

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/26/2020 04:12 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S282A200017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	35	34
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	15
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	31
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	12
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	92
<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	4
<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	15
<b>Total</b>	116	107

# Technical Review Form

Panel #10 - CSP State Entities - 14: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S282A200017)

## 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: 34

#### Sub

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

###### Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates a rationale. For example, the applicant intends to commit resources and training to subgrantees in targeted areas that will advance both strong school opening and continued operations (e26). The goals of the CSP project are also aligned with the state's 2020-2025 strategic plan, which is a strength of the application because the rationale for the project is integral to the state's approach improving academic achievement and is not a supplemental pursuit (e28). The three-pronged focus on authorizing, leadership, and tools/policies for disadvantaged students, as highlighted in the logic model, also demonstrates a comprehensive approach to improving practices and services (e74).

###### 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 uses objective performance measures related to project outcomes that will produce quantitative and qualitative data. For example, the applicant intends to fund 15 high-quality charter schools each year (e31). Each objective also clearly identified a benchmark, when applicable.

###### Weaknesses:

The applicant includes two Building Hope outputs/performance measures for Objective 1 that are not clearly defined. For example, the applicant projects that 100% of new subgrantees will benefit from technical assistance and supports provided by Building Hope but does not clearly describe how benefit will be measured or defined (e31,

**Sub**

e35). The vague wording weakens the performance measure.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**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 project's objectives are ambitious, given the outcomes slated for the project. For example, the applicant anticipates that 80% of new subgrantees will earn an A or B on their school report card by the third year of operation (e31). Given 8 of the 15 subgrantees will be new schools, meeting this outcome clearly demonstrates an ambitious goal. Another strong component of the project is the intent to train 90% of district staff new to charter school authorizing (e36). This activity ensures that staff on the front line of assisting and addressing local charter concerns are adequately trained and informed. The authorizer training plan is ambitious because it commits to training the bulk of district hires new to authorizing across the state and will require advanced coordination efforts for both timely notification of new hires and applicable training.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses 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:**

The applicant will likely engage subgrantees that meet project objectives and improve educational results. For example, the application process for new operators will be more rigorous and require responses to sections in the model application (e41). Schools that have passed through a rigorous review are more likely to open smoothly and have sound operational practices that support the main goal of improving academic practices.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - State Plan**

**1. c. State Plan**

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

**Reader's Score: 31**

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides evidence of effective monitoring strategies in the project. First, monitoring under the project will not duplicate monitoring at the LEA/authorizer level (e53). Subgrantee spending will be monitored by desk audit or on-site visit. This monitoring will ensure that subgrantees are spending funds as proposed and on approved purchases (e51). Required updates through the online CSP-Grant Tracking System will provide further documentation of spending and inventory tracking.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant also does not clearly justify why only 50% of subgrantees will be monitored, when subgrantee monitoring is a central focus of the project (e31). Moreover, with only 15 subgrantees it is unclear why all will not receive a monitoring visit, regardless of their score on the risk assessment protocol used to identify sites to be monitored (e50).

**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;**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides evidence of several practices that will avoid duplication of work. For example, subgrantees will submit the state's model charter school application and the application submitted to its authorizer. If their local application is different from the model application, similar components will reduce the burden of having to draft a completely new application narrative (e43). Also, charter schools are required to submit reports to the State and, as applicant, the State would not have to require these reports separately (e54-e55).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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 will provide a structured approach to assisting and supporting subgrantees. For example, grantees will receive consistent monitoring and support from project staff. The planned partnership with the Building Hope Charter Support Unit will provide for direct technical assistance and training for subgrantees in areas that schools deem important. The applicant's intent to offer specific special education training and to disseminate special

**Sub**

education promising practices is a strength of the application because it represents an area that most new charter operators need training and assistance (e59).

The applicant will provide sufficient technical assistance and support for quality authorizing efforts in the state. The use of the model charter application and guidelines in the Florida Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing document align local operations with expectations at the state level (e55). Trainings on how to conduct rigorous and comprehensive charter school application reviews is a strength of the proposal in that it will allow for direct guidance and resource review on core authorizing functions. The partnership with the statewide authorizer membership organization, the Florida Association of Charter School Authorizers, is also a strength of the application because of their expertise in training and supporting authorizers (e56).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 clearly addresses how it will solicit and use parent and community input on the implementation and operation of charter schools. For example, the applicant will provide announcements through the State's list-serv, annual charter school conference, and grant-funded projects (e60). Charter schools are also required to have a parent representative to facilitate involvement and resolve disputes that may provide feedback on overall operations. A strength of the application is that the applicant conducts direct outreach to parents regarding children with special needs.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not clearly define how the applicant group will directly gather feedback from parents and community members on charter operations statewide. Proposed activities depend on feedback from subgrantees or partners that may not yield data on statewide charter implementation. Also, direct outreach only focuses on one segment of school operations (i.e., special education) (e61). Finally, there is also no clear timeline for collecting data (e66-e70).

**Reader's Score: 3**

**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 provides several examples of flexibility under the State's charter school law. For example, charter schools have flexibility regarding school budgets, employee hiring, school curriculum and Board configuration (e62). A strength of the State's flexibility is that charter schools may create cooperative organizations for the purpose of sharing services (e.g., charter) direct instructional services, personnel services, payroll, professional development). This is a strength of the application because providing or procuring these services is often an expensive venture for charter schools.

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a structured management plan that defines milestones/activities, persons/teams responsible for executing activities and calendar targets. For example, the FDOE Charter Schools Director will work with the Building Hope Charter Support Unit to offer new charter school and new subgrantee services and trainings (e67). Activities are also clearly aligned to project objectives.

**Weaknesses:**

The broad assignment of teams responsible for executing several activities in the timeline does not clearly define the position/role responsible for ensuring the completion of those activities. For example, it is unclear who within the FDOE CSP team will be responsible ensuring that all subgrantee site visits have occurred (e67). The narrative indicates that the grant director will guide monitoring and oversight, but the team assignment in the management plan implies broader responsibilities (e65). Also, the lack of an assigned position/role reduces both accountability and transparency.

**Reader's Score: 9**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant addresses reporting activities planned for the project. For the project, the applicant intends to require subgrantees to submit annual reports, student performance reports, Fellowship mid-year and summative reports, expenditure report, accountability reports and data for the project (e51, e57, e68-e71). The review of these reports will ensure that the applicant is aware of subgrantee status.

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not clearly describe how they will use the data collected for continuous improvement in project operations. It is also not clear how the project director or CSP team will communicate with each other regarding the grant or how data will be collected to inform project progress (e64-e70).

**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 clearly defines the time commitments of project staff. For example, the Charter Schools Director will commit 25% effort to the project. This is reasonable given the bulk of subgrantee services and oversight will be provided by the CSP Grant Director who will commit 100% effort to the project (e391).

**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 provides evidence that the State ensures equitable financing for charter schools and students. Florida charter schools receive the same State funding as public schools, including gross state/local funds, lottery funds, district millage levy funds, and categorical program funds. Charter law also requires monthly remittance of federal funds for charter schools (e18). A strength of the application is that the State delineates all anticipated funding available at least twice a year for new charter schools. The State also provides a procedural and legal remedy if disputes arise.

**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 strong evidence that the State provides funding for facilities. For example, schools may apply to receive a portion of facility funds allocated by the State if they have operated for at least two full years, have received accreditation, or have an established feeder pattern with another school that receives charter school capital outlay (e20). A strength of the proposal is evidence supporting this claim. In March 2020, Florida allocated \$169.6 million charter facilities and 89% of charter schools received capital outlay funds. All must apply every year and show good academic and financial standing to qualify for the funds. Capital outlay funds have also increased annually since 2018-19.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

## 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's annual charter school conference is ample evidence that the State uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and local educational agencies. For example, the annual state conference hosts a number of best practice sessions from school, state, and community partners that promote best practices (e23, e110). The applicant also plans to partner with its partner, Florida Charter Support Unit, to offer charter school webinars on facilities and board planning.

#### 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 provides some evidence that it has schools that serve at-risk students in the state. In 2018-19, 80 charter schools in Florida served at-risk students through dropout prevention and academic intervention programs (e23). The charter school application also requires a description of outreach activities for academically low-achieving students (e24).

##### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not detail how it actually supports schools that serve at-risk students. There is no clear discussion of services, outreach or supports.

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:

The applicant provided strong evidence of steps it has taken to ensure that all authorizers implement best practices for charter school authorizing. For example, the State uses the Florida Principles and Standards of Quality Charter School Authorizing it developed in 2014 (e25). These standards guide state-offered authorizer training and serve as a resource to LEAs as they interview charter developers and assess their capacity. The applicant also developed its model charter school application in conjunction with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers standards. The use of a model application is best practice because it standardizes the application process across the state and ensures that LEAs assess and prioritize the same critical components. A strand of authorizer workshop sessions are also included in the annual charter school conference (e27). The applicant also addresses best practices for governing board (e570).

##### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

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## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S282A200017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	35	33
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	15
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	33
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	13
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	94
<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	4
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
1. CPP5	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 6</b>		
1. CPP6	3	1
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 7</b>		
1. CPP7	4	4
<b>Sub Total</b>	16	14
<b>Total</b>	116	108

# Technical Review Form

Panel #10 - CSP State Entities - 14: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S282A200017)

## 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: 33

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The Florida Department of Education (FDE) has leveraged data as the foundation for their grant proposal rationale. This data makes a strong grant application as data is objective and provides leadership with the road map to make quality decisions. Using the 2019 National Assessments of Education Progress (NAEP) scores as the basis for the rationale behind this grant, this data is strong evidence the 658 charter schools students had higher academic achievement scores than the traditional school students. When this data was compared to traditional schools, it became evident the quality of education offered in the charter schools will decrease the achievement gap, e28. The rationale for this grant proposal is reflected in the Logic Model, e74. The Logic Model clearly states the activities, the participants, and the resources required to meet the stated outcomes, which will impact the Florida charter school environment, e74.

Based on this evidence, the FDE has incorporated the replication and expansion of public charter schools as an integral part of their adopted strategic plan spanning 2020-2025. Florida's State Board of Education adopted this strategic plan in November 2019, e28.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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 Florida Department of Education (FDE) proposes performance measures aligned to the three grant objectives. These quantitative performance measures include tying success to the number subgrantee schools with an A or B grade by the school's third year of operation; increasing by 10 percent the schools earning an A or B grade and increasing by 10 percent the students enrolled in an A or B charter school, e31.

**Sub**

FDE will also be using qualitative performance measurement for increasing the leadership capacity of authorizers by analyzing the number of participating authorizers in activities such as trainings and sharing of best practices. An additional strength in this area is the FDE will not only sustain existing authorizer programs but expand them to create more access for the expanding charter school sector,e32. To continue to strengthen the intended outcomes, the FDE will intensify their efforts to recruit district administrators to attend the Florida Charter School Conference and encourage more collaboration between charter and traditional schools, e37.

**Weaknesses:**

In the table on e33 with regards to performance measure to meet Objective #3 outcomes, there are no baseline or threshold numbers to guide subgrantees.

**Reader's Score: 13**

**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:**

There is evidence the Florida Department of Education has realized the success of the state's charter school policy which has been a driving force for the educational opportunities for Florida's economically low and disadvantaged students. Based on the data, the FDE seems adamant to not only sustain but to expand on the best practices and strategies which have made charter schools an integral part of the Florida educational landscape. The proposal is ambitious in its desired outcomes and goals, e39-e40.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**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:**

Having gone through a previous CSP grant and utilizing many of the components which helped to launch successful charter schools the past four years strengthens the likelihood that subgrantees will meet the objectives of the grant proposal, e40.

New charter school operators will have to meet a rigorous review, and the expectations within this review will ensure subgrantees will meet the objectives of this proposed grant and improve educational opportunities for Florida students. Another plus for the applicant is the premise they will seek a partnership with an outside entity to analyze the current educational landscape to build better collaborative opportunities between district and charter schools. Contracting with a separate entity can bring a new perspective to the discussion.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - State Plan**

**1. c. State Plan**

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

**Reader's Score: 33**

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant already has in place robust subgrant monitoring policies and protocols which have been refined from the past CSP grant cycle. Monitoring will include oversight in the areas of academic progress, financial stability, enrollment, and reporting performance measurements on time. Monitoring will take place in onsite visits or on web-based platforms, e48-e52.

There is strong evidence monitoring of subgrantees will minimize the risk of a charter school, not meeting adequate standards.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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:**

There is strong evidence of very distinct and separate compliance requirements for the Florida Department of Education and a charter school's authorizer. The distinction is FDE ensures all subgrant charters are making progress towards the CSP project's goals and objectives. The district authorizes oversees progress towards the goals and objectives in the school's charter agreement. Thus there is no duplication of work for the charter school, e53-e54.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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;**

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

Providing technical assistance to eligible applicants is a priority in this grant. There is a focus on developing a pipeline of visionary educational leaders through a school fellowship program, e56. The grant states for a charter school to be successful, a key component is the recruiting of strong governance board membership and equipping those board members with leadership skills to meet the challenges facing the subgrantees, e57-e58.

The FDE has in place a guideline, Florida Principles, and Standards for Quality School Authorizing, which has been a resource for the past decade. The technical support provided for authorizers provides uniformity among statewide authorizers complimenting the charter school landscape, e55. The evidence found in the grant proposal also validates the FDE building authorizer capacity through trainings, which will guide authorizers on how to evaluate a new charter school applications, e57-58.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 Florida Department of Education recognizes a charter school must engage its customers, the parents, to be successful. Therefore, FDE elicits parents' input using multiple platforms, e60. Input from these stakeholders is critical to the FDE. Accordingly, FDE has stipulated every subgrant applicant must have a plan on how to engage their parents and prove there is parental demand for school or support from the community, e60.

**Weaknesses:**

Since the proposal calls for the burden of the parental data to rest on the subgrantee, there is no information on how the FDE will solicit input from parents statewide.

There is no timeline for subgrantees on the collection of parental or other stakeholders' engagement.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**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:**

Strong flexibility policies have been in place in Florida since 1996, giving charter schools maximum autonomy, e61. Additional flexibility is evident when a charter school may agree to accept the authorizing district's policies, e62-e63. The accountability comes from the state statute, which requires charter schools to uphold high standards set by the state, e62.

Rewarding high-performing schools with greater flexibility motivates charters to outperform their district schools and provide the best educational opportunities to their communities, e63.

State law also allows the formations of charter school "Cooperatives," giving these schools greater flexibility to share contractors such as accountants, auditors, and psychometrists, e63.

Since the grant applicant is a Florida state agency it is inferred that the generous amount of flexibility the state legislature has put into law will be supported by the FDE to subgrantees. Additionally, the FDE has supported charter schools by redeveloping the application model to include more standards and require greater assurances while still giving charters a high degree of autonomy, which is in effect supporting flexibility for charter schools, e63.

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**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: 13**

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 strength of the management plan offered in this proposal is there is not a rigid timeline. The general timeline provided allows for partnering agencies and other stakeholders to have input on specific schedules and deadlines. This strategic plan is critical because not only does it allow for engagement from other entities, but it encourages collaboration.

The two-prong objectives outlined in the grant will be met easily based on the general timelines with stated responsibilities and milestones on e66-e70.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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

**Strengths:**

There is evidence the applicant will be using multiple means to collect feedback and support continuous improvement. They will be contracting with an independent entity to collect and analyze data for credible feedback, e67. Additional methods to ensure new charters, existing charters, and authorizers will receive feedback include surveys, doing quarterly check-ins, sponsoring summits and conferences, and reviewing yearly reports, e67.

**Weaknesses:**

There is no evidence on how the FDE will use the collected data for continuous improvement.

There is no description of how continuous feedback will be provided to not only the subgrantees, authorizers, or other statewide educators.

Sub

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:**

This grant is a strong proposal concerning the management team, which has a history of managing the prior CSP grant. These team members already know the challenges they will be facing and have worked to put procedures in place to ensure the success of this grant, e63-e64. The team includes a project director, a subgrantee director, a business analyst, two specialists who will provide technical assistance, and a support assistant to provide clerical support e63-e64.

The time commitments for these positions are appropriate as outlined in the Budget Narrative, e391.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

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:**

Florida more than meets these criteria. There is evidence with the grant proposal that there is equitable financing/parity for charter schools and traditional schools. This parity includes funding areas such as discretionary lottery funds and millage levy, to name a few, e17-e18.

Also, state statute requires charters schools must be a part of the conversation when school districts are asking voters for additional funds, such as bond issuance, e19.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

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:**

Although Florida allocates direct facilities funding to charter schools, it is not a one-size-fits-all allocation. Charter Schools must "earn" these funds by meeting academic and financial criteria. The criteria placed on the facility's fund distribution gives charter schools, yet, another incentive to become high-performing. Logically, other charter schools, which did not receive facility funding, were conversion schools, since they already have a facility, e20-e21.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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:**

To ensure the best practices gleaned from the launching of high-quality charter schools, the FDE created The Florida Principles and Standards, Attachment G. These principles, accessible to all Florida educators, have existed since 2011, and there is evidence they are regularly updated to meet the needs of 2020 educators, e25.

Through national partnerships, FDE has enhanced their charter application and built the capacity of authorizers, which nurtures an educational landscape providing the most high-quality seats to Florida's students, e26.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**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 grant applicant approaches many formats to ensure authorizing agencies have the tools they need to assure quality charter schools under their purview. FDE has sponsored day-long workshops utilizing The Florida Principles and Standards as a guide for the standards and expectations for authorizers, e25. Additionally, the applicant partners with the NACSA to keep current with best practices authorizers are using around the nation. This partnership only strengthens the success rate of Florida charter schools.

Other formats the FDE uses include creating space for authorizers to discuss such topics as performance frameworks. The FDE has also created the Florida Leaders in Authorizing Fellowship. In this program, authorizers send representatives to four of the most noteworthy authorizers in the nation to gain first-hand knowledge of best practices, e27

**Weaknesses:**

It is unclear how the FDE's proposed grant will support subgrantee's schools in the area of at-risk students. There is no mention of programs that might be promoted to either prevent student dropout rate or student recovery rates. Additionally, there is no information as to how the designation of being an alternative education charter school benefits the students at that school,e23.

**Reader's Score:** 1

**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 grant applicant approaches many formats to ensure authorizing agencies have the tools they need to assure quality charter schools under their purview. FDE has sponsored day-long workshops utilizing The Florida Principles and Standards as a guide for the standards and expectations for authorizers, e25. Additionally, the applicant partners with the NACSA to keep current with best practices authorizers are using around the nation. This partnership only strengthens the success rate of Florida charter schools.

Other formats the FDE uses include creating space for authorizers to discuss such topics as performance frameworks. The FDE has also created the Florida Leaders in Authorizing Fellowship. In this program, authorizers send representatives to four of the most noteworthy authorizers in the nation to gain first-hand knowledge of best practices, e27

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score:** 4

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/26/2020 11:18 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/26/2020 11:28 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S282A200017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	35	33
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	15
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	33
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	13
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	94
<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	4
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
1. CPP5	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 6</b>		
1. CPP6	3	1
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 7</b>		
1. CPP7	4	4
<b>Sub Total</b>	16	14
<b>Total</b>	116	108

# Technical Review Form

Panel #10 - CSP State Entities - 14: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S282A200017)

## 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: 33

#### Sub

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

###### Strengths:

The design is provided to extensively describe a rationale for charter school expansion (e27-e29). The rationale for the project is grounded in data supporting a progressive implementation of charter school development for the state. Specifically, the applicant cites several measures of success comparing charter schools to their non charter counterparts showing progress in student performance. Using this data, the applicant seeks to expand the program through three objectives: 1) increase access to high-quality charter schools, especially for educationally disadvantaged students; 2) increase the number of high-quality charter school leaders and high quality charter school authorizers and build their capacity for leadership; and 3) narrow the achievement gap. These objectives are aptly described in the logic model.

###### 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's narrative provides methods of evaluation that include objective performance measures (e30-e34). Each is aligned with objectives and activities. For example, the applicant will increase the number of high-quality charter schools with an emphasis on those serving educationally disadvantaged students. The applicant will do this by awarding 15 high-quality charter schools selected for charter school sub-grant funds each year; at least one of those schools will be located in one of the state's Opportunity Zones.

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

Some methods were not clearly defined with benchmarks. For example, it is unclear why only 50% of the charters will be monitored (e31).

**Reader's Score: 13**

**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 narrative for this indicator is sufficient. The applicant indicates that it will sustain its efforts (e39). Specifically, the applicant shows how its plan is ambitious. Projected outcomes are stated for each of the objectives with benchmarks provided. For example, to increase the number of high quality charter schools, the applicant will target the following outcomes: increase the percent the number of charter schools that earn a school grade of A or B (2019 baseline: 404); annually increase by 10 percent the number of students enrolled in charter schools that earn a grade of A or B (2019 baseline: 246,588); and annually increase by 10 percent the number of charter schools that earn a grade of A or B and have a free and reduced-price lunch student enrollment of more than 75 percent (2019 baseline: 115). Compared to the baselines, these targets are ambitious.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses 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:**

The plan is comprehensive to ensure that high-quality eligible subgrant applicants are selected (e41-e48). The applicant provides a plan to ensure high quality applications are received and provide ample technical assistance to potential applicants. In its process, a rigorous peer review process ensures model application components are met (e41). For example, applications must have the school's mission and vision; the student population to be served; the research base used to design the educational program; the curriculum for the core academic areas and the research base and foundation used to develop the curriculum; the multi-tiered system of supports for students performing below grade level; the goals for student learning, how the school will serve students with disabilities and English language learners; the governance structure of the school; and management and staffing plan. Having such components will ensure the applicant meets the goal of having high quality charter schools and having such high quality schools will help the program improve educational results for students.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

## Selection Criteria - State Plan

### 1. c. State Plan

The State entity's plan to--

Reader's Score: 33

Sub

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant's plan is sufficient for monitoring eligible applicants that receive subgrants (e48-e52). Specifically, the plan includes program monitoring (desk and on-site) and fiscal monitoring through the quality management organization. For example, two offices review project components. A program office review is completed by the Charter Schools Office, and a separate review is completed in the federal grants office. Both reviews ensure that all items on the CSP sub-grantee budget are allowable, reasonable, necessary and allocable and are aligned with the purposes of the CSP. This provides additional review of applications.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

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 narrative is sufficient for addressing this criterion (e53-e55). For example, the applicant will provide technical assistance on authorizing strategies to avoid duplication. Additionally, authorizers perform annual reviews for each charter school they authorize and conduct activities as part of the review to determine duplicity. Additional training is provided through the annual conference to ensure that charter school personnel are made aware of all efforts. Such activities are sufficient for avoiding duplication through providing a number of professional development.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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 sufficient plan for providing technical assistance and support to eligible applicants (e55-e60). Training is both targeted and general to educators. The applicant ensures that trainings will focus on core

**Sub**

authorizing functions, including but not limited to rigorous charter application reviews and conducting substantive applicant interviews. It also will include guidance on developing plans and procedures for assisting students in a charter school that closes to attend other high-quality schools.

The narrative is sufficient for demonstrating quality authorizing efforts in the state (e55-e60). Specifically, the applicant focuses on building charter school leadership that will in turn lead to high quality applicants. The applicant will provide trainings that target new schools as well as continuing schools. As an example, a charter school fellows program allows for leaders to shadow other state charter school systems. The applicant will also use the model charter application as a guide for training authorizers. Even through the training is primarily to developing school leaders, there is a spillover impact to improve quality authorizing efforts.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 narrative describes how the applicant will solicit input from stakeholders (e60-e61). For example, the applicant has a state advisory council. Parent and stakeholder involvement processes are included within the model application. As a standard, the charter school must ensure involvement as part of its training process.

**Weaknesses:**

An area not expanded in the narrative is the methods for collecting parent and stakeholder input for the state plan. Lacking from the narrative is a timeline for collecting such data. It is unclear how this information will be used in the development of charter school applications.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**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 narrative is sufficient to demonstrate that the state's charter school law provides flexibility to charter schools (e61-e64). The state's laws favor charter schools. For example, charter schools enjoy flexibility of laws within the state as long as they are high-quality. For example, schools that are consistently graded A on the state's report card and that show an unqualified opinion on their three most recent audits are allowed to increase their student enrollment, expand their grade levels and modify the length of their charter contract terms to 15 years. Additionally, charter schools develop their own budgets, hire their own instructional and administrative staff, and select their own curriculum.

**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: 13

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 describes a management plan sufficient to operate the project (e64-e68). The plan includes milestones, timelines, and persons responsible for each task. Additionally, the applicant will add staffing to support the project. These include: a business analyst, responsible for the management and oversight of all subgrantee budgets and expenditures, and is the staff member primarily responsible for conducting on-site monitoring; two grant specialists who provide direct support and assistance to a group of assigned sub-grantees; and a support assistant who provides clerical support to the CSP team. The timeline also provides opportunities for stakeholders (e66-e70).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

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

**Strengths:**

The narrative describes a process for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement (e68-e70) through reporting. Specifically, an annual report must include demographic information, student performance data, and financial accountability information. An independent data collector will be used (e67). The annual accountability report must provide an explanation of the charter school's progress toward its goals and provides feedback on the operation of the project.

**Weaknesses:**

Unclear in the narrative is how reports will be used for continuous improvement. Specifically, there isn't a clear description of how the data is being used for decision making and making changes to the program. This information is needed in the narrative to sufficiently address this criteria.

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.

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

All positions are listed with job responsibilities (e64-e70). For example, the Project Director will conduct day-to-day activities. The Project leader co-wrote the successful 2016 CSP grant application and provided overall leadership for that project and has been responsible for the implementation of all grant-related activities. Time commitments are provided with in the budget (e391); for example, the project director is 100%.

**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 funding description is sufficient to show equitable funding to charter schools (e17-e20). Specifically, charter schools receive funding at state and local levels just like their public school counterparts. For example, charter schools have access to local funds allocated to school district. Moreover, charter schools receive shares of dollars received through bond referendums or other local levies. Charter schools received their proportionate share of federal funds. Specifically, charter schools receive all federal funding for which the school is otherwise eligible, including Title I funding, and are reimbursed for expenses monthly.

**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 an explanation of funding sources for facilities (e20-e21). The applicant identifies funding that is provided by the state that assist higher education agencies in expanding their facilities to accommodate charter schools they sponsor. Additionally, in the 2018-19 fiscal year, the legislature set a baseline of funding for charter school capital outlay. If in any subsequent year the legislature appropriates less than the baseline set in 2018-19, local school districts would have to contribute their own local facility funds. These methods provide ample funding sources for charters.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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 an expansive narrative to explain best practices to improve struggling schools and local education agencies (e25-e26). The charter management organization acquired additional funds to provide expansion of best practices and training. For example, the CMO provided nationally recognized training programs to district personnel and sharing its academic and character resources and other best practices with district students, teachers, and administrators, concentrating initially on sharing these resources with neighboring schools.

**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 provides a narrative of how it will serve at-risk students (e23-e25). The state requires charter schools to indicate how it will serve students with disabilities, English learners, families in poverty, and academically low-achieving students within their applications. Schools serving such students participate in a modified rating scale for accountability purposes. Specifically, these schools may opt for an alternate school improvement rating if the charter school operates as an alternative school. Using the alternate rating, 71 out of 80 schools received a "commendable" or "maintaining" rating to improve their charter school application.

**Weaknesses:**

Unclear in the narrative is an explanation as to how the alternative rating benefits at-risk students. Specifically, the applicant does not explain how this methodology prevents dropout, recovers dropouts or provides career counseling services. Additional services are not explained in the narrative.

**Reader's Score:** 1

**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 narrative is sufficient to describe a robust charter school authorizing system (e25-e27). The applicant uses the guide with standards and principals by the national association of charter school authorizers (NACSA). Using these standards, the applicant conducts trainings and professional development for charter schools and authorizers across the state. These standards are also used to complete model applications.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 4

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/26/2020 11:28 AM

## Technical Review Form

Reader: CSP Staff  
Applicant: Florida Department of Education (S282A200017)

**Total CPP1 and CPP2 Score** **6**

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**CPP1 Score (select the score)** **4**

### 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:

- a. The applicant provides census tract numbers of all Qualified Opportunity Zones in Florida (in Attachment A) and says sub-grantee applicants who open schools in an Opportunity Zone will get the maximum sub-grant award. (p. e17)
- b. The applicant says sub-grantee applicants who include information about how students in Qualified Opportunity Zones will be served will receive preference points. (p. e16)

#### 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:**

The applicant meets b as the application says Florida has a “robust appeals process that allows a charter developer to appeal a district’s decision to deny a charter application” and describes the appeals process. (Local school districts are the only authorized public chartering agencies). (p. e17)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader’s Score: 2**