

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/02/2020 10:56 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Opportunity 180 (S282A200009)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	35	35
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	13
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	28
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	12
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	88
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
1. CPP3	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
1. CPP4	4	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
1. CPP5	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 6</b>		
1. CPP6	3	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 7</b>		
1. CPP7	4	4
<b>Sub Total</b>	16	14
<b>Total</b>	116	102

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - CSP State Entities - 8: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Opportunity 180 (S282A200009)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

#### 1. a. Quality of Project Design

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:

Reader's Score: 35

#### Sub

##### 1. (1) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale;

###### Strengths:

The applicant presents a well-developed, researched-based logic model centered on 5 tenets to create quality charter schools, thereby creating quality public schools. Quality schools, great ideas in action, engaging the community, providing accessible data and good governance provide the foundational goals for achieving high quality programming in charter schools (e43).

Specific preference is given to subgrantees with success in serving at-risk populations and of the 52 subgrantees, 24 will operate in areas of greatest need, therefore addressing the applicant's efforts to support charter schools in LEA's identified as needing comprehensive support (e44).

Opportunity 180 (O180) has developed partnerships with existing CMO's to support the development of high-quality charter schools and will provide extensive technical support through a variety of in-person and online resources to proposed charters.

Among the activities proposed to build strong networks across the state are leadership consortiums, partnering with parent leadership councils and seeking national charter organizations to support the development and replication of high-quality charter schools (e48,50).

###### Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 15

##### 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 project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and

###### Strengths:

O180 provides clearly outlined objectives to support the intended outcome of high quality charter growth over the lifetime of the grant, specifically with regard to charter school access as outlined in growth targets, awarding of subgrants each year and a gradual increase in the number of charters (e42-46).

**Sub**

While the performance measures are primarily quantitative, the applicant accounts for such qualitative measures as parental surveys and dissemination of best practices through the annual Top Schools report (e50).

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**3. (3) The ambitiousness of the State entity's objectives for the quality charter school program carried out under the CSP State Entities program**

**Strengths:**

O180 seeks to become "the national test case for charters." O180 proposes to support the anticipated 52 subgrantees in becoming high-quality charter schools; the sheer numbers are ambitious; however, they have a proven track record of achievement. In addition, the applicant has stated that "every student will graduate from high school ready for college and career (e41)."

However, it grounds these aspirations in the tangible fact that 72% of Nevada charters have received a 3-star rating or higher, which is 14% higher than their non-charter counterparts.

O180 speaks to student growth and the support for student growth and indicates throughout the application through partnerships, proposed training and research-based practices that it will continue to achieve excellence in their charters and attain their ambitious goals.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants**

**1. b. Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants**

**The likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet those objectives and improve educational results for students.**

**Strengths:**

O180 describes efforts to vet eligible subgrantees (e57) including through a variety of online and print tools to provide a clear, detailed account of the subgrantee selection process, the creation of a diverse CSP review board and the provision of rubrics for subgrantees to support their application process.

Care is given to ensure parental and community voices are included in the charter process through the use of research-based tools to determine best practices for parental engagement and forming a partnership with the Parent Leadership Council (e67).

O180 seeks to unify the state's charters around transportation needs by developing a transportation project between charters, providing students with greater access to quality schools (e65).

O180 created a Charter School Consortium to foster the sharing of best practices among charters in the state to support charters in improving educational results for students (e65).

O180 provides an opportunity for subgrantees to receive preferential funds based on their ability to serve "at-risk" students. Schools noted as "of concern" may apply for supplemental funds to invest in educational strategies to improve educational outcomes (e65).

Students identified as "at-risk," are provided preferences for admission through a weighted lottery system thus leveling the playing field for those students to access high quality schools.

**Weaknesses:**

Although “transportation collaboratives” are suggested, charters are not required to join nor is the description of such clearly outlined. Without a clear description of the collaborative, it is difficult to discern how all students will access transportation and how effective it has been previously in supporting charters in improving educational results for all students.

Overall, the plan lacks definition of specific support for rural districts or high schools (e36).

**Reader's Score: 13**

**Selection Criteria - State Plan**

**1. c. State Plan**

**The State entity’s plan to--**

**Reader's Score: 28**

**Sub**

**1. (1) Adequately monitor the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity’s program;**

**Strengths:**

Opportunity 180 outlines a comprehensive, collaborative plan to monitor subgrantees to ensure the development of high-quality schools. (e23,e34)

The plan speaks to a “risk-rubric” which will be utilized along with other existing partner tools to identify and address concerns within charters immediately (e61).

An additional layer of support is provided through O180’s development of a stand-alone performance contract to ensure each subgrantee meets the expectations of all oversight entities, such as SPCSA, NDE and others. (e60).

**Weaknesses:**

Although O180 implements a tiered risk system, schools that are pre-identified as “high- risk,” which by definition do not have a proven track record of success, have a seemingly broad window (3 years) of time to improve (e61).

O180 references 10 Zoom charter school pilots that receive funding to support students with IEP’s and ELL students, however, it is unclear how subgrantees who are eligible to receive the funding are monitored to ensure the funds are spent on activities dedicated to those subgroups. (e23).

**Reader's Score: 8**

**2. (2) Work with the authorized public chartering agencies involved to avoid duplication of work for the charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies;**

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

O180 minimizes duplicitous efforts by creating an Advisory Committee of various stakeholders to share best practices and align monitoring tools to avoid duplicity of efforts in supporting subgrantees (e46,60,63). In addition, O180 utilizes existing monitoring tools vetted by the state such as the performance benchmark report to avoid repetition of effort (e62).

**Weaknesses:**

Although the composition of the Advisory Committee is noted as including the NDE, the Charter School Association of Nevada (CSAN) and the SPCSA, the application does not speak specifically to the frequency of the meetings or how duplicative efforts are mitigated if noted by the Committee (e33, e63).

**Reader's Score: 4**

**3. (3) Provide technical assistance and support for--**

- i. The eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program; and**
- ii. Quality authorizing efforts in the State;**

**Strengths:**

O180 provides a multifaceted plan for supporting new charters in becoming high-quality, as well as supporting existing charters in their growth. O180 provides support at the beginning of the charter life cycle, including support for 501c3 development, to charter application support and extending to facilities acquisition and finance. Over the course of the 5-year plan, O180 includes a timeline for providing technical assistance to subgrantees(e64, p71). With specific regard to authorizing, O180 has a tiered system of support designed to promote quality authorizing efforts throughout the state. These efforts include guidelines and trainings on all aspects of charter leadership, paired partnerships between leaders to share best practices, enhanced board governance training and continuous monitoring to ensure schools remain on track and avoid closure (e41-42).

**Weaknesses:**

O180 does not provide a baseline in PM1(d) for the required number of subgrantees participating in Technical Assistance activities thus it is unclear what portion of the 24 subgrantees will attend proposed sessions over the life of the grant.

The data provided for current authorizers rankings on the NACSA Index of Essential Practices Report is dated 2016, with indications that all active authorizers meet or exceed NACSA rankings each review cycle. However, the review cycle has not been defined in the application, therefore the stated target is vague. The application fails to discuss if the current scores are indicative of prior TA support that would support the need for this specific assistance(e53-54).

O180 relies heavily on partner agencies to provide the authorizers with support and provides little detail regarding the specifics of the type of technical assistance given other than board governance training (e38,e48).

**Reader's Score: 8**

**4. (4) The State entity's plan to solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of charter schools in the State; and**

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

O180 seeks the input of parents of potential charter school students through its work with parent advocates from the district and charter sectors (e68).

Funds are committed to developing a survey to specifically address parental engagement (e68). O180 seeks partnerships with the Parent Leadership Council to ensure that parents have a voice in creating more options for school choice.

**Weaknesses:**

The plan lacks a timeline to show the collection of parental input, turnaround time for analysis and how the data is effectively used in the charter school development process.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**5. (5) The degree of flexibility afforded by the State's charter school law and how the State entity will work to maximize the flexibility provided to charter schools under such law**

**Strengths:**

O180 demonstrates an understanding of the flexibility afforded charter schools through ESEA and Nevada's charter school law.

O180 encourages the application of innovative approaches in their charters and provides financial and advisory support to that end (e69).

**Weaknesses:**

Although examples of successful charters are provided, little details are provided on the specifics of flexibility afforded to schools.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

**1. d. Quality of the Management Plan**

**The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:**

**Reader's Score: 12**

**Sub**

**1. (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines,**

**Sub**

**and milestones for accomplishing project tasks; and**

**Strengths:**

The management plan provided by O180 is thorough and timely with attention given to the main objectives outlined in their logic model (e42,e71).  
Internal and external stakeholders are included throughout the plan with training outlined for key roles in the project (e71-74).  
Through its investment basis priority for schools addressing high-risk students, 97% of the budget is directed toward the creation and replication of high-quality charter via specific trainings based on need.

**Weaknesses:**

Although the currently proposed staff includes the ED from Opportunity 180, the amount of time she will give to support the project is unclear (e55).  
A nod is given to “many systems in place for project management, grant management and technical assistance (e75)” but the plan does not give a clear description of how O180 will manage external partners.

**Reader's Score: 8**

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

**Strengths:**

O180 solicits and retains feedback from internal and external stakeholders at multiple points in the lifetime of the grant (e71-73).  
Through a combination of tools such as site visits, desk audits, parent engagement surveys and performance contracts, O180 ensures there is a continuous feedback loop with all stakeholders accountable for charter school success.

**Weaknesses:**

The plan lacks specificity on the analysis of the feedback and who will disseminate the feedback.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**3. (3) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

A Project Manager, who is 100% dedicated to this project will lead and oversee the implementation of the grant (e75).  
In addition, a Project Coordinator will be assigned to provide support for meeting the goals of the project and ensuring compliance to the objectives.

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:** 2

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 3**

**1. CPP3 Competitive Preference Priority 3: Equitable Financing**

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located ensures equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner.

**Strengths:**

In order to support charters in understanding their rights to state & federal funding, O180 provides a funding seminar in their Future Schools Summit and ongoing technical support in the area of finance (e23). As NDE charters are entitled to their proportionate share of per pupil funding, new charters are supported by a provision which allows them to access certain funds 30 days earlier than other schools.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:** 3

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 4**

**1. CPP4 Competitive Preference Priority 4: Charter School Facilities**

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located provides charter schools one or more of the following:

- a) Funding for facilities;
- b) Assistance with facilities acquisition;
- c) Access to public facilities;
- d) The ability to share in bonds or mill levies;
- e) The right of first refusal to purchase public school buildings; or
- f) Low- or no-cost leasing privileges.

**Strengths:**

Nevada law provides charter schools, two of which were O180 charters, with access to a revolving loan fund, a portion of which may be utilized for facility costs. There is also a provision for charter schools to contract with school districts to access facilities at low cost.

O180 employs specific tools and partnerships to support charters in accessing these facilities. Through a collaboration with the Building Hope project, equity support is provided to charters seeking loans. The combination of O180's Facilities Survey Tool and Facilities Loan Fund supports charters in identifying available facilities and crafting long-term plans for

facilities acquisition (e26).

**Weaknesses:**

Although it is mentioned as a method of support, the Fund to Assist School Districts in Financing Capital Improvements has not yet been appropriated in the budget (e24).

**Reader's Score:** 3

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 5**

**1. CPP5 Competitive Preference Priority 5: Best Practices to Improve Struggling Schools and Local Educational Agencies**

**To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and local educational agencies.**

**Strengths:**

The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) website includes the "Underperforming Schools Support Resources" which O180 will utilize to share within their network proven methods for best practices in improving schools (e27). In addition, O180 facilitates "paired partnerships" with various state stakeholders, through monthly consortiums and the use of established CMO's, such as Democracy Prep, to highlight and implement best practices throughout the state (e28-29).

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:** 2

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 6**

**1. CPP6 Competitive Preference Priority 6: Serving At-Risk Students**

**To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which it supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services.**

**Strengths:**

It is evident that O180 is committed to providing alternatives for students who are considered at risk through options such as the weighted lottery preference and direct subgrantee funding (e32-e33). O180 pairs low-performing schools with CMOS's and other partners to promote academic achievement (e30-31).

**Weaknesses:**

Focus is given to the state initiatives more so than to O180's specific plans for supporting struggling schools (e31-e32). There is a lack of specificity around drop-out prevention programming. While models such as the Explore Academy have been utilized in other states, these are new models to Nevada without state-based data on effectiveness (e33-36).

**Reader's Score:** 2

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 7**

**1. CPP7 Competitive Preference Priority 7: Best Practices for Charter School Authorizing**

**To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which it has taken steps to ensure that all authorized public chartering agencies implement best practices for charter school authorizing.**

**Strengths:**

O180 partners with NACSA to promote best practices among authorizers (e37).  
O180 recognizes that an effective Board is a critical component to charter success and provides specific training on Board Governance (e38).  
Ongoing technical support to authorizers will be provided by "several quality service providers" (e38) to continuously monitor and review authorizer practices throughout the state.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:** 4

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## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Opportunity 180 (S282A200009)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	35	35
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	13
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	25
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	11
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	84
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
1. CPP3	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
1. CPP4	4	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
1. CPP5	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 6</b>		
1. CPP6	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 7</b>		
1. CPP7	4	3
<b>Sub Total</b>	16	14
<b>Total</b>	116	98

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - CSP State Entities - 8: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Opportunity 180 (S282A200009)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

#### 1. a. Quality of Project Design

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:

Reader's Score: 35

#### Sub

##### 1. (1) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale;

#### Strengths:

The applicant presents a logic model based on research. The research data presented based on the Nevada Report Card SY2018-19 compares all Nevada charter schools (72% receiving a 3-star rating or higher) with all non-charter schools in Nevada (58% receiving a 3-star rating or higher) (e41). The applicant provides further data surrounding the need for increasing high-quality charter schools in neighborhoods of greatest need. The applicant shares that in Nevada's lowest-performing schools (bottom 5% in the state) student demographics are 82% students living in poverty, with 60% Black or Hispanic students (e41). The applicant provides student ELA and Math growth comparison of Opportunity 180 supported charters with traditional public schools, demonstrating that historically underserved student subgroups at Opportunity 180 supported charters grew academically faster than state averages (e52). The applicant research and evaluation findings suggest a high likelihood for realizing project outcomes. All key priorities are explained in detail (e40-52).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

##### 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 project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides methods of evaluation that include the use of objective performance measures which are both qualitative and quantitative. In addition, the application shows evidence that each objective includes at least one performance measure that can be reported on annually (e53-56).

- Performance measures are clearly explained, in detail, and are related to the intended outcomes of the project.
- All applicant performance measures are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. The applicant performance measure 1e, "Increasing the number of charter schools in Nevada," is paired with the

**Sub**

baseline of 75% of Nevada schools being charters for FY2018-19, including a target for each FY2020-2023, along with a goal for total increase by FY2025 (e54).

- The application performance measure 1d demonstrates both qualitative and quantitative evaluation, "Subgrantee participation in Technical Assistance activities," has a target goal of "Subgrantees participating in 90% of TA activities each program year" (e54).
- The application objective 1a, "Award subgrants to at least 24 new, replicating, or expanding high-quality charter schools," details yearly benchmarks (e53). The application objective 2c1, "Percentile change in the median growth percentiles (MGP) in English Language Arts for educationally disadvantaged students in charter schools," details a target increase in MGP in ELA by 1 percentile point annually (e55).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**3. (3) The ambitiousness of the State entity's objectives for the quality charter school program carried out under the CSP State Entities program**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides objectives that are ambitious, yet attainable and explicitly tied to a high-quality project. The applicant documents that to date, the quality charter schools component of Opportunity 180's work has led to the launch of seven new schools, as well as school improvement and technical assistance investments in four additional schools, creating access to high-quality public-school seats for over 8,000 students (e51). The applicant provides a strong rationale for why objectives are ambitious, yet attainable. This rationale includes charter school student academic growth data (e52). The applicant shares that Nevada Prep Middle School, one of Opportunity 180's fresh-start school investments, achieved the highest math growth data of any middle school in Nevada (2019 Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium assessment data) (e51).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants**

**1. b. Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants**

**The likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet those objectives and improve educational results for students.**

**Strengths:**

Opportunity 180 sufficiently details a well-developed plan describing all supporting activities (e56-59). The applicant appropriately documents a timeline for all required components to the subgrant application (e46-47). A variety of publication announcements for Nevada CSP fund availability are documented. The application specifies their website, newsletter, social media (Facebook and Twitter), independent organization network platforms, and purchased strategically targeted advertising. In addition, the application notes a virtual Nevada CSP webinar biannually, at least three weeks prior to the application deadline to offer technical assistance related to the competition and application process (e56). The applicant's plan provides a description of subgrant application requirements that include the roles and responsibilities of

all parties (e58-59), the role of the authorizer in reviewing performance and operations (e58), family and community engagement activities (e57-59, e68), flexibilities afforded to charter schools (e57), and expenditures and activities as part of a sustainability plan (e57). The applicant provides an extensive detailed process for selecting peer reviewers as well as the process for reviewing and awarding subgrants. In addition to training on reviewing subgrants, each peer review committee member will be asked to participate in at least one school monitoring visit (e58). The review process uses a subgrant rubric that includes “demonstrated research-based evidence; plans for attracting, hiring, and retaining quality educators; and quality of learning model that addresses the needs of all student population subgroups, including measures of impact” (e58). It is relatively apparent through the description of the plan that the subgrant program should support high-quality charter schools that will improve educational results for children.

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant describes efforts to actively recruit various successful school models from across the country, the applicant does not describe how the subgrant process will support diverse charter models that include either prioritizing rural communities or opening high schools (e59). The applicant provides inadequate information about how it will ensure each subgrantee will plan for student transportation needs. Offering transportation is simply listed as an example of approaches to ensure accessibility (e58) and as a topic of technical assistance for their Charter Schools Consortium (e65).

**Reader's Score: 13**

**Selection Criteria - State Plan**

**1. c. State Plan**

**The State entity's plan to--**

**Reader's Score: 25**

**Sub**

**1. (1) Adequately monitor the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program;**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes a performance framework by which each school is held accountable in compliance with NRS 388A.273. These include an academic framework, financial framework, and organizational framework (e59). The applicant describes most of the activities and systems to be used to ensure effective monitoring, including a timeline. The application includes a Risk Rubric to inform the frequency and intensity of subgrantee monitoring activities (e61-62).

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant presents a detailed monitoring plan addressing subgrantee regular monitoring and identifying risk, it is lacking how any deficiencies found would be addressed in a prompt manner. The application states “high risk” charters will have quarterly site visits and progress reports, but allows up to three years to show improvement progress (e62). Allowing three years to show improvement progress makes it unclear that subgrantees would address deficiencies promptly. It is also unclear whether the proposed monitoring will ensure subgrantees are using funds for activities to help meet educational needs of students, specifically for students with disabilities and English Language Learners (e61). The applicant does not provide sufficient detail for how they will evaluate subgrantees’ sustainability plans (e59).

**Reader's Score: 7**

**2. (2) Work with the authorized public chartering agencies involved to avoid duplication of work for the charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies;**

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a plan to avoid duplication of work for charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies. The applicant explains that Opportunity 180 is forming an Advisory Committee to ensure strategic alignment between state agencies and other charter school authorizers in the state (e63).

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant presents a plan for reducing the burden for both state entities and charter schools, the plan lacks specific details to determine to what degree this burden will be reduced (e63).

**Reader's Score: 4**

**3. (3) Provide technical assistance and support for--**

- i. The eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity’s program; and**
- ii. Quality authorizing efforts in the State;**

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a plan for providing technical assistance to subgrantees in opening and operating new charter schools (e63-66). The applicant lists and briefly describes activities and modalities that would be used to provide technical assistance, including geo-targeted marketing and grassroots outreach to families to promote enrollment of a student population that is reflective of the community in which the school resides (e65). The applicant plans to dedicate a portion of technical assistance funds for authorizer support, which includes partnering with a service provider with expertise in board governance to train newly appointed State Public Charter School Authority and State Board of Education board members (e67).

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant presents a plan lacking specific details related to helping subgrantees with student recruitment and reducing overuse of discipline practices that remove students from classrooms (e63-66). The applicant provides an insufficient plan for providing technical assistance to public chartering agencies. This plan lacks specific details relating to assessing annual performance data of schools financial review and assistance with annual audits; holding charter schools accountable to performance agreements; reviewing processes related to renewal, non-renewal, or revocation of school's charter; and establishing clear plans and procedures to assist students enrolled in charter schools that close to attend other high-quality charter schools (e67). The application makes it unclear how partnering with experienced service providers can strengthen authorizing practices in the state (e67). It is also unclear how the technical assistance plan can serve all public chartering agencies (e67).

**Reader's Score: 6**

**4. (4) The State entity's plan to solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of charter schools in the State; and**

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a plan to solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of charter schools in the state. The plan provides adequate detail, including describing the maximization of parent voice in the subgrant decision-making process. Opportunity 180 plans to have subgrant review committee members attend authorizer public hearings to collect input and request additional feedback (e67).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant's plan does not contain a variety of activities for engaging the community, nor a timeline for these activities. As a result, it is unclear how well the community can be engaged in sharing input. A description of how data will be collected and shared is missing, as well as how data will be used when implementing and operating charter schools (e67-69).

**Reader's Score: 4**

**5. (5) The degree of flexibility afforded by the State's charter school law and how the State entity will work to maximize the flexibility provided to charter schools under such law**

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a description of the flexibility offered by the state's charter school law. Nevada charter schools are free from all district policies and regulations, except those required by state or federal law (NRS 388A.366) (e69). In addition, every two years, the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority must, in consultation with other authorizers and the Nevada Department of Education, review all statutes and regulations from which charter schools are not exempt to determine whether those policies assist or impede charter schools (NRS 388A.171)" (e70).

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant describes how it will work to maximize the flexibility allowed by law, it does not clearly demonstrate a detailed or comprehensive plan. The application simply states that the applicant will “continue its work to recruit and support charter schools that leverage flexibility to offer innovative instructional practices while adhering to the highest of accountability requirements and standards” (e70). This makes it unclear whether the plan will produce results.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

**1. d. Quality of the Management Plan**

**The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:**

**Reader's Score: 11**

**Sub**

**1. (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks; and**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The plan includes clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks that are realistic and appropriate for the objectives of the grant (e71-74). The application covers all necessary information in an easy to read table (e71-74). The proposed budget is clearly aligned with the management of the grant and provides adequate resources for all project tasks (e324-327). The responsibilities and milestones are presented with detail, and are adequate to ensure project success (e71-74 and e324-327).

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant provides resumes for key project personnel, demonstrated qualifications to contribute to this project's success is missing (e71-74 and e324-327). Although the applicant's management plan includes a detailed description regarding external partners, managing their work is not clearly defined (e326-327).

**Reader's Score: 8**

Sub

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a plan for collecting, reviewing and using feedback to improve project objectives. Activity 2.1.1 provides for “scheduling and conducting quarterly authorizer meetings, including one in-person convening with NACSA to promote continued growth and share best practices” (e72). This provides further opportunities for ensuring continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides little detail surrounding the plan to collect, analyze and use feedback for continuous improvement to their proposed project. Although the applicant states that they will work with a “quality service provider with expertise in research” to conduct annual evaluations of progress toward performance measures and target outcomes, the applicant’s plan lacks significant details about the steps to collect this feedback and how data will be analyzed to adjust the proposed project (e75).

**Reader's Score: 1**

**3. (3) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a plan for the use of key personnel. Detailed information is provided on personnel time commitments, including the time each staff member plans to spend on the project. The Project Manager will commit 100% of his time to carrying out the activities of the project, with 60% time on administrative activities, and 40% of time on technical assistance activities (e75). The time dedicated to the project is appropriate and adequate to meet the goals and objectives of the grant. The Opportunity 180 team capacity will be providing support to the project, with a 20% time commitment from its Director of Communications and Development and a 25% time commitment from its Director of Operations. The plan also provides for a full-time Project Coordinator, to be added in years 2-4 of the project. This Project Coordinator will assist with tracking project activities and managing logistics for all technical assistance offerings (e75).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 3**

**1. CPP3 Competitive Preference Priority 3: Equitable Financing**

**To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located ensures equitable financing, as compared to traditional public**

**schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant demonstrates the state fully ensures charter schools receive equitable financing in comparison to traditional public schools in a prompt manner. The applicant adequately describes Nevada Revised Statutes, which provides that each charter school pupil must be included in counts for purposes of apportionments and allowances from the Nevada State Distributive School Account (NRS 388A.411) (e23-24). The applicant documents that charter schools receive quarterly payments; a public charter school in its first year of operation may request any quarterly payments 30 days earlier (NRS 388A.417) (e23). Per pupil supplemental funding is allotted for students qualifying for Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL), on Individualized Education Plans, English Language Learners (ELL), and those who are designated Gifted and Talented (e23-24). In addition, the applicant describes two state pilot programs, Zoom Schools (ELL) and Victory Schools (FRL), for students who attend underperforming schools. The Nevada Department of Education included ten Zoom charters and one Victory charter in these pilot programs (e23-24).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 4**

**1. CPP4 Competitive Preference Priority 4: Charter School Facilities**

**To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located provides charter schools one or more of the following:**

- a) Funding for facilities;**
- b) Assistance with facilities acquisition;**
- c) Access to public facilities;**
- d) The ability to share in bonds or mill levies;**
- e) The right of first refusal to purchase public school buildings; or**
- f) Low- or no-cost leasing privileges.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides comprehensive detail regarding how the state, Opportunity 180, and outside partnerships attempt to assist charter schools in obtaining facilities. Nevada law provides charter school access to the State-Sponsored Account for Charter Schools. Funds must be used for "making loans at or below market rate for costs incurred in preparing a charter school for its first year of operation and must be completely repaid in three years (NRS 388A.432 to 388A.438)" (e24). The applicant, along with its working partner Building Hope, provides up to 25% of the equity needed to secure bank or bond financing by providing non-recourse, 6.5% interest 5-year loans. The applicant sufficiently documents these activities with clear examples (e24-26).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides evidence that the state is not currently actively working to provide charter schools with facilities access. Charter schools may apply to the Nevada Department of Education for available facilities funding "if the school has been operating for at least five consecutive years and is in good financial standing (NRS 388A.405)." However, the applicant states that there is currently no budget appropriation for this fund (e24).

Reader's Score: 3

### Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 5

#### 1. CPP5 Competitive Preference Priority 5: Best Practices to Improve Struggling Schools and Local Educational Agencies

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and local educational agencies.

##### Strengths:

The applicant provides specific examples of how the state is using best practices to improve struggling schools, both charter and traditional public schools as well as for local education agencies. The Nevada Department of Education website houses a repository of best practices, and offers a Leadership Network to provide professional development to leaders of struggling schools (e27-28).

##### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

### Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 6

#### 1. CPP6 Competitive Preference Priority 6: Serving At-Risk Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which it supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services.

##### Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates the support of charter schools serving at-risk students. Nevada average math and reading proficiency by student subgroup is detailed, showing that the majority of students in Nevada meet the definition of being at-risk (e30). The applicant details state legislative initiatives surrounding charter schools "to address the widening opportunity gap and to enable innovative solutions (NRS.388A.045 and NRS 388A.167)" by requiring both an Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment and a Growth Management Plan for charter application approval by the State Public Charter School Authority (e32). The applicant demonstrates a statewide plan for ensuring equitable access to these supports by state categorical funding for at-risk populations on a per pupil basis for all district and charter schools (e33). This plan permits charter schools to deploy enrollment preferences or a weighted lottery for including at-risk students (e35). Opportunity 180's charter school application process focuses on serving at-risk students by utilizing a yearly updated Priority Footprint, which targets geographies based on overcrowding and underperformance of neighborhood schools (e33). The applicant specifies that it will provide preference points and additional funding to CSP subgrant applicants that demonstrate success or evidence-based plans to successfully serve at-risk student populations greater than or equal to the average at-risk student population served by the district (e35). The applicant provides clear state-wide examples of multiple activities which include credit recovery programs, behavioral/continuation programs, juvenile detention facilities, and schools serving students with identified disabilities (e34).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 3

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 7**

**1. CPP7 Competitive Preference Priority 7: Best Practices for Charter School Authorizing**

**To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which it has taken steps to ensure that all authorized public chartering agencies implement best practices for charter school authorizing.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant adequately describes a state-wide authorization and monitoring plan ensuring quality practices are deployed by authorizers (NRS 388A.220) (e37). The applicant demonstrates how Opportunity 180 will take steps to complement the state's efforts to monitor the quality of authorizer practices. Opportunity 180 plans to partner with NACSA to evaluate the quality of authorizing practice and policy in Nevada, including making recommendations for improvement (e37). The applicant documents that a portion of CSP technical assistance funds will be dedicated to provide development opportunities to authorizers (e38). The applicant further details that governance training will be provided to all newly appointed authorizer board members and to the State Public Charter School Authority Board (e38).

**Weaknesses:**

It is unclear how the applicant plans to address all types of authorizing agencies. The application does not provide specific information regarding authorizing agencies in the state, including their number (e37-40).

**Reader's Score:** 3

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 07/02/2020 10:56 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/02/2020 10:56 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Opportunity 180 (S282A200009)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	35	32
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	12
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	25
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	11
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	80
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
1. CPP3	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
1. CPP4	4	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
1. CPP5	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 6</b>		
1. CPP6	3	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 7</b>		
1. CPP7	4	3
<b>Sub Total</b>	16	12
<b>Total</b>	116	92

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - CSP State Entities - 8: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Opportunity 180 (S282A200009)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

#### 1. a. Quality of Project Design

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:

Reader's Score: 32

#### Sub

##### 1. (1) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale;

#### Strengths:

The rationale and logic model provided by the applicant indicates that the applicant has established and makes use of broad partnerships with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), the State's largest charter authorizer, National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), and several other nonprofit groups (e17, e22, e40) with the goal of increasing the number of and access to high-quality charter schools for the State's most disadvantaged students (e41).

The applicant provides a number of statistics that supports the need for the CSP grant in the State. For example, Nevada received an overall score of D+ on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) ranking it 50th in the country (e16). The applicant also provides a chart on page e30 with results from the 2018-19 Nevada State Report Card that outline average and reading proficiency rates for all students and by student subgroups. The chart clearly indicates that not only is there an overall achievement issue in Nevada but, subgroups are achieving proficiency at a significantly lower rate than their non at-risk counterparts (e30).

NDE decided not to continue its CSP program in the State. The applicant wishes to continue the CSP program in order to ensure continuity of grant ability by strengthening the work of the NDE in areas of technical assistance and continued support for the development of new charter school, expansions, and replications (e77). Overall, the evidence provided in the application support the rationale for the proposed program.

#### Weaknesses:

While the applicant provides data and statistics and clearly describes several key components of the project and the relationship between most of the key activities and outcomes that indicate a likelihood of success (e41-42), it is not clear how the activities are informed by research or evaluative findings, other than State assessment data, that supports the rationale.

Reader's Score: 13

Sub

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 project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and**

**Strengths:**

Based on the information provided in the performance plan, the objectives and performance measurements are clear, directly related to the stated outcomes, and measurable (e53-54). The applicant intends to increase the number of high quality charter schools in the state by 24 and increase the number of charter seats available by 10,800 at the end of the grant term.

The applicant also intends to narrow the achievement gap in each year of the grant period and demonstrates this by showing increases for disadvantaged students in median growth percentile scores on state assessments (e55).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

3. (3) **The ambitiousness of the State entity's objectives for the quality charter school program carried out under the CSP State Entities program**

**Strengths:**

The stated objective to increase the number of students, with a focus on at-risk students, attending high-quality charter schools by 10,800 seats among 24 schools is reasonably ambitious in that it continues to promote meaningful improvement for the charter school sector in Nevada. As provided by the applicant, there are currently 75 charter schools (e54) serving 57,853 students (e22) which equates to a 32% and 19% increase respectively over the five-year term. The data provided, indicate a strong likelihood that the objectives will be attainable.

**Weaknesses:**

Some of the proposed outcomes could demonstrate more ambition. For example, the applicant intends to award 4 subgrants in its first year (e45) but provides that 15 subgrants were approved by the NDE in 2020 (e53). The applicant's goal of awarding 4 grants in the first year appears low in comparison to most recent number of subgrant awardees that were approved in 2020 by the NDE.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants**

**1. b. Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants**

**The likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet those objectives and improve educational results for students.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides that Opportunity 180 (O180) has a track record of recruiting and supporting charter schools and recruiting high-performing CMOs with a track record of success. O180 launched in 2015 (e16) and since that time their efforts have resulted in an additional 8,167 high-quality charter seats made available to Nevada students (e49). The applicant provides that they intend to recruit various successful school models from across the country that have experience in CTE, project-based learning, and STEM/STEAM (e59).

The applicant describes a robust plan to publicize the availability of the grant. This includes traditional marketing methods - website, newsletter, social media marketing, purchase of strategic advertising, and a number of partner organizations that will announce the grant opportunities to their respective networks (e57). The marketing plan will ensure the information is provided to a wide variety of potential applicants.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides minimal information of subgrant application requirements. For example, the applicant requires that the applicant must “demonstrate” that they have met several requirements – quality controls, charter contract, flexibility in school design, federally aligned enrollment policy, etc. (e57). However, the applicant does not describe how the applicant will demonstrate this and if the applicant will be required to provide information other than the written application. If only the application will be required, it is unclear if O180 project staff or the review committee will be responsible for verifying the information provided by the potential subgrantee.

The applicant generally describes the peer review committee selection process and the expected makeup of the committee. While they describe several types of stakeholders to potentially serve on the committee that would have direct charter school experience, it is not clear what role, if any a charter authorizer would in the peer review process (e58).

Overall, the applicant generally describes their intent to meet the requirements of this criterion but lacks specificity as to how they will meet the requirements. For example, the applicant provides a general list of items that reviewers will assess applications against a “finalized rubric”. No rubric is provided, and it is unclear how the application requirements will be judged and weighted (e58).

**Reader's Score: 12**

**Selection Criteria - State Plan**

**1. c. State Plan**

**The State entity's plan to--**

**Reader's Score: 25**

**Sub**

**1. (1) Adequately monitor the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program;**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides that they intend to contract with a quality service provider selected through an RFA process that will perform the majority of the monitoring services which include fiscal, compliance, data collection, data analysis, and assist with site evaluations to assess instructional and operational practices (e61).

The applicant proposes to align most of its monitoring criteria to those outlined in the charter school's performance contract with its authorizer (e60). This would provide for standardization for assessing performance metrics based on the metrics set by the specific authorizer.

The applicant indicates that new subgrantees will be subject to site visits either on an annual or biannual basis depending on criteria in the risk rubric provided (e61). The rubric indicates that first year subgrantees that do not

**Sub**

have a history of successfully operating a charter school but do have a strong plan in place are considered moderate risk and will be subject to biannual visits. Subgrantees in their first year that have an existing track record of success will be subject to annual site visits (e62).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant states that the SPCSA issues charter contracts that outline a performance framework that each school is held accountable to (e59). It is unclear if this is the case for other authorizing agencies in Nevada. This is concerning as the framework included in the SPCSA's contract includes measures from critical categories such as academics, financial, and organizational. The applicant intends to issue a performance contract with each subgrantee that is aligned to the school's contract with their authorizer (e60). If an authorizer besides the SPCSA authorizes a charter school, it is unclear if that authorizer will require the same performance contract measurements.

The applicant provides a risk rubric that is intended to guide subgrantee monitoring activities (e61-62). If concerns arise regarding a subgrantee's academic, operational, or fiscal practices the applicant indicates that the charter school will be moved to a higher risk category which will require a different level of monitoring activities. The applicant provides minimal information as to what type of actions could lead to a subgrantee being moved to a higher risk category with increased oversight. If a subgrantee receives a notice of concern from their authorizer they will be moved to the high risk category. The applicant does not provide how they will receive notification that a notice of concern has been issued to one of its subgrantees. In addition, it is unclear if there are varying levels of severity of the notice of concern that would trigger the charter to be considered high risk or remain in the moderate or low risk categories. No information is provided as to how the applicant will review the notice of concern and determine the appropriate response level or if all charters will automatically be deemed high risk due to a notice of concern being issued.

Other than a single reference to the requirement that a subgrantee demonstrate in their application their long-term budget stability beyond the grant terms, there is no indication as to how O180, monitoring provider, or peer reviewers will evaluate and ensure long term sustainability on the part of the subgrantee.

**Reader's Score: 6**

**2. (2) Work with the authorized public chartering agencies involved to avoid duplication of work for the charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies;**

**Strengths:**

The applicant specifies that they will develop an advisory committee that will ensure the alignment of efforts and avoid duplication. Both the NDE and SPCSA will serve on the advisory committee (e63). In addition, the applicant intends to leverage and build upon existing tools, strategies, and frameworks already established by the State. This will provide the applicant with existing tools that they can easily modify and reframe to align with the ultimate goal of providing high-quality educational opportunities to students.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant states that representatives of the SPCSA will serve on the advisory committee. It is unclear if the existing authorizers in the state follow the same practices as the SPCSA. Without additional information it is unclear how the advisory committee will contribute to efforts to limit duplication of efforts if only one authorizer is a member of the committee (e63).

**Reader's Score: 4**

Sub

3. (3) **Provide technical assistance and support for--**
- i. **The eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program; and**
  - ii. **Quality authorizing efforts in the State;**

**Strengths:**

The applicant is experienced in providing technical assistance to charter schools as it relates to new charter school development and recruitment of high-quality CMOs. The applicant appears to be strengthening current practices to provide technical assistance in a number of areas that will ensure schools are high-quality from inception (e47).

The applicant proposes to provide technical assistance that will be tailored to the specific needs of the charter school. This will be informed in a variety of ways – specific request by the school, areas of concern identified in data analysis, and authorizer issued notices of concern (e49). Of note is the applicants plan to offer governance training to newly appointed authorizer board members, SBOE members, and charter school governing board members (e38, 48, 66). This is a critical component as understanding the importance of approving and authorizing a good charter school helps to ensure strong charter schools are approved that will be able to maintain strong academic and operational performance long-term. Training charter school board members is equally as important as the charter school's governing board is essentially responsible for the overall direction and results of the school.

The applicant states they will partner with NACSA or another recognized authorizing expert to provide technical assistance to authorizers and assist in building capacity (e48).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not describe if technical assistance offered to a subgrantee because of problems identified in a notice of concern issued by the authorizer is required or optional (e49).

The applicant provides little detailed information as to what sort of technical assistance they will provide to authorizers that will improve the authorizing efforts in the state. The applicant indicates that authorizers are required to apply to be an authorizer and can lose their authority to authorize charters if they fail to adhere to authorizing standards (e37). The applicant states they will provide technical assistance opportunities for authorizers to share best practices but there is no information provided as to how the applicant will work with the school to ensure the authorizer is utilizing those best practices to ensure they maintain their authorizing privileges.

**Reader's Score: 6**

4. (4) **The State entity's plan to solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of charter schools in the State; and**

**Strengths:**

Nevada law specifically requires charter school applications to describe parent and community involvement and support in order to apply to open a charter school (e67). The applicant describes several examples of how parent input is collected. For example, as part of its program performance evaluation, applicant intends to contract with a service provider to conduct a parent survey (e50) to assess subgrantee's utilization of evidence-based practices for engaging parents and measure effectiveness of parent engagement strategies (e68).

The applicant also describes activities related to parental engagement collection strategies by offering breakout sessions at annual conferences (e64), providing technical assistance on outreach to families to promote enrollment (e71), and providing parental engagement as an item of discussion at its monthly charter school consortium meetings (e65).

**Sub**

The applicant works closely with the Parent Leadership Council (PLC) which is comprised of parent advocates from both districts and charter schools. The described actions of the PLC is to spread information to other parents about a variety of school related matters and top encourage parent participation in their child's education. The applicant intends to continue working with the PLC to solicit parental input (e68).

**Weaknesses:**

Overall, the applicant describes methods to engage and solicit input from parents and the community but there is little information as how that input should be or is considered. The applicant does not clearly provide information on proposed collection of parent and community input in order to ascertain the reasonableness. For example, the applicant states that members of the subgrantee application review committee will attend authorizer public hearings to collect input and request additional feedback from parents and community members testifying at public hearings during the proposed charter school authorizer's consideration process (e67). There is little information provided about the application submission timeline for a charter school to be considered for approval by an authorizer other than a reference to a subgrantee applying for a subgrant following approval of their charter petition by an authorizer (e68). The applicant states that the approved charter performance contract between the authorizer and charter schools will inform its subgrantee decision making process but it is unclear if subgrantee's would have an approved charter prior to applying for the subgrant. The timing of review committee members attending public hearings for a potential subgrantee charter authorization held by a potential authorizing governing board is unclear and it is difficult to ascertain if it is even possible for members of the review committee to solicit this input for consideration.

**Reader's Score:** 4

**5. (5) The degree of flexibility afforded by the State's charter school law and how the State entity will work to maximize the flexibility provided to charter schools under such law**

**Strengths:**

Charter schools in Nevada operate with substantial flexibility. According to the applicant, State law largely frees charters from all policies and regulations with the exception of state and federal law that prohibit discrimination and interference with civil rights (e69). In addition, Nevada law requires charter authorizers to actively preserve a charter school's legal autonomy (e70). This allows the charter school governing board to freely guide and direct the charter school in the best interest of its students free from most government regulations.

The applicant intends to recruit and support charter schools that effectively leverage that flexibility. The applicant will provide support to charter schools to enable them to utilize their autonomy to best suit the needs of its students (e70).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

**1. d. Quality of the Management Plan**

**The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:**

Reader's Score: 11

Sub

1. (1) **The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks; and**

**Strengths:**

The applicant identifies the necessary qualifications of anticipated personnel that will be brought on to carry out the objectives of the grant as well as existing O180 personnel that will provide direct services to the grant program (e75). Key roles and milestones are identified and assigned in the management plan provided (e71-74). Overall, the qualifications for key personnel are sufficient to carry out the proposed grant objectives.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant indicates there will be significant involvement from the current O180 Executive Director (ED). The application states that the ED will devote a substantial portion of her time to the execution of the grant which will be covered solely by philanthropic funding and her time will not be charged to the grant (e75). There is no indication of a plan should philanthropic donations not be sufficient to cover the cost of the ED's services in addition to any other operational expenses incurred by O180.

The management plan timeline lists multiple staff members as being responsible to carry out the various tasks (e71-74). The plan as described does not clearly delineate which staff member has ownership of the various tasks/benchmarks. This could lead to confusion, duplication of efforts, and delay project deliverables.

Reader's Score: 8

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant intends to contract with an experienced service provider to provide research and evaluation of the programs progress toward stated goals and objectives (e75).

**Weaknesses:**

The plan provides minimal specifics as to which stakeholders will be solicited for feedback as it relates to the measurement and evaluation of determining sufficient progress of O180's grant program. It is also unclear how that information will be used to continuously improve the program.

Reader's Score: 2

3. (3) **The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

As a whole, there appears to be enough dedicated personnel time to meet the project objectives. The applicant is providing significant services from the current O180 Executive Director free of charge in addition to hiring of two full time staff members dedicated 100% to the project. Additional staff members will provide services to the project in a capacity that aligns with the budget allocations for the responsibilities they are tasked with (e75).

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

There are inconsistencies between the job descriptions for the two positions that the application is proposing to hire. The descriptions for both the Program Manager (e92) and Program Coordinator (e90) indicate one function of the respective jobs will be to work closely with the "grant fiscal team". The grant fiscal team is not identified in the application.

The management plan does not clearly specify which key personnel are responsible for the specific deliverables/benchmarks listed. Instead there are numerous positions listed as responsible for a majority of the benchmarks. This makes the staffing justification less clear and difficult to determine if the time commitments are appropriately stated (e71-74).

**Reader's Score: 1**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 3**

**1. CPP3 Competitive Preference Priority 3: Equitable Financing**

**To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located ensures equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides specific information on the extent to which the State ensures equitable financing for charter schools. This includes providing charter schools with the same per-pupil based funding and proportionate share of additional state, federal, categorical, and local sources of funding (e23). Charter schools in their initial year of operation may request to receive quarterly payments 30 days early which will assist charter schools in maintaining fiscal solvency in the critical first year of operations.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 4**

**1. CPP4 Competitive Preference Priority 4: Charter School Facilities**

**To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located provides charter schools one or more of the following:**

- a) **Funding for facilities;**
- b) **Assistance with facilities acquisition;**
- c) **Access to public facilities;**
- d) **The ability to share in bonds or mill levies;**
- e) **The right of first refusal to purchase public school buildings; or**
- f) **Low- or no-cost leasing privileges.**

**Strengths:**

The State has established a revolving loan fund that provides low cost loans to charter schools in their first year of operation. The funds can be used towards facility costs, although it is not mandated (e24).

If a charter school has been in operation for a designated period of time and meets performance qualifications they can apply for available facilities funding to the NDE or can access tax-exempt financing through NV state agencies for purchase, construction, improvement, etc. of facilities (e25).

State law allows charter schools to contract with a district for low-cost facilities (e25).

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant provides detailed information about the services the organization has developed internally to assist charter schools in locating and financing facilities, overall, the State provides minimal assistance in dedicated facility funding. There is provision in state law that allows for a charter school to apply for facilities funding; however, it is only available for charters that have been in operation for a minimum of five years and in good financial standing (e24). It also appears that the Nevada legislature has failed to fund the program through budget appropriations.

While State law allows charters to contract with a district for district owned facilities at a low-cost, it is unclear if there are any legal requirements that require a district to do so. In addition, there is no right of first refusal in law allowing charters access to public school buildings (e25).

**Reader's Score:** 2

**Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 5****1. CPP5 Competitive Preference Priority 5: Best Practices to Improve Struggling Schools and Local Educational Agencies**

**To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and local educational agencies.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant indicates that there are several strong practices both internally and at partner agencies, specifically the NDE, dedicated to improving struggling schools through the collection and dissemination of best practices. The NDE publishes documents with best practices for family engagement, offers targeted professional development specifically for leaders of struggling schools, and posts information on its website specific to resources and support for underperforming schools (e27). The applicant intends to, through its partnership with the NDE, capitalize on these already established efforts by adding to them and strengthening them where possible.

The applicant currently publishes annually the "Top Schools Report" which recognizes the highest performing district and charter schools that are considered high poverty and have a minimum of 75% of students that are proficient or on track to be proficient (based on growth data). The report disseminated widely and O180 intends to host an event each year to a broad group of stakeholders to unveil the report (e52).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

### Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 6

#### 1. CPP6 Competitive Preference Priority 6: Serving At-Risk Students

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which it supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services.

##### Strengths:

The applicant proposes to award preference points and additional funding to charter schools that propose to serve at-risk students (e12).

Together, the NDE and SPCSA conducted an Academic and Demographic Needs Assessment which outlines strategies for how new charter schools will serve at-risk students (e33). The applicant indicates that the SPCSA will be a member of the advisory committee to help ensure that applicant's recruitment and support efforts are aligned with needs identified in the assessment SPCSA conducted (e33).

##### Weaknesses:

The applicant describes the state's implementation of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports but in conjunction with the Nevada Integrated Student Support, which is a framework to help states and districts allocate resources to ensure success for students (e34). The application does not describe how these frameworks will address the needs of the students/schools or how they would be incorporated to support the objectives of the project.

Reader's Score: 2

### Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 7

#### 1. CPP7 Competitive Preference Priority 7: Best Practices for Charter School Authorizing

To receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which it has taken steps to ensure that all authorized public chartering agencies implement best practices for charter school authorizing.

##### Strengths:

Under Nevada law, charter authorizers must submit an application to the Nevada SBOE and be approved in order to authorize charter schools (e37). Once approved, the authorizer must submit an annual report to the SBOE that evaluates its authorized charter schools in the areas of academics, financial, and operational performance.

The applicant references the assessment of charter authorizing practices for some authorizers in the state by benchmarking authorizing practices against NACSA's 12 Essential Best Practices for Quality Authorizing. The assessment showed that the SPCSA met 11 out of 12 best practices and the Clark County School District met 7 out of 12 best practices (e37).

The applicant is proposing to partner with NACSA to assess authorizer quality and develop technical assistance that can be offered to authorizers to build authorizer capacity (e38).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant describes the SPCSA authorization practices at length but there is minimal information about Nevada's other authorizers. Reference is made to SPCSA being the only authorizer currently accepting petitions, but no information is provided as to why that is the case. Without information about the additional authorizers in Nevada, it is unclear the extent to which these authorizers are already implementing best practices or how much willingness there is on the authorizers part to take place in the proposed activities to strengthen authorizing best practices (e37).

**Reader's Score:** 3

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**Status:** Submitted**Last Updated:** 07/02/2020 10:56 AM

## Technical Review Form

Reader: CSP Staff  
Applicant: Opportunity 180 (S282A200009)

Total CPP1 and CPP2 Score

6

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### Competitive Preference Priority 1: Spurring Investment in Qualified Opportunity Zones

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the area in which the applicant proposes to provide services overlaps with a Qualified Opportunity Zone, as designated by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 1400z-1 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). An applicant must--

- a) Provide the census tract number of the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s) in which it proposes to provide services; and
- b) Describe how the applicant will provide services in the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s).

**Note:** In responding to this priority, an applicant is encouraged to explain how it will encourage prospective subgrantees to open, replicate, or expand one or more charter schools in a Qualified Opportunity Zone and how that might align to the application requirement response for (I)(C)(i).

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides the census tracts for the Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZs) in Nevada. (e20). They state they will present the census tract in the preapplication process to encourage schools to locate in those areas. Priority points will be awarded based on the QOZs concentration of low performing schools and the applicant will target activities to improve low-performing schools to QOZs. (e20)

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Competitive Preference Priority 2: One Authorized Public Chartering Agency Other than a LEA, or an Appeals Process**

To meet this priority, the applicant must demonstrate that the State--

- a) Provides for one authorized public chartering agency that is not an LEA, such as a State chartering board, for each individual or entity seeking to operate a charter school pursuant to State law; or
- b) In the case of a State in which LEAs are the only authorized public chartering agencies, allows for an appeals process for the denial of an application for a charter school.

**Note:** In order to meet this priority under paragraph (b) above, the entity hearing appeal must have the authority to approve the charter application over the objections of the LEA.

**Strengths:**

Nevada law provides for statewide authorizers as well as LEAs and meets [a]. Additionally if authorizes that are not the State Public Charter School Authority deny an application, the applicant may appeal to the State Public Charter School Authority. (e21-22)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**