%) than the state (p. 28).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide marketing information to recruit migrant students and students with disabilities, particularly since students in these subgroups are below state averages. For example, the applicant notes that its schools serve fewer Special Education students than the State average (8% v. 12%) (p. 28).

Reader's Score: 8

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed, clear plan to recruit enroll and effectively serve educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and students and English learners (pp. 35-40). The plan has many

Sub

components including engaging parents, a detailed recruitment plan, marketing strategies, and activities that target educationally disadvantaged students. All activities are in Spanish and English, and application materials make clear that Grimmway is a no-cost public school open to all, with non-discrimination statements (p. 35).

Weaknesses:

Enrollment activities do not target students with disabilities. This is especially relevant as the applicant has previously noted a lower percentage of students with disabilities than state averages.

Reader's Score: 9

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: 29

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 conceptual framework with a Theory of Action (p. 41) which consist of a strong organization structure, rigorous, data driven, multi-tiered instructions program combined with the core values of Grimmway (p. 41). Underpinning this theory is the researched based emphasis that high-quality teachers are the key, which explains the applicant's strong commitment to professional development (p. 41).

The researched based approached emphasizing the efficacy of teaching and hiring high-quality teachers is based on a citation and documented in the literature (p. 41)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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 logic model presented (p. 43) is clear and comprehensive, listing how grant activities are aligned with outcomes and objective performance indicators that Grimmway has identified as part of a strategic growth planning process (p. 43). The indicators include student academic outcomes (e.g., academic achievement, college credits earned

Sub

through dual enrollment, college application and matriculation), health and wellness outcomes and operational processes (e.g., CMO staffing, financial sustainability). The logic model lends itself to a rigorous evaluation to be built and sustained (p. 44) because it will focus on the applicant's ability to add two additional schools while maintaining fidelity to its successful model and demonstrate the projects impact on student learning, all of which are aligned to major goals, objectives and strategies within the logic model (pp. 43-44).

The evaluation model will focus on two areas: 1) Grimmway's ability to add two additional schools while maintaining fidelity to core elements of its successful model and 2) Grimmway's impact on student learning, each of which are align to major goals, objectives, and strategies proposed by Grimmway and represented in detail within the logic model. (p. 44).

The evaluation framework and associated performance measures are designed to produce a high-quality quantitative and qualitative set of data in alignment to Grimmway's expansion and performance goals (p. 44).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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:

All goals, objectives, performance measures and outcomes are clearly identified (pp. 48-49). Each objective has specific and measurable outcomes that are relevant to the logic model and the grant period. For example, using the objective to replicate and continuously improve the applicant's rigorous model a performance measure has been set that more than 60% of all students will meet individual Growth Targets in Math and reading each year (p. 48).

Weaknesses:

Performance measures are not disaggregated for disadvantaged students (p. 23).

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 design for the implementation and evaluation of the proposed project are largely focused on gaining information for the replication of project activities, including data which would confirm the effectiveness of strategies employed by the project (pp. 48-49). For example, one of six such objectives is focused on replicating Grimmway's rigorous instructional model in K-8 schools, resulting in high academic achievement (p. 48). This objective alone will generate dozens many of descriptive statistics relative to student performance that will be used to inform that replication efforts for the new schools are on track. The chart provided by the applicant details 22 definitive performance measures tied to the goals and objectives (p. 48)

The prospects of an effective replication is further enhanced by prior to opening a new school, the Founding Principal will spend a full year in Residency, engaged in comprehensive professional development (p. 50).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

1. 4. Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

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

In addition, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides significant data at both the school, CMO, and board levels and majority of the personnel are Hispanic learners (H/L) (p. 52). For example, 79% of current staff at one of its schools is H/L which is reflected of the student population it serves (p. 52).

The identified management team is well credentialed, experienced and diversified in knowledge and skills (pp. 53-56). For example, both the Executive Director/CEO and the Director of College and Alumni Initiatives have had successful experiences in leading schools (p. 53).

Weaknesses:

The position of Chief Operating Officer, critical to the success of the project, is vacant. The position would be responsible for overseeing school site Principals and all aspects of the instructional programs, including professional development for teachers (p. 53).

The applicant also did not describe the qualification for this key position with relevant background experiences and appropriate credentials.

Reader's Score: 4

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

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed and comprehensive plan on how performance data from numerous objectives are received for the express purpose of feedback and improvements of the project (pp. 57-59). The applicant will use the CSP grant to form an Evaluation Working Group that will meet regularly to discuss grant data and lessons learned, ensuring that school site Principals and staff get the information and support they need to make necessary adjustments in real time to ensure project goals and objectives are met (p. 59). Data driven decision making, in general, is the demonstrated strength throughout the project.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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 proposes to replicate a new high school based on a highly successful model of school achievement in their K-8 programs. The applicant predicates this assertion based on their instructional model which integrates rigorous, standards-aligned Humanities and STEM curricular with Individual learning plans that are updated every six weeks (p. 3). Therefore, there is reason to expect that as the program expands into the high school grades their eighth-grade students will be adequately ready for high school.

The applicant presents a comprehensive plan that includes detailed actions to ensure a high-quality charter school to serve educationally disadvantaged students. The plan includes researched based strategies (pp. 9-13) to prepare students to enroll and succeed in postsecondary education with a strong emphasis on no cost dual enrollment programs (p.11). It is particularly notable that the plan would employ four academic/college counselors in year one and will further add a Director of College Success (p. 12) that will support the high school graduates as they enroll in college. These actions will provide a myriad of support for college/career counseling, mentorship, ongoing assistance with financial aid and establishing peer systems.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not include a specific stated plan to enroll students with disabilities in this section. There are no project specific measures involving the recruitment and enrollment of students with disabilities provided by the applicant.

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:**

Applicant did not address the question.

Weaknesses:

Applicant did not address the question.

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:

Applicant did not address the question.

Weaknesses:

Applicant did not address the question.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2020 04:40 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/12/2020 04:40 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Grimmway Schools (S282M200028)

Reader #3: *****

| | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| Questions | | |
| Selection Criteria | | |
| Quality of the Applicant and Adequacy Resources | | |
| 1. Applicant and Resources | 40 | 35 |
| Significance of Contribution in Assisting Students | | |
| 1. Disadvantaged Students | 20 | 16 |
| Quality of the Project Design and Evaluation Plan | | |
| 1. Project Design/Evaluation | 30 | 27 |
| Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan | | |
| 1. Personnel/Management | 10 | 9 |
| Sub Total | 100 | 87 |
| | | |
| 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 | 88 |

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - FY20 CMO - 2: 84.282M

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Grimmway Schools (S282M200028)

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: 35

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:

Grimmway Schools provided academic achievement results for all students that shows strong growth, including annual student performance on California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), and higher proficiency of its students compared to the county and state (pg. e19, e33-e39). Subgroup performance is also higher than the local school districts and state with exception of English Learners (Appendix F). Its student attendance rate is on par with the local school district and state at 95-96%, chronic absenteeism is 11% at Grimmway Academy and 8% at Grimmway Shafter, and 3-year average retention rate is 96% at Grimmway Academy and 90% at Grimmway Shafter (Appendix F).

Weaknesses:

Only 2019 data was presented; data from previous years was not evident. Thus, student growth and the narrowing of the achievement gap over time was not able to be determined (pgs. e19, e33-e39, Appendix F). Subgroup performance of English Learners in the grades 3 – 8 data showed the proficiency in both ELA and Math to be lower than the local school districts and the state (Appendix F).

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:

Grimmway Schools serves 1,400 students at two charter schools in California, Grimmway Academy (opened in 2011) and Grimmway Academy Shafter (opened in 2017) (pgs. e18, Appendix E). Grimmway Schools stated that no charter school has closed or been revoked by an authorizer for any reason (pg. e41).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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:

Grimmway Schools indicated it had not had any significant issues in the areas of financial or operational management or student safety. Evidence to support this statement included its Financial Statements and Supplementary Information for year end June 30, 2018, which has no findings, and multi-year budget projections, which shows a reserve of 38% at the end of SY2019 (Appendix G).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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:

Grimmway Schools plans to use reserves and fundraising to offset the initial deficit for new schools until each reaches its capacity (pg. e43). Multi-year budget projections show a reserve of 38% in FY19, 36% in FY20, and 35% in FY21 (Appendix G). Grimmway Schools has experience in getting bond financing, grants, and a loan with the California Department of Education (pg. e43). Information provided by the applicant shows a basic plan to ensure strong financial support at a reasonable and sufficient level.

Weaknesses:

Multi-year budget projections show a consistent decline in reserve funds for the next two years. No explicit explanation for this decline was provided (Appendix G). As such, it is not clear if the current reserves will allow the two new schools, and expansion of one school, to make it to full enrollment capacity before running out.

Reader's Score: 7

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: 16

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:

Current enrollment shows a diverse student population with a higher percentage of SED, EL, RFEP, and Hispanic/Latino than the county and state averages (pg. e44). Subgroup performance is also higher than the local school districts and state with exception of English Learners (Appendix F). Grimmway Schools explained in detail how its curriculum and school environment address the needs of students with disabilities and students learning English and explained how they will continue to support these students in the new schools (pgs. e45-e50). For example, Grimmway School uses multiple in-class assessments, such as NWEA MAP, IXL, Achieve 3000, ALEKS, News ELA, Rosetta Stone, Dreambox, and Edmentum to identify low-achieving students and to continuously inform teacher practice (pg. e45). In addition, Grimmway is transitioning to Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) as a systemic, continuous improvement framework to support academic standards and behavioral expectations for all students (pg. e45).

Weaknesses:

Enrollment of students with disabilities is below the county and state averages (pg. e44). Subgroup performance of English Learners in the grades 3 – 8 data showed the proficiency in both ELA and Math to be lower than the local school districts and the state (between pgs. e77 and e79, Appendix F). In addition, subgroup proficiency of white students in Math is grades 3 – 5 is lower than the state (Appendix F).

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:

To ensure the new schools proposed in this project will recruit, enroll, and serve educationally disadvantaged students, particularly English Learners, Grimmway Schools activities and materials are in Spanish and English (pg. e51). They employ the help of parent volunteers (who are parents of current students) to talk with other parents (pg. e51). In addition, Grimmway Schools' outreach efforts include written materials distributed at easily accessible community locations, attending neighborhood and community events, advertising on local radio and in the local newspapers, hosting open-houses, and hosting other events (pgs. e51-e52, Appendix H).

Weaknesses:

No recruitment or enrollment activities were specifically targeted at students with disabilities despite their lower than average enrollment at existing schools (pgs. e44, e51-e52, Appendix H).

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: 27

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:

Grimmway Schools presented a conceptual framework that included a clear theory of action and results, including underlying assumptions and context to the county (pgs. e56-e58). They documented research about the effectiveness of having high-quality teachers (pg. e57). Teachers receive 260 hours of professional development each year and weekly one-on-one coaching (pgs. e20, e57). Grimmway Schools provided details about its individualized student program, including each student receiving an ILP and revising it every 6 weeks based on assessment data and school-wide MTSS for both academics and behavior (e29-e30, e45-e47). The applicant also noted its schools are guided by the outcomes and objectives detailed in its Local Control Accountability Plan, which is updated annually and involves input from all types of stakeholders (pgs. e57-e58, Appendix H).

Weaknesses:

Grimmway Schools identified three assumptions it used for its conceptual framework: (1) few site-based charter schools; (2) low college degree attainment in the county; and (3) population growth (pgs. e56-e57). However, Grimmway Schools did not provide adequate documentation of these assumptions.

Reader's Score: 4

- 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:

Grimmway Schools' logic model provides clear inputs and outlines several activities (pg. e59). Most activities are clearly aligned with short- to mid- term outcomes (pg. e59). For example, one activity is to "codify core elements of K – 8 curricula, instructional strategies, and MTSS model." The aligned output is "Highly qualified, diverse staff delivering rigorous personalized curriculum and MTSS...with fidelity at each school." The short- to mid- term outcomes that correspond to the activity and output includes "students' academic achievement is high and on track for college and beyond", "students are meaningfully engaged", and "schools are sufficiently staffed and staff have the support they need to succeed" (pg. e59). The proposed evaluation will focus on two areas and include interviews of CMO staff, school administrators, and teachers, as well as reviewing benchmark data to identify longitudinal trends and ensure achievement gaps of academically disadvantaged students are lessening (pg. e60).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

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

Sub

Strengths:

Grimmway Schools' proposed goals, objectives, and outcomes are clearly identified and are set for all students, including quantifiable measures and measures for disaggregated groups of students (pgs. e59, e64). For example, for the short- to mid- term outcome of "students' academic achievement is high and on track for college and beyond," the specific measurable targets include: (1) 60% of students meet individual NEWA MAP Growth Targets, (2) Overall CAASPP mean scale scores in both ELA and Math meet or exceed local Districts, County, and state for the same grade level, (3) All statistically significant subgroups' CAASPP mean scale scores in both ELA and Math meet or exceed local Districts, County, and state for the same grade level, (4) High School students complete at least three college credits per year, (5) 100% of high school students on track to meet A-G requirements each year, (6) 100% of students participate in the ACT/SAT, (7) 100% of students complete a FAFSA, and (8) 100% of students complete a college application (pgs. e59, e64).

Weaknesses:

Some of the performance measures have targets that are lower than current student performance (pg. e64). For example, in SY2019 Grimmway Schools indicated 60-70% of students met individual NWEA MAP Growth Targets in math and reading, yet the performance measure is set at 60% for both objectives 2 and 3 (pgs. e39, e64).

Reader's Score: 3

- 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:

Grimmway Schools' design for implementing and evaluating the project are clear and thorough (pgs. e65-e68). It is clear which entity is responsible for specific parts of implementation (e.g., the school board maintains control over school operations) and evaluation (e.g., the CMO review data to ensure school leaders are on track towards LCAP goals, etc.) (pgs. e65-e68). Grimmway Schools selected Bellweather, an external evaluation agency, to complete its evaluation and Bellweather will evaluate the project formatively (quarterly and annually) and summatively (project) and share the results so that Grimmway Schools can use the data to make course corrections, if needed (pg. e68).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

1. 4. Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan

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

In addition, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

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

Strengths:

Based on the project objectives of (1) increasing the number of high quality seats for students in Kern County, (2) replicating and continuously improving Grimmway's rigorous instructional model in K – 8 schools resulting in high academic achievement, (3) replicating Grimmway's personalized model with embedded MTSS in new college prep high school, (4) replicating and continuously improving the Edible Schoolyard program, (5) recruiting and developing a diverse, mission aligned, highly effective staff, (6) effectively managing finances and operations, the assumed qualifications for key personnel include knowledge of the target communities; knowledge of the Grimmway Schools instructional model; knowledge of MTSS; being able to build relationships with local colleges and industry partners; knowledge of Edible Schoolyard program and health; hiring, training, and evaluation of staff; and financial and operational skills (pg. e64). Most of the proposed key personnel have these qualifications, training, and experience needed for the opening, operation, and management of charter schools as proposed in this project, including the management of previous grants (pgs. e68-e73, Appendix B).

Weaknesses:

The position responsible for overseeing principals and all aspects of instructional programs is vacant and there is not a clear description of the qualifications needed for that position or for the added CMO positions with responsibility for this project (pgs. e69, e82).

Reader's Score: 4

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

Strengths:

Grimmway Schools provided a detailed plan of how it will collect data to make improvements to the project, including the specific data collected and timeline for collection, as well as the frequency of meetings to review data and make adjustments (pgs. e73-e75). Data collected will include enrollment data, demographic data for students/districts/county, student achievement data, Edible Schoolyard learning assessments, and staff surveys with some of it being collected daily, weekly, end of unit/semester, or specified months throughout each year (pgs. e63, e73-e74). Most data collection will be by instructional staff, however some will also be collected by administrators (pg. e73). The evaluation work group will meet regularly to discuss grant data and lessons learned, ensuring the school site Principals and staff get the information and support they need to make necessary adjustments in real time to ensure project goals and objectives are met (pg. e75).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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 proposes to open one new high school in Kern County with 1,000 seats in grades 9 – 12 (pgs. e6, e22, e25). Grimmway Schools' plan is to expand its current model into a high school setting with some unique aspects, such as creating four CTE pathways (pgs. e22, e26). Grimmway Schools provides all activities and materials in English and Spanish (pgs. e40, e45, e51).

Grimmway Academy High School was planned in partnership with California State University Bakersfield and Bakersfield College (pg. e22). The applicant Grimmway Schools plans to have a dual enrollment aspect within its CTE pathways and require each high school student to complete at least one dual enrollment course each year (pg. e22, e27). Once the high school opens, the CMO will hire four academic/college counselors and in SY2025 they will add a Director of College Success who will support graduates as they enroll in college (pgs. e28, e29).

Grimmway Schools proposes the Director of College Success will track student persistence in college (pgs. e28-e29).

Grimmway Schools proposes four performance measures specifically tied to college preparation (pg. e64).

Weaknesses:

There is no specific plan to recruit students with disabilities, only a plan to identify eligible students using the SELPAs search and serve child-find procedures (pgs. e51-e54).

It is not clear what Grimmway Schools will do differently to prepare academically disadvantaged students for postsecondary education.

There is no description of how the Director of College Success will provide support for students, including educationally

disadvantaged students, who enroll in postsecondary education institutions (pgs. e28-e29).

There was no discussion regarding how the CMO will evaluate educationally disadvantaged student progress toward meeting the performance measures (pg. e64).

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:

Not addressed in this application.

Weaknesses:

Not addressed in this application.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - CPP5: Reopening Poor-Performing Schools

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

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

- a. Demonstrate past success working with one or more academically poor-performing public schools or schools that previously were designated as persistently lowest-achieving schools or priority schools under the former School Improvement Grant program or in States that exercised ESEA flexibility, respectively, under the Elementary and Secondary Education**

Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; and

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

1. Replicating one or more high-quality charter schools based on a successful charter school model for which the applicant has provided evidence of success; and
2. Targeting a demographically similar student population in the replicated charter schools as was served by the academically poor-performing public schools

Strengths:

Not addressed in this application.

Weaknesses:

Not addressed in this application.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
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