

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/08/2022 10:25 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Green Dot Public Schools National (S282T220017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	30	23
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	40	30
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	17
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	78
<b>Total</b>	100	78

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - National Dissemination Panel - 3: 84.282T

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

Applicant: Green Dot Public Schools National (S282T220017)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 23

#### Sub

1. The national significance of the proposed project.

#### Strengths:

The applicant presents an innovative high-impact model of district-charter partnership through codifying an operational guidebook that focuses on operational and communications practices (p. e14, e16).

The project clearly addresses Absolute Priority 3c by partnering with a historically low performing public school for turnaround, improving outcomes for underserved students (p. e20), which is of national significance.

The applicant has built more than a decade of national experience in school turnarounds and is now positioned to bring their charter model (flexibility, financial transparency, and operational effectiveness) to create collaborative district-charter relationships in the school turnaround context (p. e19), which aims to bring an innovative solution to a problem of national significance.

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not present data on past expertise around similar district-charter partnerships and turnaround success.

While the project addresses a general problem of national significance, the scale of the project is very small (partnering with only one middle school in Texas), which also limits its significance as larger scale and replication opportunities may be scarce (p. e20).

Reader's Score: 12

2. The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

#### Strengths:

The proposed project aims to build capacity of both charters and districts to improve operational effectiveness and better serve high need students, and ultimately increase the number of high-quality district-charter partnerships (p. e21) with an adequately developed plan.

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

The narrative lacks sufficient evidence as to how the applicant will build capacity of charters and districts to form effective partnerships. The examples the applicant included of providing contract negotiation tips and norming new inter-operational standards are unclear about how they relate to national significance and school turnaround (p. e23-24).

The applicant lists growing the number of CMO-district partnerships as one of the design principles of the project. However, it is not clear what the applicant will do to grow these partnerships beyond just the dissemination of information (p. e24).

**Reader's Score: 11**

**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: 30**

**Sub**

**1. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant references several examples of failed district-charter partnership initiatives focusing on turnaround efforts (p. e25), fully contextualizing a persistent problem of equity.

The narrative lists several resources developed and disseminated by reputable organizations on district-charter partnerships (p. e26-27) but the applicant clearly provides evidence that such examples are missing a specific roadmap co-developed by the partners focusing on operational effectiveness in a turnaround setting (p. e28), making the rationale for this proposed project stronger.

The applicant provides fully developed examples of how a collaborative partnership was formed with a turnaround school district and shares snippets of their best practices such as merging their cultures, negotiating essential autonomies, addressing issues with transparency, etc. (p. e31-32).

The project narrative lists detailed components of its operational handbook (p. e34-37), which adds strength to the rationale for establishing high-quality district-charter partnerships in turnaround settings.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not include a logic model in the project narrative. The operational guidebook the applicant aims to codify seems to be a key project component that would have been named in the project's logic model. Although the applicant provided details on key components of their deliverable (p. e34-37), there is not sufficient information around how this key project component is informed by research or evaluation findings. The only indication that suggests this key project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes is the applicant's lessons learned from past experience (p. e34).

**Reader's Score: 8**

Sub

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

**Strengths:**

The goals and objectives are adequately aligned to the selected absolute priority (p. e38-39).

**Weaknesses:**

While the goals and objectives are measurable, it is not clear how achieving these goals will produce desired student outcomes in turnaround schools.

The metrics around culture reset (p. e40) and similar short term academic performance metrics could have been included in goals/objectives to make this section stronger.

The outcome listed on the Goals-Objectives-Outcomes table is not a quantifiable outcome statement (p. e38). Instead, the applicant added the language of absolute priority 1 verbatim.

This criterion was thoroughly discussed, and my score reflects my professional assessment of this sub-criteria section.

**Reader's Score: 6**

**3. The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.**

**Strengths:**

The narrative gives well-developed examples of tried and failed attempts at turnaround efforts in district-charter partnerships, while highlighting successes of the applicant (Memphis, Los Angeles, etc.) through its unique approach to cross-agency coordination and community engagement to advance systemic change (p. e41).

The applicant partially demonstrates a working library of best practices through past experiences, such as quickly adapting to change, seeking deeper understanding of local contexts, and analyzing the entire school community (p. e43).

**Weaknesses:**

There is not enough detail and context on the provided examples of failed turnaround efforts with other district-charter partnerships, which does not allow for a fair comparison.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**4. The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

**Strengths:**

Dissemination begins at a specific time after the model is adequately tested and evaluated by a third-party (p. e45).

The applicant lists well-developed dissemination efforts that include:

- o Hosting at least 5 webinars and presenting in-person in at least 3 national and state conferences (p. e45).
- o Hosting one-on-one and group training sessions for both charter and district operators to establish more formal partnerships and ultimately grow district-charter collaborations (p. e46).
- o Reaching out to its philanthropic partners to leverage their networks for national dissemination (p. e46).

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant lists multiple powerful avenues for dissemination, including white papers and case studies presenting evidence of effectiveness of this operational guidebook would have added more strength to the dissemination plan.

The applicant does not appear to have a mechanism around grassroots efforts for replication in small districts.

**Reader's Score: 8**

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

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**Reader's Score: 17**

**Sub**

- 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.**

**Strengths:**

Project activities are listed in a clear timeline across project years-- with key staff members responsible for developing and executing each activity clearly notes as well (p. e47-48).

**Weaknesses:**

While there is alignment between listed project activities and project goals/objectives, this alignment is not explicitly demonstrated and the absence of a logic model contributes to not being able to connect all the pieces of the project with goals, deliverables, activities, outcomes, etc.

**Reader's Score: 7**

- 2. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

A large number of team members will contribute to the project as described in the budget narrative (p. e68-69). It is clearly outlined what activities each team member will contribute to and with their allocated FTEs.

All travel and contractual costs are reasonable and necessary to support the overall project (p. e70-71).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 8

Sub

1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

**Strengths:**

The applicant includes adequate evidence on improving diversity efforts by conducting audits on its workplace culture to uncover systemic biases and explicitly embed diversity, equity, and inclusion in its organizational culture and talent practices (p. e55).

The applicant shares data that "41% of GreenDot teachers across the California schools are Latinx and 14% are Black," and similarly [In Tennessee] "...70% of Green Dot teachers are Black and 4% are Latinx." (p. e55), which adds strength to their diversity and equity efforts on employment.

**Weaknesses:**

While there is evidence of recruitment among underrepresented groups based on race/color, no other evidence is presented in other areas of underrepresentation (e.g. national origin, gender, etc.).

Although it is mentioned that each member has a strategic plan that addresses their commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion, no examples of strategies are provided from any of those plans.

Reader's Score: 2

2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

**Strengths:**

A project director is already named, and she has extensive experience as an educator, school and district leader, and systemic change maker (p. e57).

**Weaknesses:**

Although the project director is explicitly named in the project narrative, the budget narrative lists the project director at a reduced capacity and only responsible for a limited portion of the project activities (p. e68). This discrepancy creates a possible gap in the overall oversight and management of this project by the project director.

Reader's Score: 3

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

**Strengths:**

Both key personnel listed have the qualifications and expertise that match the stated project goals (p. e57-58).

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/08/2022 10:25 PM

Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Green Dot Public Schools National (S282T220017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	30	20
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	40	31
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	13
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	73
<b>Total</b>	100	73

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - National Dissemination Panel - 3: 84.282T

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

Applicant: Green Dot Public Schools National (S282T220017)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 20

#### Sub

1. The national significance of the proposed project.

#### Strengths:

The applicant largely demonstrated the national significance of the proposed focus of its project. It cited considerable research around the challenges of turning around the nation's lowest performing schools. Its proposed project would co-create an innovative and high-impact model of district-charter partnership to be codified, evaluated, and disseminated as an Operational Guidebook. The proposed project would leverage the applicants multi-context experiences across 14 years of turnaround efforts and the model will be informed by collaborative work with partnering districts and non-profit community engagement partners, with the goal of creating an essential tool for both charter operators and school districts to catalyze rapid improvements in academic, school culture, and community engagement outcomes. The applicant cited a number of national efforts over time for turning around chronically low performing schools. It noted Federal School Improvement Grant funds infused more than [REDACTED] in the bottom 5 percent of the nation's schools as has supplementary district and state funds, federal Title I funds, and Race to the Top grant as has philanthropic organizations (e.g. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's District-Charter Collaboration Compact Initiative invested [REDACTED] in since 2010). [e14-e22, e25, e39]

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant needed to more clearly demonstrate how its approach to the proposed project would have relevance nationwide. The existing terrain, per the application, includes at least 35 urban school districts and about a dozen with existing district-charter collaborations. While the applicant's own turnaround experience is extensive, it has been limited to three districts. The applicant did not identify specific prospects for additional partnering districts or CMOs or how they would be cultivated to enhance the national significance of the project. [e14-e22, e25, e39]

Reader's Score: 12

2. The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

#### Strengths:

Through the project guidance, dissemination and training, the applicant seeks to expand the number of district-charter partnerships nationally to deliver successful turnarounds of low-performing schools. To the applicant, what stands out from current research was a considerable lack of focus on how operations and communication protocols and practices, together with clear demarcations concerning autonomy and collaborative space, can contribute to

**Sub**

defining, practicing and sustaining excellence in the turnaround context. The proposed Operational Guidebook would deliver a roadmap that assists organizations in avoiding pitfalls that commonly lead to partnership failure, despite mutually good intentions. [e21-e25]

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant needed to more clearly explain how it would leverage the development of an Operational Guidebook to aid districts and CMOs to succeed in this complicated turnaround space where so many others have not been able to sustain their efforts. More elaboration was also needed on how it would focus support to recruit and support additional district-charter partnerships. [e21-e25]

**Reader's Score: 8**

**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: 31**

**Sub**

- 1. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant largely demonstrated a rationale and regarded the following as critical strategies for district-charter collaboration: (1) Creating a robust and well-defined partnership structure that identifies areas of autonomy and interdependence; (2) Early, authentic community engagement/buy-in; and (3) connecting students and families to services through community partnerships, to overcome non-academic barriers to learning. To the applicant, what these three strategies emphasize is the importance of strong school operations. Traditionally, charter schools differentiate their model based on academics. This has allowed for significant innovation over the past thirty years on how to successfully serve different learners in different contexts. The operations of a school, while critical to effectiveness, have been often overlooked. Operations of a school are especially important and complex in the turnaround setting, as the school must 'reset' to overcome years of dysfunction that have led to low performance. A District partnership in that turnaround adds another layer of complexity. [e25-e33]

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not clearly identify a logic model for the proposed project, which left some ambiguity over how the research cited would inform the approach and the likelihood the project would improve the relevant outcomes.

**Reader's Score: 7**

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

**Strengths:**

The project design included four goals each with a variety of specifically measurable objectives. The proposed deliverable would be a practical guidebook for best operational practices for charters in operating a turnaround school in partnership with a district based on the following key components: (1) Sourcing and Assessing Partnership Opportunities (Market Analysis, Governance, Authorizer Structure, Financial Sustainability, Policy and Regulatory,

**Sub**

Human Capital, Facilities and Infrastructure, and Local Champions and Landscape); (2) Structuring an Effective Partnership; and (3) Launching a Turnaround School (based on Community Partnerships Plan, Change Management Flow Charts, Student Engagement Plan, Staffing Model, Leadership Development, Start-up Operational Plan). [e34-e40]

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant demonstrated good alignment between goals and objectives, more detail was needed to show how the project design would achieve the proposed outcomes of engaging four CMOs to follow the Operations Guidebook (by year 3) and ultimately forming district partnerships using the Guidebook for the turnaround of at least seven schools (by year 5). [e34-40]

This criterion was thoroughly discussed, and my score reflects my professional assessment of this sub-criteria section.

**Reader's Score: 7**

**3. The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant partially demonstrated an exceptional approach to the priority. This included the applicant having cited the third-party recognition for its leadership in the turnaround field by the US Department of Education, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, leading philanthropies (e.g., The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Edythe and Eli Broad Foundation, The Ballmer Group, and Carnegie Corporation of New York) and that its model at Locke High School in Watts has been independently studied and validated by the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing. The applicant also lauded its partnership approach and its effectiveness at assessing partners, defining ambitious meaningful goals, developing buy-in from stakeholders, and then building an operating playbook to ensure activities and communications occur as planned and outcomes are achieved. [e41-e45]

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant needed to provide additional context that its project design was going to be exceptional when, as it acknowledged, there have been many attempts at district-charter collaboration across the nation that frequently are unsustainable. In noting its own mistakes, the applicant seemed to suggest its staying power was based on moving quickly to adapt. It was unclear how the operational guidebook would encompass this adaptable quality. The applicant also acknowledged the availability of a host of best practices and tried strategies in the literature. It seeks to build on that, which may make the project design evolutionary, though perhaps not exceptional without more context. [e41-e43]

**Reader's Score: 7**

**4. The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant proposed to disseminate its proven model following release of the third-party evaluation to at least three in-person convenings and five webinars targeted to friendly charter management organizations, charter advocacy organizations, and districts, the National Charter School Conference, New School Venture Fund, and state-level conferences, such as the Texas Education Agency training. The applicant also proposed between five and ten training sessions (one-on-one or group) with charters and districts as well as dissemination through its many philanthropic connections. [e45-e46]

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**Reader's Score: 13**

**Sub**

- 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.**

**Strengths:**

The proposed management plan includes a year-by-year timeline with milestones and responsibilities assigned by activities. The applicant also provided for a third-party evaluation during year 2 of the project. [e47-e53, e68-69]

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address the staffing in an adequate way in terms of roles and reporting relationships among team members, internal and external, and how functions would be managed. It would have been helpful to see how the flow of work (e.g., who reports to whom) extended from the project director and two key project personnel to the other six personnel identified in the budget narrative as well as the contractors. The management plan also lacked sufficient detail around the focused support (activity 8), which seemed pivotal to reaching important objectives of securing the interest (year 3) of at least 8 Districts/CMOs that seek the applicant's help in forming a partnership along with at least 4 CMOs (other than the applicant) seeking to implement the guidebook. [e47-e53, e68-69]

**Reader's Score: 6**

- 2. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant largely demonstrated its costs were reasonable in relation to the project scope. In particular, the budget narrative included a helpful breakdown of project personnel by title, duties, percent of FTE, and cost. [e53-e54, e68-e72]

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant identified a third-party evaluator, little information was provided about the scope to assess whether the projected cost was reasonable. Additionally, it would have been helpful for the applicant to provide clarity around any new versus existing staff. The management plan section made one general reference to "new and existing staff" and the budget narrative identified two positions (Growth Operations Analyst and Community Partnership and Student Engagement Analyst) at an FTE of 100 percent. Per the budget, both positions would seem to be engaged for the full 36-month term of the project. If not new positions, some clarity around the change in roles within the organization would help alleviate any concern that the project could be supplanting roles these

**Sub**

staff were already performing of a non-project nature for the organization. [e53-e54, e68-e72]

**Reader's Score: 7**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Sub**

- 1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant explained its efforts to encourage employment from the underrepresented groups referenced above and its approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion in its organizational culture, educational practices, and talent acquisition. The applicant noted 41 percent of its teachers across the California schools were Latinx and 14 percent were Black and 70 percent of its teachers in Tennessee were Black and 4 percent were Latinx. These percentages were comparable to the percent of Black and Latinx students the applicant served in the two states. [e55-56]

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant addressed California and Tennessee, it did not report comparable data for its turnaround site in Texas, which is the focus of this project. The applicant also did not indicate the extent to which such representation extended to its governing board, central staff, or school leadership. [e55-56]

**Reader's Score: 2**

- 2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.**

**Strengths:**

The project director held progressively responsible positions with the applicant since 2007 and had been the Chief Growth Officer since 2014. This person had considerable turn-around experience, including contract negotiations between the CMO and teacher's unions, and navigating complex political environments. [e56-57, e60-61]

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 4**

- 3. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant identified two other employees as key project personnel. The Managing Director of Operations would manage the work of developing new district relationships and play a leading role in codifying the Operational

**Sub**

Guidebook and in disseminating the best practices of the district partnership. The Managing Director of Schools, since joining the applicant last year, had designed a system for ensuring alignment between the TX school and the Organizational Leadership Team to support school principals in establishing goals and meeting growth targets. As the proposed project is disseminated, this person would act as a liaison between the CMO and organizations adopting the operational model to guide them in building their own operational capacity and efficiencies. [e57-58, e62-66]

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/08/2022 12:33 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/09/2022 01:08 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Green Dot Public Schools National (S282T220017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	30	26
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	40	37
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	20	20
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	93
<b>Total</b>	100	93

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - National Dissemination Panel - 3: 84.282T

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

Applicant: Green Dot Public Schools National (S282T220017)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Significance

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

Reader's Score: 26

#### Sub

1. The national significance of the proposed project.

#### Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrated that the proposed project will address an urgent national problem to turn-around low-performing schools, which are often serving low-income families and communities of color. (Abstract) The applicant is proposing to collaborate with district partners and non-profit community engagement partners, in a cross-agency collaboration with the goal of creating an essential tool for both charter operators and school districts to initiate improvements in academic, school culture, and community engagement outcomes. (pgs. e 3) The proposed model will provide a blueprint for successful district-charter partnerships nationally, and ultimately catalyze and facilitate broader systemic transformation. The guidebook will be disseminated widely, with training sessions in order to envision a shift towards more and better partnerships between CMOs and districts focused on turnarounds of low-performing schools. Green Dot will utilize the CSP Dissemination grant to codify a model for collaborative district-charter partnership that will include the Operational Guidebook. (pgs. e1-8)

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide sufficient evidence to determine the impact of the project on districts and charters in a variety of settings, such as in urban versus rural locations. Some discussion as to how the response to the model may vary could have strengthened the national significance.

Reader's Score: 13

2. The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

#### Strengths:

The applicant effectively demonstrated that the proposed project has the potential to build local capacity to facilitate school turnaround of low performing schools in targeted populations of low performing schools. The project is likely to address the needs of cross-agencies because the collaboration embraces the strengths of both charter operators and districts in the service of students and families. Additionally, the applicant provided a succinct project purpose that is intentionally designed to (1) build the capacity of charters to partner with districts and succeed in serving

**Sub**

students in low-performing schools; (2) improve the capacity of districts to partner with charters and improve their operations to better meet the needs of their stakeholders; and (3) grow the number of high-quality district-charter partnerships serving the most marginalized students. (pgs. e9-13)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide sufficient clarity as to how the proposed project will impact low-performing schools turnaround efforts. The applicant focused mainly on the significance of building partner relations; thus, it is difficult to determine the potential impact of the model on school turnaround efforts in diverse settings.

**Reader's Score: 13**

**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: 37**

**Sub**

- 1. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant indicated that the project has been developed utilizing an evidence-based rationale aligned with existing resources on best practices for district-charter collaboration. For example, the applicant will build upon their prior research, white papers, and best practices, formative evaluations, and early learning from recent turnaround collaborations. (pgs.e14-16) The applicant's model will take principles from theory into practical action, creating a framework for charter school operators to assess partnership viability.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided four clearly-focused and somewhat measurable goals. The goals are aligned with yearly performance targets that are relevant and related to project outcomes. (pgs22-27) For example, the goals are: (1) define best practices and user focused approaches in district-CMO partnership, (2) define best practices and user focused approaches in collaboration with districts to turnaround low performing schools, (3) document and disseminate the guides, and (4) engage Districts/CMOs across the country to improve low-performing schools. (pgs. e22-27) The applicant adequately demonstrated how the proposed goals would lead Green Dot through the end of Year 5 and have successfully engaged district-charter partnerships using the Guidebook: including at least 7 low-performing schools, serving 4,200+ students, and will be focused on collaborative turnaround with some transformations that will be realized within 3 years of operation. (pgs. e27)

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

“This criterion was thoroughly discussed, and my score reflects my professional assessment of this sub-criteria section.”

**Reader's Score: 10**

**3. The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided compelling evidence for strengthening cross-agency coordination and community engagement to advance systemic change that represents an exceptional approach to the program priorities. (pg. 29) The applicant makes a strong point that districts and charters historically do not have the best working relationships, thus building partnerships with a clear focus on turning around low-performing schools is needed to change communities. Through this grant project, Green Dot will codify a model of operating a partnership that bridges two entities that otherwise operate in silos. (pgs. 29-30) Based on their national experiences with effectively implementing school turnaround and student outcome transformations through serving a wide variety of students from some of the most marginalized communities in the U.S., the applicant shows promise that the strategies and lessons learned from past experiences will strengthen the model that can used to initiate and succeed in district partnerships. (pgs. e20-31)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide a full discussion of the impact of the project on the various cross-agency collaborative partners to ensure partners will maintain the relationships. While the applicant addressed the fact the collaborative relationships have not been successful in the past, an indication of what would be different now as a result of their proposed approach would have strengthened their argument for an exceptional approach.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**4. The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant successfully demonstrated that the proposed project has in place strategies for broadly disseminating the project deliverables that can be used for replication. For example, the applicant will disseminate the Operational Guidebook for Charter-District Partnerships in training sessions and digital publications through partner networks. (pgs.31-32) The applicant will engage in encouraging new partnerships between charters and districts focused on turnaround schools. Sessions for engaging and recruiting partners will be held virtual and in-person training sessions. The organization has partnerships with various national groups that would be interested in building high-performing cultures and delivering outcomes that close achievement gaps, thus providing an array of networks. The applicant indicated that by Spring 2024, Green Dot will begin to disseminate the district-charter model. Green Dot will wait until the third-party evaluation of the program is complete to ensure the model has proven impact, and to prove legitimacy to the public education sector. (pg. 33) Green Dot will launch dissemination by hosting a webinar with charter management organizations, charter advocacy organizations, and districts. Additionally, the project model will be presented at national conferences, such as the National Charter School Conference and at state-level conferences in states with partnership models, as well as other conferences focused on innovation/reform of public education. Green Dot aims to present at least three times at in-person convenings, and host at least five webinars. (pgs. e31-34)

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide a full discussion on their replication strategies. For example, how they will support interested entities in replicating the model in various settings is not clear.

**Reader's Score: 9**

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

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Sub**

- 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.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided a detailed management plan that outlines the timeline, tasks and activities, and responsibilities of team members. (pgs. e35-36) The applicant provided a comprehensive description of each activity and task that is aligned with meeting the goals and objectives of the project. This alignment provided a clear blueprint and step-by step guide for how the project will developed and implemented over the grant period. The management plan includes milestone activities and tasks that will allow time to identify gaps and solutions. For example, the applicant will conduct a comprehensive audit of the materials assigned to each staff member to identify any gaps, inconsistencies, or extraneous information, thus ensuring time for refinement and adjustment of all learning materials to best meet the needs of the operational model. (pgs. e35-40)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

- 2. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided a detailed line-item budget and budget narrative that aligns the costs to implement the project. Based on a review of the budget and the budget narrative, the three-year grant budget allocates 73% of project-related costs to staffing. (pg. e41) The budget includes reasonable costs for supplies and materials. The applicant will utilize the services of an evaluation contractor, which was clearly presented in the narrative to conduct a case study of the model at important inflection points, to understand the impact of levers of district-charter partnership in an existing partnership and a new district-charter partnership that will be formed during Year 1 of the grant. (pgs. e-41-42)

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the following factors:**

**Reader's Score: 10**

Sub

- 1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly demonstrated that the applicant has developed strategies and processes for encouraging applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented. The applicant indicated they committed to recruiting a talented and diverse team and is committed to complying with GEPA. To recruit and retain a diverse staff, Green Dot will partner with local universities to develop human capital pipelines, hosting student teachers and attending job fairs at local community, junior, and 4-year colleges that serve primarily underrepresented populations. Green Dot also maintains membership to diverse professional networks and recruits teachers via referral from highly effective team members. (pgs. e43-44)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

- 2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly demonstrated that the current person serving in the role of a Project Director has the qualifications and experience needed to implement the project. Green Dot's Chief Growth Officer has been with Green Dot Public Schools since 2007. (pgs. e 44-45) Before coming to Green Dot, she served as Chief Executive Officer for Civitas Schools, a CMO serving four charter schools. Some of her previous experiences include coaching and evaluating principals, managing fiscal resources, developing community partnerships, and leading enrollment efforts. Based on a review of her resume, she is highly qualified to maintain the lead role in implementing the grant. (pgs. e 44-45)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 4**

Sub

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly demonstrated that the qualifications, relevant training, and experiences of the key project personnel are relevant for leading and guiding the project's direction and implementation. There are two key personnel staff members, and all have been involved in the implementation of the previous CSP project. (pgs. e44) Each have over 30 years of experience working with various charter movements. For example, the Managing Director of Operations has administered a [REDACTED] budget, while maintaining state and federal fiscal compliance, guiding facilities operations and maintenance projects, navigating vendor relationships, and overseeing in-house bus transit schools in Memphis. (pg. e45) The Managing Director of Schools has previous experience designing a system for ensuring alignment between the school and the Organizational Leadership Team to support school principals in establishing goals and meeting growth targets. She will act as a liaison between Green Dot and the organizations adopting the operational model to guide them in building their own operational capacity and efficiencies.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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