

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/24/2022 04:17 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Atlas Public Schools (S282B220002)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	40	35
Sub Total	40	35
Continuation		
Quality of the Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	20	18
Sub Total	20	18
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	10	10
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	30	27
Sub Total	40	37
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP1	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	95

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Developers New Panel - 2: 84.282B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Atlas Public Schools (S282B220002)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. 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 the following factors:

Reader's Score: 35

Sub

1. (i) 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 (up to 10 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

Strengths:

The Atlas Public School grant has evidence of an adequate management plan in most areas. The grant outlines in a table (Pages e26 -e32) not only a timeline for the project activities but the responsible party for each activity. There are best practices incorporated from the 67 school districts the administrative team visited Page e33 to hone the best opportunities for their students and maximize this grant's funding. Additionally, the use of timelines to implement project activities along with the outlining of specific roles and responsibilities will strengthen this grant. The start and end times were realistic. Pages e26-e32 and e36

Weaknesses:

The weakness with the applicant's management plan is the lack of historical data to base success on. Atlas is currently in its second year of operation, and therefore, historical data is slim. Their first year was during a pandemic. Although challenging, the 2022-23 school year will actually be their first "typical" year. Even though this school received many awards this past year, there is still little anecdotal testimony for operation in a "typical" year.

Reader's Score: 8

2. (ii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(f)(2)(iv))

Strengths:

Atlas Public Schools has provided a data table of other nearby charter schools and their high-quality seat costs for comparison. Page e34. This is a strength in providing a basis for the calculation of their budget.

Sub

Weaknesses:

Based upon this comparison of other nearby charters per-pupil expenditures, Atlas's budget expense per pupil is the lowest in the area. The budgeted cost for Atlas to provide 319 high-quality elementary seats is estimated at [REDACTED] per seat. Since Atlas's per-pupil expenditures are the lowest in the area and the proposed budget estimate is based on vendor estimates, this becomes a weakness. Page e34

Reader's Score: 4

- 3. (iii) 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 (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(iv))**

Strengths:

The Atlas Public School grant has stated that there will be a three-leadership team with the Executive Director devoting 40 percent of their time to this project. Page e35. A strength of spreading the leadership duties provides different perspectives and ideas available for creative problem-solving.

The additional support staff will include six others with a lesser time commitment to this project. The table located on page e35 includes names and time commitments. This is a strength because there are a number of staff engaged in the success of this project.

Realizing an objective entity can bring more expertise to the project, they will contract with an outside vendor to be the principal investigator to track the project's success.

Weaknesses:

A weakness in this area is the listed time commitment for the Project Director of 40 percent. When viewed, the listed goals for the Project Director are more than a 40 percent time commitment to be done with high expectations. Page e27

Reader's Score: 4

- 4. (iv) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(e)(3)(ii))**

Strengths:

This grant provides evidence that they employ highly qualified personnel, with five of the six key leadership administrators having Master's Degrees, while the remaining individual has experience in working in their designated field. Page e36, e37. To have this highly-qualified staff ready to meet the challenges of this grant is a strength. Additionally, resumes are listed in Appendix B.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

- 5. (v) The adequacy of the applicant's plan to maintain control over all CSP grant funds (up to 5 points). (2022 NFP)**

Strengths:

The Atlas Public School grant is strong in this area, as shown on Pages e25 and e26. They are contracting with an outside entity to track adherence to and review accounting policies and procedures and to interface with the project'

Sub

s leadership team to ensure all federal grant funds would have transparent accountability. This vendor has experience with working with the CSP grant guidelines from other clients. Additionally, the listed Internal Controls listed in the grant are impressive. Page e25

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses evident.

Reader's Score: 5

6. (vi) The adequacy of the applicant’s plan to make all programmatic decisions (up to 5 points). (2022 NFP)

Strengths:

The use of all stakeholders: community supporters, faculty, parents, and student voices strengthens the decision process for Atlas Public Schools. Because they are a data-driven decision-making school, they have the flexibility to experiment with new platforms, curricula, and ideas that will best meet the needs of its students. The grant provided testimonials to this iterative decision-making process. Page e26

They intend to employ a start-stop-continuous analysis model to evaluate their programs and curriculum continually. Page e26

Weaknesses:

As a new school entering its second year of operation, this decision-making process, although it served well in Year 1, it may or may not need more resources and support in Year 2 and beyond. The historical data which would prove this is a good decision-making plan is not available.

Reader's Score: 4

7. (vii) The adequacy of the applicant’s plan to administer or supervise the administration of the grant, including maintaining management and oversight responsibilities over the grant (up to 5 points). (2022 NFP)

Strengths:

Atlas Public School provides evidence that they will adequately plan and supervise this grant if awarded. There is documentation of extensive, thorough, and strategic planning to administer the CSP grant if they are awarded the funding. It is clear they have strategized over many months to submit this application after visiting 67 school districts and engaging their community in discussions through surveys and meetings in regards to the expansion of more high-quality student opportunities. Page e2.

This grant defines the plan to administer the finances and the implementation of their goals. They will be contracting with an external entity to provide resources and expertise on the financial management of this grant. Pages e37 and e38. Evidence is provided of specific educators as to their roles and responsibilities.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

Continuation - Quality of the Continuation Plan

- 1. In determining the quality of the continuation plan, the Secretary considers the extent to which the eligible applicant is prepared to continue to operate the charter school that would receive grant funds in a manner consistent with the eligible applicant's application once the grant funds under this program are no longer available. (2019 NFP)**

Strengths:

There is evidence within this grant for Atlas to sustain financially long after the grant funds have been expended. Page e40, e41, and Appendix F. The bulk of this grant's budget will go towards start-up costs, and they believe financial sustainability will be strengthened because they are one-time costs. They will be relying on Missouri's per-pupil allocation, which has just received a legislated boost for more charter school funding. Page e41 Their intention is to be fully funded in Year 4 without any philanthropic help. Page e41

Additionally, the plan is to add one grade per year, thus allowing the administration the flexibility to meet the needs of a growing student population without sacrificing the individual student's academic growth. Page e37

Another strength of Atlas is the year-round academic school calendar. This eliminates learning gaps and increases community engagement. Page e58 and e59

Based on this application, Atlas, in all probability, will be sustainable after the grant goals are met because of the engagement of both the staff and community partnerships. Page e7

Weaknesses:

A budget weakness is that the Missouri per pupil expenditure might be budgeted low and thus limit the school's ability to meet their expected goals. Additionally, not all costs budgeted were start-up expenses.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

- 1. (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(xxix))**

Strengths:

The project's rationale strikes a balance as both broad and specific, which lends the four focal points to be effective and to have the flexibility to meet the needs of students, educators, and the community expectations without straying from the grant's vision. Page e42, e43. Atlas Public Schools has a strong rationale for this project in the area of academics, where their explanation of Place-Based learning provides the rationale for the use of this strategy for their students. The Placed-Based model includes project-based and a wide range of resources as the foundation for its curriculum. Page e42

The rationale behind the project's activities for educators and family engagement is realistic. Page e31 The final rationale is funding that supports activities to ensure that this grant will be implemented with fidelity. An example is

Sub

contracting with a horticulturist to assist with a gardening project and to fund training for teachers in the art of Place-Based teaching. Page e44.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses evident

Reader's Score: 5

- 2. (ii) **The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(i))**

Strengths:

The proposed grant has provided a Project Logic Model for goals in the areas of academics, educator development and parent engagement. These models strengthened the probability of success for Atlas Public Schools. The goals are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound. Pages e32, e33, and e34.

Additionally, to ensure that this grant meets its targets, there are performance measures and a target table to be used as a guideline. Page e35 and e36.

Although there is not a Logic Model for the specific Project Management Goal, the objectives and outcomes are listed in previous grant sections.

Weaknesses:

There are no evident weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

- 1. **The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:**

Reader's Score: 27

Sub

- 1. (i) **The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project (up to 15 points). (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(i))**

Strengths:

Based on the data provided, this community needs more highly-qualified seats and educational opportunities for students.

There is strong evidence of both the poverty level and poor academic opportunities for students in the three zip codes where Atlas Public Schools recruits. Page e52. This proves there is a need for a Diverse-by-Design model to

Sub

meet the needs of this community. The school, which opened last school year, proved that they could not only engage this student population in learning but show measurable growth in academic areas. Because of this success, Atlas wants to expand this model to add a grade a year and eventually be a K-5 school. Page e50

Weaknesses:

There is no evidence of any weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 15

2. (ii) The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project (up to 15 points). (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(ii))

Strengths:

The school has chosen a diverse-design model to meet the needs of this community’s population. To strengthen their student’s success, they adopted a new curriculum where they found students to be more engaged and where academic growth was strengthened. The decision to employ the Bridges framework to help students with the math concepts was initiated last spring. They will now use the Bridges approach for the core curricula areas. This approach utilizes project-based lessons.

Weaknesses:

A weakness found is that there is no data that claims that this community feels the Atlas Public School should expand. There is no proof of waiting lists or parent groups asking for expansion. The grant states that there is an opportunity in this area for high-quality educational seats, but an “opportunity” does not equate to sustainability. Page e51 Since this school is still in the infancy stage, it is still proving its value in the community, but that does not signify that the community will support this growth expansion through enrollment numbers.

Reader's Score: 12

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1—Promoting High-Quality Educator and Community-Centered Charter Schools to Support Underserved Students. (Up to 5 points).

1.Under this priority, an applicant must propose to open a new charter school, or to replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that is developed and implemented—With meaningful and ongoing engagement with current or former teachers and other educators (0 or 1 point); and

2.Using a community-centered approach that includes an assessment of community assets, informs the development of the charter school, and includes the implementation of protocols and practices designed to ensure that the charter school will use and interact with community assets on an ongoing basis to create and maintain strong community ties. (Up to 2 points).

In its application, an applicant must provide a high-quality plan that demonstrates how its proposed project would meet the requirements in paragraph (a) of this priority, accompanied by a timeline for key milestones that span the course of planning, development, and implementation of the charter school. (Up to 2 points).

Strengths:

- 1.. Atlas Public School has met this provision by wanting to expand from a Kindergarten only school to a K-5 by adding one grade per year. Page e2 The effort to strategize and plan for the expansion was nurtured through teacher input. Atlas believes in teacher-led management for schools. Page e15
2. This grant states Atlas employs a community-centered approach decision process where all stakeholders are engaged, and decisions are not only data-driven but feedback from teachers, students, and parents. Page 26 There is documentation Atlas utilized focus groups, one-on-one meetings, and surveys to assess the needs of the community. Page e16. Additionally, they intend to be transformative to the community by being a resource for their patrons to other community links. Page e17
3. This applicant has fulfilled this requirement through utilizing Project Logic Models, research-based goals, local statistics profiling the community, and experienced leadership to ensure the plan is implemented with fidelity. Pages e13, e19, e32, e33, e35 and e36

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses evident.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/24/2022 04:17 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/19/2022 05:09 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Atlas Public Schools (S282B220002)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	40	39
Sub Total	40	39
Continuation		
Quality of the Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	10	10
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	30	28
Sub Total	40	38
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP1	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	102

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Developers New Panel - 2: 84.282B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Atlas Public Schools (S282B220002)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. 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 the following factors:

Reader's Score: 39

Sub

1. (i) 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 (up to 10 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed project plan that includes activities, responsible party, start date by month, and completion date. The applicant provides evidence of their ability to win and manage multiple major grant awards, including a grant from NewSchools Venture Fund and one from the Charter School Growth Fund. The proposal documents important milestones already met in the first year of operation. These details support the expectation that the school will be able to achieve objectives on time and within budget.

(e26-33)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 10

2. (ii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(f)(2)(iv))

Strengths:

The proposal provides a cost per seat analysis that demonstrates the school's competitive position compared to other charter schools in the state that have received CSP grant funds. The budget includes costs that are aligned to the school's project goals. Costs for proposed expenses are reasonable and are aligned with program goals. (e34-35)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

Sub

3. (iii) 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 (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(iv))

Strengths:

The applicant provides a clear chart of time commitments for key personnel, including the project director. The narrative identifies an experienced firm to serve as the principal investigator. Time commitments are well defined and appropriate. (e35)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

4. (iv) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(e)(3)(ii))

Strengths:

The applicant provides a chart of education and experience for key personnel in addition to their resumes. Key personnel demonstrate extensive experience, relevant training, and a commitment to education. (e36-67, e72-84)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

5. (v) The adequacy of the applicant's plan to maintain control over all CSP grant funds (up to 5 points). (2022 NFP)

Strengths:

The proposal provides details for accounting and internal controls that can be expected to lead to adequate control over CSP grant funds. (e37-38)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

6. (vi) The adequacy of the applicant's plan to make all programmatic decisions (up to 5 points). (2022 NFP)

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates that all programmatic decisions are made by the applicant based on the school goals and community input. (e39)

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not indicate the role of the Governing Board and input from the evaluator to influence programmatic decisions.

Reader's Score: 4

Sub

7. (vii) The adequacy of the applicant’s plan to administer or supervise the administration of the grant, including maintaining management and oversight responsibilities over the grant (up to 5 points). (2022 NFP)

Strengths:

Grant expenditures will be overseen by the project director and tracked and managed by their selected accounting firm. The proposal lists specific duties of the project director related to project management, including oversight of all drawdowns of grant funds. (e40)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

Continuation - Quality of the Continuation Plan

1. In determining the quality of the continuation plan, the Secretary considers the extent to which the eligible applicant is prepared to continue to operate the charter school that would receive grant funds in a manner consistent with the eligible applicant's application once the grant funds under this program are no longer available. (2019 NFP)

Strengths:

The applicant provides evidence that the project budget supports primarily one-time costs associated with start-up. The narrative describes expected state revenue increases based on enrollment growth and also recent legislation that increases the share of revenue for charter schools in the state. Based on this information, the school is in a strong position to continue operations once grant funds are no longer available. (40-42)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

1. (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(xxix))

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that the curriculum and instructional approach are research-based. Research to support this approach is provided in another section.

Sub

(e42-e44, e55-61)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

2. (ii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(i))

Strengths:

The logic model displays the activities, outputs, and outcomes expected for each of the four components of the program. Outcomes are specific and measurable. (e45-47) The proposal includes a detailed chart of performance measures and targets across five years. (e49)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

Reader's Score: 28

Sub

1. (i) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project (up to 15 points). (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(i))

Strengths:

The proposal provides detailed data to support the problems being addressed, including educational segregation, teaching job vacancies, and preparing students for 21st Century jobs. For example, the applicant provides evidence that St. Louis is one of the most segregated cities in the U.S. overall, and yet the city is highly integrated when reviewed on a block-to-block measurement. (e50-51) The applicant believes this is evidence that the community is supportive of their diverse-by-design school model. Data is provided to show that 84% of students in the local district were not proficient in English/Language Arts prior to the pandemic. The proposal discusses challenges related to teacher vacancies and high levels of stress reported by teachers. (e54-55)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 15

2. (ii) The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be

Sub

carried out by the proposed project (up to 15 points). (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(ii))

Strengths:

The proposed program was developed with community input to directly address the needs of that community. The narrative provides research and evidence to support the need and desire for their instructional approach and school design. The school design prioritizes support for teachers and plans to deliver an educational experience that is engaging and innovative. (e55-61)

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide details to indicate that the community is supportive of this specific model through wait lists, survey data, or numbers of parents participating in information nights.

Reader's Score: 13

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1—Promoting High-Quality Educator and Community-Centered Charter Schools to Support Underserved Students. (Up to 5 points).

1. Under this priority, an applicant must propose to open a new charter school, or to replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that is developed and implemented—With meaningful and ongoing engagement with current or former teachers and other educators (0 or 1 point); and

2. Using a community-centered approach that includes an assessment of community assets, informs the development of the charter school, and includes the implementation of protocols and practices designed to ensure that the charter school will use and interact with community assets on an ongoing basis to create and maintain strong community ties. (Up to 2 points).

In its application, an applicant must provide a high-quality plan that demonstrates how its proposed project would meet the requirements in paragraph (a) of this priority, accompanied by a timeline for key milestones that span the course of planning, development, and implementation of the charter school. (Up to 2 points).

Strengths:

The applicant provides evidence that the program was designed with meaningful and ongoing engagement with educators. For example, the founding team visited 67 schools to learn from them and the program is based on other successful teacher-led schools. The applicant invites continuous input from staff members through problem-solving committees. The applicant also states that teacher input was included in the development of the CSP grant proposal. (e15)

The applicant describes several strategies they plan to use to encourage family and community engagement. In addition to seeking input in the development of the school, the applicant plans to implement a Family Council to get bi-monthly feedback, to actively develop parent partnerships, and to work with community partners such as Unleashing Potential and Operation Foodsearch. The proposal includes a chart of community partners and how the applicant plans to work with each. (e16-20, e93-97)

The proposal provides a detailed chart of activities and responsibilities for community engagement. The level of detail in the narrative and chart of activities demonstrates the applicant's commitment to this competitive preference priority. (e24-25)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/19/2022 05:09 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/24/2022 01:43 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Atlas Public Schools (S282B220002)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	40	36
Sub Total	40	36
Continuation		
Quality of the Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	10	9
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	30	29
Sub Total	40	38
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP1	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	105	99

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Developers New Panel - 2: 84.282B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Atlas Public Schools (S282B220002)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. 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 the following factors:

Reader's Score: 36

Sub

1. (i) 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 (up to 10 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

Strengths:

A chart of deliverables is included with a timeline that includes clear individual responsibilities (P.13-19).

Weaknesses:

The logic model clearly articulates the objectives and milestones, however the proposal does not present a full crosswalk between the activities within the management plan and those within the logic model. It is therefore difficult to discern whether the activities of each priority area are fully captured within the management plan.

Reader's Score: 8

2. (ii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(f)(2)(iv))

Strengths:

The proposed costs generally appear reasonable based on the scope of work listed within the project. A careful analysis was done to look at the regional per pupil expenditure through the CSP (p. 21). Most expenses appear to be related to start up and are clearly aligned to the scope of work articulated within the logic model (p.13-18, p.33).

Weaknesses:

There are quite a few curricular resources listed as expenses that do not appear to be 1 time costs (p.13-18) such as an instructional coach, ELA education curriculum, Bridges in math curriculum, Dean, School support specialist, PD from external vendors. The logic for some purchases is not 100% clear. For example, LETRS PD is listed as a teacher retention strategy in the logic model without much explanation (p.33).

Sub

Reader's Score: 4

3. (iii) 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 (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(iv))

Strengths:

The proposal presents a robust and experienced team allocated to project management (p. 22). A chart is presented which outlines each individual and their allocated time and responsibilities. (p.13-18; p.22; p.24). An evaluation partner is included in the plan. (p. 24).

Weaknesses:

There were no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

4. (iv) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(e)(3)(ii))

Strengths:

A highly qualified leadership team has been selected to oversee the CSP project and there is a diverse skillset across the leadership team. (chart, p. 24).

Weaknesses:

There were no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

5. (v) The adequacy of the applicant's plan to maintain control over all CSP grant funds (up to 5 points). (2022 NFP)

Strengths:

The applicant documents experience managing grants such as those from the Charter School Growth Fund and New School Venture Fund (p.20). There is reference to an existing fiscal policy handbook (p.24). Clear controls are also articulated, as well as a commitment to an independent audit. (p. 24-25).

Weaknesses:

There were no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

6. (vi) The adequacy of the applicant's plan to make all programmatic decisions (up to 5 points). (2022 NFP)

Strengths:

A clear process was presented for multi-stage decision making with valid examples of precedence such as the use of Ed Reports and the pilot of Bridges program is presented as well as a commitment to data-informed practice (p. 26).

Sub

Weaknesses:

There was no reference to the board's role in programmatic decision making. It is unclear how the evaluator included within the grant will influence decision making.

Reader's Score: 4

7. (vii) The adequacy of the applicant's plan to administer or supervise the administration of the grant, including maintaining management and oversight responsibilities over the grant (up to 5 points). (2022 NFP)

Strengths:

A strong process for the oversight of grant administration is provided with clear roles and responsibilities for the project director and program officer. The applicant demonstrated a knowledge of required compliance, programmatic and fiscal reporting. There is a clear integration of fiscal and programmatic monitoring (p. 27).

Weaknesses:

There were no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

Continuation - Quality of the Continuation Plan

1. In determining the quality of the continuation plan, the Secretary considers the extent to which the eligible applicant is prepared to continue to operate the charter school that would receive grant funds in a manner consistent with the eligible applicant's application once the grant funds under this program are no longer available. (2019 NFP)

Strengths:

The charter school has demonstrated the ability to be fiscally sound, noting that it ended the first year with a budget surplus (21). The team has demonstrated that they can raise private dollars to supplement ongoing program costs (p.20). The team also conducted an analysis of its plan and noted that 91% of its expenses were explicitly tied to start up. The school also presented a student growth pattern which will result in sustainable revenue. (p. 22)

Weaknesses:

There were no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34

Sub

CFR 77.1(c) (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(xxix))

Strengths:

The rationale for the project is largely clear and meaningful, as demonstrated within the logic model (p.33). The designation of 4 major components of work and aligned outcomes is coherent (p. 29-34). The External Factors and Assumptions table is meaningful for the framing of logic (p.34).

Weaknesses:

There were no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

2. (ii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(i))

Strengths:

The applicants provided a clear rationale for academic support. A compelling argument was presented on the polarization of the community and the school's approach to mitigation of this issue through a focus on intentional diversity. The school spoke to the exodus of families from the community and the need for high quality school choice options. This demonstrates that the school could pose a solution to the declining economic investment in the city (p.39).

Weaknesses:

The school did not fully articulate community demand for this specific model (example: evidence of surveys, waiting list, focus group data, etc.).

Reader's Score: 4

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

Reader's Score: 29

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1. (i) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project (up to 15 points). (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(i))

Strengths:

The applicant provided a clear presentation of the challenge: Schools are segregated despite the community being diverse. Patterns of family enrollment demonstrates the need for school options. Students who would enroll in the school would otherwise have school options that are historically under-performing (p.41). The challenge includes a focus on new work opportunities to support educator wellness and there is evidence that research was done on school enrollment patterns (p.36-41).

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Weaknesses:

There were no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 15

2. (ii) The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project (up to 15 points). (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(ii))

Strengths:

The applicants provided a clear rationale for academic support. A compelling argument was presented on the polarization of the community and the school's approach to mitigation of this issue through a focus on intentional diversity. The school spoke to the exodus of families from the community and the need for high quality school choice options. This demonstrates that the school could pose a solution to the declining economic investment in the city (p.39)

Weaknesses:

The school did not fully articulate community demand for this specific model (example: evidence of surveys, waiting list, focus group data, etc.).

Reader's Score: 14

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1—Promoting High-Quality Educator and Community-Centered Charter Schools to Support Underserved Students. (Up to 5 points).

1. Under this priority, an applicant must propose to open a new charter school, or to replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that is developed and implemented—With meaningful and ongoing engagement with current or former teachers and other educators (0 or 1 point); and

2. Using a community-centered approach that includes an assessment of community assets, informs the development of the charter school, and includes the implementation of protocols and practices designed to ensure that the charter school will use and interact with community assets on an ongoing basis to create and maintain strong community ties. (Up to 2 points).

In its application, an applicant must provide a high-quality plan that demonstrates how its proposed project would meet the requirements in paragraph (a) of this priority, accompanied by a timeline for key milestones that span the course of planning, development, and implementation of the charter school. (Up to 2 points).

Strengths:

1. There is a clear commitment to involving educators in the planning process of this school as well as to engage in practices of continuous improvement (1 pt)

“Atlas uses systems of meaningful input from teachers regarding school management. The year-round structure of our school empowers teachers and creates built-in time for professional collaboration. During each professional development week (typically week six of the academic session), all teachers participate in problem-solving committees around relevant areas of school improvement. Teachers then have dedicated professional development time to participate in these problem-solving committees.” (p. 2)

2. There is a priority and related activities of the grant that is specific to family engagement. There are also several

core community partners and a role dedicated to fostering support in this area (2 pt).

“Atlas was built with the input and feedback from parents and community members through focus groups, one-on-one meetings, and surveys. Ideas and concerns voiced by the community, such as wanting a safe and joyful environment for their students, are interwoven into the fabric of the school. We also understand the need to create formal systems that explicitly incorporate family and community input into the governance and decision-making process so their voices continue to be heard as the school grows” (p.3). Logic model (p.33) lists Family and Community Engagement as a core activity.

3. When paired together, the management plan (p.12) and the logic model (p.33) demonstrate that the proposed project would meet the requirements of this preference’s criteria. (2 pt).

Weaknesses:

There were no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/24/2022 01:43 PM