

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

Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (S282A230009)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	26
<b>Quality of Eligible Applicants Receiving Subgrants</b>		
1. Eligible Applicants	15	14
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	30
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	12
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	82
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP1	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	1	1
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP2	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
1. CPP3	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
1. CPP4	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	2	2
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
1. CPP5	3	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	3	2

**Total**

110

91

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - State Entities - 7: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (S282A230009)

## Questions

### 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:

Reader's Score: 26

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant proposes a project that demonstrates a rationale as seen through the research-backed logic model (pg. e31). The applicant's logic model includes inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. The comprehensive logic model provides details to show how the inputs and activities will eventually result in the impacts, such as the CSP funds leading to the impact of expanded access to high-quality public school seats across the state. Additionally, the applicant describes how opening, expanding, or replicating at least 28 high-quality schools resulting in adding at least 7,500 high quality public school seats in at least 3 new communities will provide access to high-quality educational programming (pg. e28 & e31).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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 presents methods of evaluation that include objective performance measures that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. For example, to meet the applicant's objective of expanding access to high-quality public school seats across the state, the applicant will award 28 subgrants during the project period and provides details for the number of subgrants awarded during each project year (pg. e33). The applicant's method of evaluation includes quantitative data collected through tools such as number of new seats and standardized assessment data (pg. e33-34).

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant fails to provide enough evidence of qualitative data. While the applicant presents surveys, the information is not clear about the type of survey to ensure the survey are indeed qualitative in nature.

Sub

Reader's Score: 4

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents two objectives for the quality charter school program that are ambitious and attainable. The applicant's objective to expand access to high-quality public school seats across New Mexico is ambitious because it increases the number of new, expanding, or replicating schools by 13 over the total schools in the previous FY17 grant cycle (pg. e34-35). This objective is attainable because the applicant will conduct Readiness Reviews that will allow for the customization of support (pg. e36). The applicant's objective to improve learning outcomes for high-needs students is ambitious because it utilizes specific performance measures, such as 90% of subgrantees exceed both the state and district averages on the state accountability system (pg. e33). This is attainable through quality in the subgrant process, rigorous monitoring, and providing targeted supports (pg. e36).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant presents one objective that is poorly developed. The applicant presents an objective to strengthen the overall sustainability of New Mexico's charter sector (pg. e34). While the objective is attainable through the activities such as the leadership roundtables and fellowship participation, it is difficult to ascertain the ambitiousness with little baseline data provided (pg. e34).

Reader's Score: 4

**4. The extent to which the projected number of subgrant awards for each grant project year is supported by evidence of demand and need, and the extent to which the proposed average subgrant award amount is supported by evidence of the need of applicants**

**Strengths:**

The applicant proposes the number of subaward grants anticipated for each grant project year supported by evidence of demand and need. The applicant's plan includes a reasonable breakdown by year of new, expansion, and replication schools (pg. e37). The applicant presents data from a 2022 New Mexico Public Education Survey and notes that demand is currently unmet because 5,000 families are on waitlists for the high-quality charter school seats with four recently opened schools already at capacity (pg. e38-39). The applicants specifies that maximum awards for new and replicating schools will be [REDACTED] for expanding schools (pg. e41). Additionally, the applicant anticipates the average award to be [REDACTED] (pg. e42). This criterion was thoroughly discussed, and my score reflects my professional assessment of this section.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant fails to provide evidence of the calculations to determine the subaward projected amounts. Without this information, it is difficult to ascertain whether the subaward amounts are adequate. This criterion was thoroughly discussed, and my score reflects my professional assessment of this section.

Reader's Score: 13

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Eligible Applicants Receiving Subgrants**

**1. The likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet the State entity's objectives for the quality charter school program and improve education results for students.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a plan for the likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet the State Entity's objectives for the quality charter school program and improve education results for students. The

applicant describes the timeline, activities, and details for applying for subgrants (pg. e42-50). For example, the applicant will provide technical assistance in February, March, and May to applicants as well as conducting technical assistance between competition cycles for unfunded schools (pg. e42-44). Additionally, the applicant provides the process, requirements, and peer review process for subgrantees. For example, the applicant will use a panel of trained, diverse reviewers that will work as a team of four to evaluate applications (pg. e44-45). Furthermore, the applicant utilizes competitive preference priorities to address serving rural communities, diverse populations, and high schools (pg. e49-50).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant lacks information regarding the family and community engagement activities that will be utilized to reach the diverse populations served. It is unclear what activities will be implemented to provide an inclusive environment for the diverse populations.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**Selection Criteria - State Plan**

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

**Reader's Score: 30**

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a well-developed plan to monitor the eligible applicants receiving grants. The applicant includes a thorough monitoring timeline that includes three phases: pre-award, pending award finalization, and post-award (pg. e52-53). For example, subgrantees will be required to submit an annual performance report, which shows how funds are being used for activities to meet the educational needs of all students including students with disabilities and English language learners, and an annual financial report, which will be used to review performance and progress of the subgrantees (pg. e53 &57). Additionally, the applicant describes how it will address transparency by sharing monitoring findings and Corrective Action Plans on each subgrantees website (pg. e56-57).

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant notes that its administrative team will attend all pertinent trainings offered by the U.S. Department of Education's National Charter School Resource Center and its partners, details are lacking for how the applicant will thoroughly train its monitors. It is unclear if the administrative team includes all monitors or not. Additionally, the applicant fails to mention if and when financial audits may occur to monitor fiscal stability.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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 a robust plan to avoid duplication of work for the charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies. The subgrant application and the monitoring processes will be minimized by utilizing the

**Sub**

cohesive statewide system already in place (pg. e57). Additionally, the applicant will use publicly available data in the application process, so the operators and authorizers are not expending undue effort (pg. e58). Furthermore, the applicant will convene a Charter School Program Steering Committee to ensure ongoing coordination, identify potential redundancies, and integrate the charter schools into the state's existing infrastructure (pg. e58). All of these measures will significantly reduce the burden for both charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies by relying on readily available information and a committee.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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:**

(i) The applicant presents a partial plan for providing technical assistance and support for eligible applicants receiving subgrants. The plan consists of three components, including technical assistance for subgrant applicants, technical assistance for charter school developers and operators, and technical assistance in support of quality authorizing efforts (pg. e59). For developers and operators, the applicant will use the Readiness Review, which will function as a needs assessment and will include financial trainings, facilities trainings, and access and equity trainings (pg. e59-61).

(ii) The applicant presents a comprehensive plan to provide technical assistance and support for quality authorizing efforts in New Mexico by building on its work connected with the Quality Authorizing Initiative (pg. e63). The applicant will use three resources that will assist authorizers in building their capacity based on their individual needs, and the applicant will use some funds to engage outside experts to provide targeted technical assistance (pg. e63). Through these efforts, the applicant is providing authorizers technical assistance to meet their specific needs and increase success in their charter schools. For local authorizers, the applicant will provide foundational technical assistance because charter schools are only a small portion of their day-to-day activities, and this will strengthen their quality.

**Weaknesses:**

(i) While the applicant mentions that trainings will cover how to mitigate barriers to enrollment, recruitment, retention, and discipline, the applicant fails to provide details, such as activities or modalities that will be used to provide the technical assistance.

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**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 describes an adequate 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. By soliciting input from parents and community members, the applicant is better able to address the needs of the community through the charter schools. The applicant notes that state law requires authorizers to consider the input of parents and other

**Sub**

community members as part of the initial decision-making process (pg. e65). The applicant also requires charter developers to describe parent and community involvement and conduct a needs analysis (pg. e65-66). Additionally, the applicant has embedded competitive preference priorities to community-centered proposals (pg. e66).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides no evidence of a timeline of activities for soliciting input from parents and other members of the community. The applicant does not provide a clear means of how data collected from parents and community members will be shared.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents a fully developed plan to provide flexibility to charter schools. The state's statute allows charter schools certain non-discretionary waivers to be granted by law, remaining in effect throughout the term of the charter's contract, and the charter schools have successfully implemented these waivers for areas such as teacher evaluation frameworks (pg. e66-67). The applicant also provides guidance on how to leverage the flexibility allowed under state law. Additionally, the charter schools' expenditures are only bound by the state procurement code, commitments made in their charter, and participation in federal and state programming (pg. e67). Through these examples, the applicant shows support to charter school by offering great flexibility.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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:**

**Reader's Score: 12**

**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 provides detailed management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The applicant includes a comprehensive timeline that provides activities, responsible staff, timing, and years of activities (pg. e53-55). Additionally, the applicant provides qualifications and resumes of key personnel to ensure the project's success (pg. e68, e72-74, e86-97, & e331-333). The extensive management plan will ensure the project's success.



**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant lacks details for the qualifications required of the key personnel. It's unclear what qualifications are required of key personnel positions in the event proposed key personnel resign. The applicant includes the activities, tasks, and milestones are all combined in Table 5 making it difficult to determine which items are the actual milestones (pg. e69).

**Reader's Score: 8**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides adequately developed procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. The applicant will use qualitative and quantitative survey data and student performance data to make informed mid-course corrections (pg. e73-74). The Project Director will ultimately be responsible for determining programmatic adjustments, communicating those adjustments, and monitoring the implementation. The applicant commits to making at least one improvement annually based on review and analysis of data.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant's procedures lack significant details about the steps to collect feedback and how it will be analyzed. It is unclear how the project personnel will use the feedback to make improvements for subsequent years.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**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 presents a fully developed plan for the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel. The time commitments are adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project. The time commitments range from 13% to 100% (pg. e75). For example, the project director will commit 36% of his time, while the CSP Grant Manager and Fiscal Coordinator will devote 100% of their time to the project (pg. e75). These personnel time commitments will ensure the project's objectives are successfully met.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1**

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

**a. Allows at least one entity that is not a local educational agency (LEA) to be an authorized public chartering agency for developers seeking to open a charter school in the State ; or**

**b. In the case of a State in which LEAs are the only authorized public chartering agencies, the State has 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 the appeal must have the authority to approve the charter application over the objections of the LEA.

Please specify whether they meet (a) or (b) and clearly explain why in the strengths.

(0 or 1 points)

**Strengths:**

The applicant demonstrates that it allows charter school developers to seek approval from non-local educational agency authorizers (pg. e20). Additionally, the applicant outlines an appeal process for the denial, nonrenewal, suspension, or revocation of charters (pg. e20). The applicant fully addresses this competitive preference priority.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 1

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it is located in a state that ensures equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner.

(up to 2 points)

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly presents a plan to ensure equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner. State law mandates the amount of funding provided to charter schools (pg. e20). The applicant notes that charter schools are funded the same ways as traditional public schools, which includes funds being distributed through state equalization distribution, transportation distribution, and supplemental distribution (pg. e20-21). The applicant's formula ensures funds follow students based on their enrollment, services received, and additional programs (pg. e21). The applicant provides funding to both traditional public schools and charter schools monthly, which is a reasonable time frame for schools to receive funding (pg. e21).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 2

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

1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it is located in a state that uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and LEAs.

(up to 2 points)

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly demonstrates that it is located in a state that uses best practices from charters to help struggling schools and local educational agencies aid in their improvement. The applicant presents a 2019 elementary school example of an elementary school implementing practices from a charter schools (pg. e21-22). Additionally, the applicant facilitates the dissemination of best and promising practices through trainings, reports, videos, and communities of practice (pg. e37).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

**1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it is located in a State that 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**
- f) Low- or no-cost leasing privileges**

**(up to 2 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly demonstrates that it will provide support for charter school facilities through the following ways (pg. e23-24). (a) The applicant describes that it will provide funding for the lesser of the actual lease payments for classroom space or █████ per student using the leased classroom space. (c&f) The applicant details how charter schools are afforded access to public facilities by requiring districts to provide charter schools with reasonable lease terms if facilities are not currently being used for educational purposes. (d) State law requires that state and locally authorized charters can demand that the local district include them in levy elections and provide them with an equitable share of funding. The applicant's plan for supporting charter school facilities is fully developed by providing multiple avenues of facilities' assistance.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

**1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services.**

**(up to 3 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant states that the New Mexico Charter Schools Act desires to address the needs of all students, including at-risk students (pg. e24). The applicant provides examples of various charter schools with innovative programs to address the needs of all students, such as Leadership High Schools, which are focused on project-based learning (pg. e25). Additionally, the applicant presents a strong need for activities related to dropout prevention and dropout recovery (pg. e25).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant fails to describe how the charter schools will serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling. Due to the lack of the description and details of activities, it is difficult to ascertain if they will truly support at-risk students.

**Reader's Score:** 2

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## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (S282A230009)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	26
<b>Quality of Eligible Applicants Receiving Subgrants</b>		
1. Eligible Applicants	15	14
<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>	<b>100</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP1	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP2	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
1. CPP3	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
1. CPP4	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
1. CPP5	3	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>

**Total**

110

91

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - State Entities - 7: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (S282A230009)

## Questions

### 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:

Reader's Score: 26

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (PCSNM) effectively narrates a comprehensive theory of change that advances the rationale that increasing the number of high-performing charter school seats for New Mexico families will improve the quality of the state's public education landscape. The rationale is substantiated by 21 years of successful advocacy of policies aligned to authorized charter school national systems standards. Data documenting the 2022 New Mexico State Assessment Data (high-quality charter schools vs. traditional public schools) is charted. It demonstrates that low-income students enrolled in high-quality New Mexico charter schools were more likely to perform at or above grade level than their demographically similar peers enrolled in traditional public schools. One chart provided clearly demonstrates data documentation that Hispanic and Native American students enrolled in high-quality New Mexico charter schools were more likely to test at proficient levels in 2022 than were their demographically similar peers enrolled in traditional public schools. (Pages e28)

The rationale of New Mexico's Charter School Program (CSP) project supports the state's public education landscape by administrating a sophisticated subgrant program for new, expanding, and replicating charter schools and developing systems and structures that enhance the sustainability of the state's charter infrastructure. These subgrants are focused on enhancing educational outcomes for students most in need of access to outstanding public schools. PCSNM fosters the creation of a cohesive statewide system that supports high-quality charter school growth by leveraging the collective capacity of public officials, educational leaders and teachers, parents and community members, school growth and advocacy partners, funders, and expert trainers. Through data-sharing, coordination, and dissemination activities that promote the identification and proliferation of best practices for serving educationally disadvantaged students, the applicant demonstrates a dedication to work to benefit educationally disadvantaged students throughout New Mexico. (Page e 28 )

A concise logic model is presented depicting a sequenced overview of the Public Charter Schools of New Mexico rationale. The logic model charts components that sequence the program rationale, implementation, and end long-term results. For example, the threefold impact of the theory of change, advances expanded access to high-quality public schools across the state, improves learning outcomes for high-needs students and strengthens the overall sustainability of the New Mexico charter sector. Core elements of the logic model are anchored in robust research demonstrating that enrollment in charter schools, particularly charter schools serving low-income students of color, will evidence a statistically significant impact on student learning outcomes. (Page e 31)

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

- 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 application narrates some information to address the criteria to detail methods of evaluation that encompass the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the project's intended outcomes and produce quantitative and qualitative data. An annual evaluation of qualitative and quantitative data sources will be implemented to inform project progress and modifications during the life of the grant period. For example, a detailed chart identifies three program objectives, specifying the sources for data collection for each. Additionally, one objective performance measure is focused on expanding access to high-quality public-school seats across New Mexico. Data collection is scheduled to be collected from sub-grant awardees and state data sources on school performance. These sources will be used to assess progress toward attainment of the objective. Data collection is sequentially scheduled throughout the project period to assess and demonstrate progress toward the intended outcome, specified to open CSP-funded schools in at least three communities that currently lack -charter school presence. (Page e33)

**Weaknesses:**

Although a detailed table identifies three program objectives with data collection sources for each is provided, adequate information is lacking to identify the specific quantitative and qualitative data to be collected to assess program progress. While the application identifies various sources of data, it is unclear which source will produce quantitative data and which sources are positioned to collect qualitative data. For example, the project specifies measuring parent engagement and gathering information from at least 25 attendees at the annual training, but it is not clear if the information to be collected is for a count of participants (quantitative data) or for input and insight into the program (qualitative data.) (Page e33)

**Reader's Score: 4**

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

**Strengths:**

Overall, the performance measures crafted for the quality charter school program carried out under the CSP State Entity Grant are ambitious and achievable based on experience, insight, and lessons learned in spearheading the development of a durable education reform coalition and laying the groundwork for a charter-supportive operating environment. The rationale underlying New Mexico's CSP project is that high-quality charter schools benefit students and families who choose to access the rigorous and relevant programs they offer and serve as engines of systemic improvement within communities. For example, the first objective is designed as ambitious in scope and is attainable based on historical trends and the scope of the project plan. Under the FY17 CSP grant, New Mexico awarded 15 subgrants to new, expanding, and replicating schools connected to the NMPE. The application specifies that 7,500 additional high-quality seats have been established since 2018, which expanded the total sector-wide enrollment by 35%. Organizational history is referenced to support the established five-year project period targets (28 subgrants, 7,500 seats, and three new communities.) (Page e37)

The program is designed as ambitious schedule to provide 7500 charter school seats in three communities. A critical program component is detailed in outreach. For example, outreach is scheduled to include hosting meetings in communities that currently lack a charter school presence, aimed to educate key stakeholders about charter



**Sub**

schools, dispel persistent myths, and share best practices currently offered in charter schools.

The application references that New Mexico's FY17 CSP grant outperformed the state mean on overall academic performance. This is demonstrated by highlighting 75% student academic growth in both Reading and Math that exceeded the statewide median score, and 67% growth in Reading and Math among the lowest-performing students than the statewide median score. Building on its track record, the program institutes an ambitious proposal and a high bar for quality in the subgrant process. It conducts rigorous monitoring and provides targeted support, building school-level capacity to drive educational performance. By raising the bar for educational possibilities within given communities and intentionally chronicling and disseminating best practices, the program will catalyze systemic improvements within the districts where newly launched charters are located. (Page e38)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**4. The extent to which the projected number of subgrant awards for each grant project year is supported by evidence of demand and need, and the extent to which the proposed average subgrant award amount is supported by evidence of the need of applicants**

**Strengths:**

The projected number of subgrant awards and average award amount for each grant project year are supported by evidence of demand and need. New Mexico is requesting funding to issue 28 subgrant awards to new, expanding, and replicating schools over the five-year project period. A dual-focused rationale supports the growth of endogenous operators who demonstrate success when working with New Mexico students and those developing innovative models explicitly focused on serving New Mexico students and addressing the realistic demand of parents for charter environments. Framed in respray, the program addresses the finding of a survey conducted by Research & Polling, Inc., documenting overwhelming support among parents for the continued growth of charters within New Mexico. An overview of the state's growth of charter schools is also detailed. (Page e40)

A concise narration of the need is well documented in data from five years of surveys that reflect a realistic understanding of New Mexico's charter environment and its current demand. For example, data from the 2022 New Mexico Public Education Survey Result document that the demand for a charter school is currently unmet. Although 7,500 new, high-quality charter school seats have been established since 2018, over 5,000 families remain on a waitlist. (Page e40)

Data from New Mexico's FY17 CSP award demonstrate that the grant-eligible financial needs of new and replicating schools have historically been larger than those of expanding schools. A clear articulation specifies that resource needs have increased since the last grant period (FY17 due to the profound toll that the pandemic took on New Mexico's most vulnerable families and also to rising inflation that has further reduced the purchasing power of smaller schools that were already hard-pressed to launch without the benefit of economies of scale. (Page e41)

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

**Weaknesses:**

Information is lacking to narrate a cost analysis, which was used to determine that the subgrantee award specification is supported by evidence. Information is lacking to specify how the specific award amounts have been determined.

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

Sub

Reader's Score: 12

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Eligible Applicants Receiving Subgrants**

- 1. The likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet the State entity's objectives for the quality charter school program and improve education results for students.**

**Strengths:**

The application narrates a comprehensive plan to advance the likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet the State Entity's objectives for the quality charter school program queued with information and support aimed to assist subgrantees in designing programs to improve education results for students. A streamlined subgrant program is designed to ensure that eligible applicants receiving awards improve educational results for students, responsibly steward federal funds, and promote NMCSP's objectives. A sample of an annual subgrant competition timeline of subgrant activities is presented aligned to five program components specifying tasks and milestones to support the implementation of a high-quality subgrant program. Each component is precisely detailed and sequenced in a comprehensive plan to support and guide subtrees. For example, the first component implements a series of technical assistance to ensure that prospective subgrantees are equipped to produce quality applications aligned with the overall vision to impact the state's public education landscape. Significantly a series of training is also scheduled to be hosted dedicated exclusively to the financial aspects of the subgrant process aimed on training prospective applicants on how to utilize CSP resources to drive progress toward school-level goals. (Page e45)

**Weaknesses:**

Information is lacking to identify services to assist and accommodate the training needs of the potential sub-grantees from various culturally diverse audiences. For example, the application mentions serving Native American and immigrant subpopulations. However, no mention is made of any accommodation for an interpreter or translating information into the language of subgrantee subpopulations.

Adequate information is lacking to identify the roles and responsibilities of the subgrantees related to the goal and overall success of the program

Reader's Score: 14

**Selection Criteria - State Plan**

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

Reader's Score: 31

Sub

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

**Strengths:**

The application details an adequate plan to monitor eligible applicants receiving subgrantee funds under the State Charter School Program. For example, New Mexico has designed a very good monitoring plan that provides potential sub-grantees and grantees with training, support, timely reimbursement access, and identifying, mitigating, and inoculating against risks. Three-phase timelines specify a pre-award cycle of activities, a pending award period, and a post-award period. Throughout the project, the administrative team will attend all appropriate training offered by the U.S. Department of Education's National Charter School Resource Center and its partners. A proposed timeline of monitoring activities is specified and aligned to a sequence of tasks and milestones to support the implementation of a high-quality subgrant program. For example, the pre-award phase schedules technical assistance, budgeting information session, and eligibility review during the subgrantee application cycle, followed by subgrant application review capacity interview. (Page e48)

Pre-award monitoring activities are well-planned and provide a proactive approach to subgrant monitoring, which begins before award confirmations. The activities are designed to support prospective subgrantees with essential information, and insight focused on constructing compliant budgets, understanding allowable cost guide, and insight from lessons learned from former grantees in avoiding common pitfalls. The Phase I application is designed to eliminate contention schools that do not meet the federal or state eligibility criteria, and Phase II engage applicants in a capacity interview to identify any areas of potential risk and or provide additional training and TA/monitoring. (Page e 50)

A notable component is identified in monitoring specifying implementing a primary risk assessment and addressing any subgrantee challenges in completing the application. This that is serves as an essential strategy in providing relevant and specific technical assistance dedicated to meeting the needs of subgrantees. (Pages e51)

**Weaknesses:**

Adequate information is lacking to specify monitoring procedures for the technical assistance to be provided. In addition, information is lacking to identify strategies to monitor the fiscal audits of the subgrantees.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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 application details an energetic plan to collaborate with authorizers to avoid duplication of work for eligible applicants and the authorizers themselves. Specifically, the subgrant application and monitoring processes are designed to leverage the existing cohesive statewide system to minimize redundancies. The application references a plan to utilize state accountability data and accountability data from authorizers in charter contracts. Based on the fact that contracts are publicly available, this will be accomplished effectively and efficiently to avoid any duplication of effort. (Page e52)

Information from previous public meetings related to statutorily mandated public input hearings for new charter applications is available to assist prospective subgrantees in designing their applications, specifically when related to evidence of community need and programmatic responsiveness. The applicant proposes to convene a CSP steering committee to meet on a semiannual basis. This committee will be tasked with the responsibility of streamlining the amount of supplemental work needed to produce requested documentation. The steering committee is well defined, noting the engagement of representatives from the Public Education Commission and

**Sub**

Albuquerque Public Schools (the state’s two largest authorizers) and experienced former charter school administrators. The steering committee’s tasks are noted to provide a mechanism for circulating parent and student survey information and sharing monitoring findings to reduce data collection burdens on authorizers. (Pages e52-e56)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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:**

A very good statewide systemic improvement technical assistance plan is detailed in the plan, intertwining a threefold composition of strategies. These encompass providing technical assistance for subgrant applications, charter school developers and operators, and supporting quality authorizing efforts. The formats for meetings include on-site and recording meetings for disseminating information specifically on program orientation, the finance webinars, and providing training that provided targeted information for unsuccessful applicants aimed to strengthen programs and proposals prior to the competition cycle. Specific training is scheduled for charter school developers and activities driven by the evidence-based readiness review process, which assists school leaders in the opening, as they open new schools, replicating and/or expanding existing schools. A broad scope of specialized training is detailed, including financial training to develop school-level capacity in developing budgets associated with growth plans, including administrative capacity and recruitment and retention of students and staff. Facilities training is provided to build the capacity of operators to manage day-to-day facilities operations, risk management, preserving assets, and compliance regulations. PCSNM will leverage expertise from project partners such as the New Mexico Finance Authority. Access and equity training is also detailed and will identify barriers for discrete groups of students. In addition, equity training is offered to ensure all students eligible to attend the school have access to resources, particularly in areas like school lunch and transportation. (Page e61)

Significant features of the TA offered by the applicant highlight grant funds to be utilized to create a bank of charter school governing council policies focused on student success, implementation of best practices, and adherence to state and federal laws. No such repository currently exists, leaving school governing councils to fashion policies individually. Access to templates that focus on student success and best practices will elevate the quality of board governance across the state. (Page e62)

A partnership with Excellent Schools New Mexico’s Cambiando Fellowship is a significant strength to the program in leveraging resources to support the development of emerging leaders. This investment will strengthen the sustainability of individual charter schools and the large sector. Family engagement training is also included to leverage the core principles and existing infrastructure of the New Mexico Parents Together Education Fellowship. (Page 62)

**ii.. Quality authorizing efforts in the State.**

The application includes the documentation for New Mexico Standards for Quality School authorization. The comprehensive document effectively details procedures to ensure programs, procedures, and resources are aligned to address the identified need of young learners in the state. The documents encompass sections detailing the

**Sub**

planning, the application process, agreements, and evaluation. (Page e112)

The regular evaluation highlights documents to ensure excellence in education and strategies to address areas identified as in need. The document clearly specifies that human and financial resources are developed for effective quality implementation. Fair, transparent, and quality procedures are outlined for guidance. (Page e114)

A concise plan summarizes the principles that stakeholders have agreed on, which inform charter authorizing, and the standards by which applicants seeking to open new charters or to have their existing charters renewed should be evaluated. The Principles and Standards are outlined in four core values Equity, Celebrating Success, Accountability, and Transparency. The four principles affirm the four key principles to Protect Public Interests, Promote Excellence and Accountability in Authorizing, Ensure Access and Equity for All, and Uphold School Autonomy to Foster Innovation. Eighteen standards are outlined in the plan aligned to the five high-leverage domains explicitly identified in state law (including Agency Commitment and Capacity, Application Process and Decision Making, Performance Contracting, Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation, and Revocation and Renewal Decision Making. The plan highlights the state's two largest authorizers, who have partnered with the National Charter Schools Institute (NCSI) and the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA). (Page e16)

**Weaknesses:**

- (i) Adequate information is lacking to discuss technical assistance to subgrantees focused on effectively serving the needs of specific subpopulations such as youth challenged with disabilities.
- (ii) Adequate information is lacking related to fiscal accountability of subgrantees, such as a financial review of audit summary report requirement.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**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:**

New Mexico's CSP project encompasses a strong plan to solicit and consider input from parents and other community members in implementing and operating charter schools in alignment with state laws, blended with a few creative approaches designed by the applicant. For example, state law requires all authorizers to consider the input of parents and other community members as part of the initial decision-making process. A critical law component requires schools to provide periodic updates on how their operations remain informed by community input. (Page e62)

The application details the 2021 founding of Excellent Schools New Mexico, which implemented the New Mexico Parents Together Education Fellowship. This unique program highlights an immersive, no-fee, seven-week program to engage parents with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives in developing the skills necessary to become stronger advocates for their children and communities. This project provides additional mechanisms for ensuring that parent and community input continues to inform charter operations across the state. The proposed subgrant application is assigned to the above requiring schools to furnish evidence of a needs analysis describing how their proposed projects will respond to feedback from key community stakeholders (including at a public hearing). In fact, the application awards competitive preference priority points to "community-centered" proposals that leverage community assets and maintain strong community ties throughout their project planning, development, and implementation. (Page e62)

The monitoring process for subgrantees is also required for active subgrantees to provide evidence of parental and community support in their annual performance reports as evidence of organizational sustainability. A survey from

**Sub**

the NMCSP Steering Committee is identified to be implemented in schools to administer each winter to gather input from parents and the community. (Pages e62)

**Weaknesses:**

Information is lacking to specify how the program will use the input provided by parents. In addition, the general timeline provided lacks the specificity of a defined time frame for the dissemination and sharing of information to ensure its effectiveness in reaching audiences and in a timely manner for response and feedback.

**Reader's Score:** 4

**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 application discusses the degree of flexibility afforded by the State's charter school law, specifying how the State Entity will work to maximize the flexibility provided to charter schools under this law. The application specifies that New Mexico has created a strong policy context for charters that includes a high degree of autonomy. Notably, the law allows certain non-discretionary waivers to be granted by operation of law, specifically pertaining to individual class load, teaching load, length of the school day, staffing patterns, subject areas, purchase of instructional material, evaluation standards for school personnel, school principal duties and driver education." (emphasis added). PCSNM has successfully advocated for implementing internal processes that ensure charters can take full advantage of the latitude afforded under state law. The state charter schools are noted as afforded flexibility with budgeting. While charter budgets are generated through student-driven categories that appropriately compensate them for serving students, they are not bound to make expenditures that are commensurate with how funds are generated. Charter expenditures are bound only by the state procurement code and the programmatic commitments they make in their charter or by participating in federal and State programming. (Pages e67)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

**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:**

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 application details an adequate management plan structured to achieve the proposed project's objectives on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. A precise table has been developed to guide program management, encompassing key areas and milestones related to TA, parent and community engagement, financial planning, and budgeting. The management plan outlines key milestones aligned to clear timelines and the person(s) designated as responsible for each.

Key project personnel identified in the management plan are references possessing the requisite expertise, local credibility, and familiarity with national best practices to ensure the NMCSPP project achieves its transformational aims. Resumes confirm the expertise and experience of key staff. For example, the PCSNM's Executive Director and the proposed Project Director have almost two decades of experience working to effect systemic change within New Mexico's education system. Significantly, the Project Director is designated to be responsible for overseeing the work of all external partners who will contribute to the initiative's success; his background includes working for three years for the Legislative Finance Committee, conducting evaluations of state programs and policies covering early literacy, funding equity, and educator effectiveness. His background includes four years as the director of the applicant organization, credited with effectively developing the department's strategic plan and performance management system as the Director of its Policy, Innovation, and Measurement Division. He also ran the Department's Charter Schools Division during a year in which it administered New Mexico's previous CSP Grant. As Project Director, he is designated responsible for overseeing the work of all external partners who are identified as experienced in working in the Excellent Schools New Mexico and School Architects. (Page e68)

A vital program component is a partnership with Readiness Review Partner to serve the program responsible for conducting formative evaluations that allow for the customization of support to address precise school-level needs. The Readiness Reviews partner is identified as a response to meet with each subgrantee to conduct a needs assessment across a range of key areas, including Access and Equity, Program Delivery, Family Engagement, Strategic Workforce Development, Finance, and Facilities Management. (Page e70)

Upon notification of a grant award, it is proposed to recruit, hire, and train a full-time CSP Grant Manager and a full-time Fiscal Coordinator. In addition, a founding Deputy Director will be recruited to work full-time on the project in a position aimed at building internal capacity. (Pages e79)

**Weaknesses:**

The application lists program milestones and activities in one chart, lacking the specificity of milestones which are to be measured to assess program progress

The responsibilities of the financial coordinator are not detailed.

Overall, the qualifications of each key person are not delineated to align to their specific role and responsibilities in the program.

Sub

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

**Strengths:**

Overall, the application details an adequate scope of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. A logic model has been developed and detailed to implement to guide feedback and continuous improvement aligned with the specified performance objectives. Evidence-based improvement cycles have been developed throughout the five-year project period to provide relevant data and insight integral to any necessary mid-course corrections. (Page e72)

The Project Team comprised of the Executive Director, Deputy Director, Grant Manager, and Fiscal Coordinator proposes to meet monthly to coordinate workflows, track progress toward grant goals, and review interim feedback. Specifically, the Project Team is responsible for analyzing survey data from subgrant applicants, peer reviewers, active subgrantees, parents, students, and technical assistance recipients to gauge the extent to which key stakeholders perceive schools to be rigorous and responsive, the subgrant competition to be precise and efficient, and training to be valuable and relevant. (Page e72)

The Project Team is also responsible for reviewing student performance data to assess the degree of progress on the intended impact on learning outcomes both at subgrantee schools and the district levels. (Page e72, and e73)

A steering committee is identified, specifying significant community representation from diverse communities. The steering committee convenes semiannually to review potential synergies within the subgrant application and monitoring plan, flag areas for improvement, and identify areas in which requested information is currently in the authorizer's possession. The Project Team will work with the steering committee, which serves as a mechanism for driving continuous improvement efforts. Managerially, the Project Director is ultimately responsible for determining what programmatic adjustments to be made, advancing communications related to adjustments, and monitoring implementation. The management team and committees are detailed and scheduled to collaborate in a commitment to making at least one material improvement to the NMCSP project annually based on its review and analysis of these pertinent data. (Pages e73 and e 74)

**Weaknesses:**

The application lacks a clear description detailing how the feedback collected will be used to advance the program.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**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 time commitments of the project director and principal manager and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project. All Project Team members are identified to devote significant time to the fulfillment of the program's objectives. For example, the PCSNM's Executive Director is designated as responsible to serve as the NMCSP Project Director, dedicating 36% of his time to the project. (The time is proposed as clouted for 75% for TA, and 25% admin). The PCSNM's Deputy Director is identified to dedicate 61% of their time to the project, with 43% for TA, and 57% for administrative responsibilities. A Field Director will serve in the program and devote 13% of her time to the project, calculated at 75% for TA, and



**Sub**

25% to administrative tasks. (Page e73)

To build the necessary internal capacity, an additional two key team members are identified to serve on the project, a full-time CSP Grant Manager and a full-time Fiscal Coordinator. (Page e 73)

The application specifies that the time commitments are both appropriate and adequate to meet the goals of the grant and will ensure that the project makes a profound impact on the quality of educational opportunities afforded to students statewide. (Page e80)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1**

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

**a. Allows at least one entity that is not a local educational agency (LEA) to be an authorized public chartering agency for developers seeking to open a charter school in the State ; or**

**b. In the case of a State in which LEAs are the only authorized public chartering agencies, the State has 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 the appeal must have the authority to approve the charter application over the objections of the LEA.**

**Please specify whether they meet (a) or (b) and clearly explain why in the strengths.**

**(0 or 1 points)**

**Strengths:**

The application narrates a clear reference to their state law that permits charter school developers to seek approval from a non-LEA authorizer. A related appeal process is outlined for the denial of a charter application. For example, the state law is referenced specifying that the Public Education Commission is empowered to “receive applications for initial chartering and renewals of charters for charter schools that want to be chartered by the state and approve or disapprove those charter applications.” The application defines the 2006 legislation that established the Commission which also created the Charter Schools Division within the NMPED. The law is referenced as providing charter school staff support and technical support (NM Stat § 22-8B-17.) (Page e20)

An appeal process is specified for developers and operators seeking “to appeal a decision of the authority concerning the denial, nonrenewal, suspension, or revocation” of their charters. The law permits offering an appeal with the Secretary of Education (NM Stat § 22-8B-7). It is referenced that upon a finding that the chartering authority acted arbitrarily or capriciously, without the support of substantial evidence, or in violation of the law, the Secretary may “reverse the decision of the chartering authority and order the approval of the charter with or without conditions.” (Page e20)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score:** 1

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

1. **To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it is located in a state that ensures equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner.**

**(up to 2 points)**

**Strengths:**

The application addresses the competitive preference priority 2- equitable financing. The State entity demonstrates that it is located in a state that ensures equitable financing, compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner. The applicant clearly specifies that New Mexico's public school funding structure provides equity between charters and traditional public schools. Charter schools are funded through the same mechanisms as the state's traditional public schools. State law provides that the amount of funding allocated to a charter school "shall be not less than ninety-eight percent of the school-generated program cost." It stipulates that charters are entitled to 100 percent of the state and federal revenues attributable to the students they enroll (NM Stat § 22-8B-13). (Page e20)

The application demonstrates that it is located in a state that ensures equitable financing compared to traditional public schools. It is specified that the program's location is in a state that ensures equitable financing. Significantly, the financing formula is research-based and developed on data from a pioneering study that explored the extent to which charter schools located in 27 districts spanning 16 states were receiving equitable financing. Consequently, it was determined that Albuquerque was the sole district that did not underfund its charters relative to traditional public schools and used their formula. The application details that public school funding is distributed throughout the state in an equalization formula that guarantees distribution, transportation, distribution, and supplemental distributions, all of which charters are eligible to receive. (Page e21)

The application describes that the funding formula designed for the state of New Mexico has been developed to ensure funds follow students. A well-detailed narration of the formula is detailed to specify that funding is based on student enrollment and generated primarily through student-centered variables. Student-centered units are generated by students through their grade-level enrollment; the level of special education services received; participation in bilingual, fine arts, and physical education programs; and other variables. Charter Schools in the state follow the same funding formula as traditional schools related to receiving state funds for instructional materials and school library materials on an annual disbursement from general obligation bonds. Both traditional and charter public schools receive their annual State Equalization Guarantee payments on a monthly basis. (Page e21)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted,

**Reader's Score:** 2

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

1. **To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it is located in a state that uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling**

**schools and LEAs.**

**(up to 2 points)**

**Strengths:**

The application demonstrates that it is located in a state that uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and LEAs. It is referenced that the state of New Mexico systematically facilitates the transmission of best practices from charters to struggling schools and LEAs in order to catalyze their improvement. An example is proposed to demonstrate this. For example, recently a struggling traditional public school in the state adopted practices developed by charters to drive systematic improvement (Whittier Elementary School in Albuquerque.) In 2019, that school was designated by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) as one of only four elementary schools in the state in need of "More Rigorous Interventions," a label that portended potential closure. An interview with the New Mexico Education Department and the new principal of the school identified two essential components of her turnaround strategy to prove her case. The two examples presented related to extending the school day and year and incorporating a "Genius Hour" into the daily schedule to offer students additional enrichment opportunities as opposed to more remediation. Each of these practices originated in New Mexico's charter sector. Consequently, the school's Genius Hour served as a significant innovation of Altura Preparatory Charter School, which triggered the possibility of Whittier relaunching as a charter school. (Pages e 21, and e22)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

**1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it is located in a State that 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**
- f) Low- or no-cost leasing privileges**

**(up to 2 points)**

**Strengths:**

The application proposes to meet the competitive preference priority 4 related to charter school facilities. The law is referenced specifically to noted that pursuant to NM Stat § 22-24-4(I), New Mexico charters annually receive lease assistance from the state for the purpose of making lease payments for classroom facilities. The amount of the annual lease assistance is identified as limited to the lesser of the actual annual lease payments owed for leasing classroom space or [REDACTED] multiplied by the number of students using the leased classroom facilities. The lease assistance rate adjusts for inflation. On a statewide basis, annual lease reimbursement payments to charter operators routinely total over [REDACTED] (Page e 21)

In addition, the application references state laws permitting charter schools to access funding for facilities. A state law is referenced specifying NM Stat § 22-8B-4(F) that requires districts to provide charter schools with available facilities on "reasonable" lease terms "unless the facilities are currently used for other educational purposes." Therefore, it is proposed

that once a school has completed the terms of its initial charter and has received its first reauthorization, the charter is eligible to apply for consideration of a standards-based award for the construction of a new facility, or if housed in a public facility, seek funds for the renovation of the facility. This award is defined as composed of two components: a share to be paid for by the state and a share to be paid for by the school. Some local school districts have provided the local share through various taxing situations for their locally authorized schools. (Page e 22)

The application references the fact that Public School Capital Outlay Council funding in their state, totaling over [REDACTED] has been awarded to more than 30 charters for facilities master planning, facilities renovations, roof replacement, feasibility studies, development of new facilities, and purchase of portable buildings. Both state- and locally authorized charters are by law able to demand the local district include them in bond and mill levy elections and provide them with an equitable share of funding. In consultation, House Bill 43, is referenced which cleared both houses of the state legislature on a unanimous, bipartisan basis in 2022 and was promptly signed into law, included four discrete provisions that materially eased the facilities-related financial burdens imposed on charters. (Pages e23, and e24)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

- 1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services.**

**(up to 3 points)**

**Strengths:**

The application demonstrates some information to address the criteria referencing that the state of New Mexico supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services. The legislation notes that New Mexico's Charter Schools Act's purpose is to "address the needs of all students, including those determined to be at risk" (NM Stat § 22-8B-3). The state regulations are specified as an effort to design innovative programs that respond to the needs of all students, particularly those designated as "at-risk." (Page e 23)

The application references the fact that New Mexico offered the first comprehensive, school-based programming for performing arts (Public Academy for Performing Arts) and project-based learning (Leadership High Schools.) The application asserts that New Mexico has historically had the nation's highest dropout rate, and charter schools have taken the lead in re-engaging students who have disconnected from their education. A reference is cited to the Leadership Schools' four "re-engagement" charter schools in Albuquerque, which offer career-specific curricula in partnership with community partners and local employers. (Page e 23)

The state entity supports charter schools that serve at-risk students. For example, the application references the operation of the Gordon Berell Charter School in providing education to youth who have disconnected from their education after being incarcerated. Programs in the school are focused on helping students who are either currently detained or have been released from jail build the skills they need to finish high school. An additional example is cited detailing the Mission Achievement and Success Charter School, where 100 percent of students are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (as compared with 75 percent statewide and 67 percent within the Albuquerque School District.) The exceptional performance of this school showcases consistently earning Spotlight designations on the state's accountability system

(placing it in the top 25 percent of schools statewide) and Designations of Excellence in Reading and English Learner Progress Toward Proficiency (placing it in the top 10 percent of all schools). (Page e 24)

**Weaknesses:**

Adequate information is lacking to detail a plan detailing specific strategies that support at-risk students or youth challenged with disabilities. For example, information is lacking to specify addressing the needs of disabled youth as outlined in their Individual Education Plans.

**Reader's Score:** 1

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 07/03/2023 12:19 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/03/2023 11:02 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (S282A230009)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	20
<b>Quality of Eligible Applicants Receiving Subgrants</b>		
1. Eligible Applicants	15	13
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	30
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	12
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP1	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP2	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
1. CPP3	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
1. CPP4	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>		
1. CPP5	3	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

**Total**

110

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# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - State Entities - 7: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (S282A230009)

## Questions

### 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:

Reader's Score: 20

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant fully developed information about the research-base used to develop the logic model (e31). The applicant provided citations such as Chen & Harris (2021), Griffith (2022), and Cordes (2018) to demonstrate the designed activities guiding the proposed project. The applicant presented results from the studies such as charter schools entry improves geographic-district-level outcomes and a significant increase in the average math achievement of low-income, Black, and Hispanic students across over 900 metropolitan and micropolitan regions (e26-e30). The applicant clearly stated in the logic model (e31) the desire to open, expand, or replicate 28 high-quality schools (17 to expanding schools and 11 to new and replicating schools) to create 7,500 quality seats. Some of the schools would be opened in at least three communities that currently lack a charter school presence (e13). The applicant indicated that the support for these charter schools is due to research showing that enrollment in charter schools, particularly charter schools serving low-income students of color, has a large and statistically significant impact on student learning outcomes (e26). The applicant presented comprehensive details regarding the research utilized to construct the logic model (e31). To support the proposed project, the applicant referenced several citations, including Chen & Harris (2021), Griffith (2022), and Cordes (2018). These citations were instrumental in shaping the planned activities outlined in the logic model. Furthermore, the applicant shared notable findings from these studies, such as the positive impact of charter school entry on geographic-district-level outcomes and a significant improvement in the average math achievement of low-income, Black, and Hispanic students in more than 900 metropolitan and micropolitan regions (e26-e30). The applicant indicated that the activities to develop or strengthen a cohesive statewide system include the identification of schools for comprehensive or targeted support and improve schools (e28). The applicant fully explained the intent to open 28 subgrant awards (17 to expanding schools and 11 to new and replicating schools). The selection of struggling schools would be determined through the statewide system. The applicant specified that the activities aimed at developing or enhancing a unified statewide system involve identifying schools for comprehensive or targeted support and implementing improvements in those schools. The applicant fully articulated the statewide system to support charter schools, identify schools for improvement, and collaborations with New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) and Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) to disseminate best practices in charter schools to serve low-performing schools as well as in individual schools struggling to meet the needs of their students (e28-e29). The applicant's systems have allowed them to support low-performing and struggling schools to meet the needs of the students through the implementation of best practices. The applicant fully indicated that collaborations through the Quality Authorizing Initiative that brought together officials from New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) and Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) would allow the diffusion of best practices to



**Sub**

transform schools (e29) to support struggling schools to meet the needs of their students.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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 information about the methods of evaluation was well developed connecting objectives, measures, data sources, and outcomes (e33). The applicant presented performance measures that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. Each of the objectives was connected to measures, data sources, and outcomes that can be monitored and reported annually. For example, objective 1 included six measures. For measure 1.1 (Number of schools receiving NMCSP support to open, expand, or replicate) the data source would be subgrant awards and the outcome would be 28 subgrants awarded during the project period that would be assessed by year (e33). The applicant provided data sources and outcomes to assess the objectives. Some of the sources seem to be quantitative due to the outcome provided. The applicant demonstrated a thorough and well-developed understanding of the evaluation methods by establishing clear connections between objectives, measures, data sources, and outcomes (e33). The applicant presented performance measures that are characterized by their specificity, measurability, achievability, relevance, and timeliness, ensuring a robust evaluation process.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide enough information about how the qualitative data would be connected to the outcomes and used to support the implementation of the proposed project (e232). For example, it is not clear if interviews and/or focus groups would be conducted among the stakeholders of the project to support the implementation, adjustments, and next steps. It is unclear how the qualitative data to be collected under evidence of community support would serve the implementation process.

**Reader's Score: 4**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant fully developed information to articulate the objective being ambitious and attainable (e34-e37). The applicant indicated that objective 1 is ambitious and attainable based on historical data and past performance of awarding subgrants to support charter schools (e.g., 15 awards in FY17 and 7,500 additional high-quality seats have been established since 2018). The needs presented in the proposed project are based on the unmet demand of students and the applicant would meet with the stakeholders of the community (parents; elected officials; civic, business, and community leaders, etc.) to present the benefits of the charter schools and hear from the community to develop charter schools that meet the community needs. These activities would meet objective 2. Objective 3 would develop the capacity for the charter schools to build up leadership.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness noted.

Sub

Reader's Score: 5

**4. The extent to which the projected number of subgrant awards for each grant project year is supported by evidence of demand and need, and the extent to which the proposed average subgrant award amount is supported by evidence of the need of applicants**

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly provided information about the estimated number of subgrants to be awarded per year for new, expansion, and replication (e37). For example, a total of 9 new school chapters would be awarded; 2 awards for years 1-4 and 1 award in year 5. The applicant indicated that the average subgrant award size would be [REDACTED] (e42). The applicant provided clear information regarding the projected number of subgrants to be awarded annually for new, expansion, and replication purposes (17 expansions and 11 openings/replications with an average subgrant award size to be [REDACTED]). The applicant also indicated the expenses to purchase technical equipment, professional development, and marketing events. This criterion was thoroughly discussed, and my score reflects my professional assessment of this section.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant poorly developed information about the evidence and the calculations to determine the cost of the sub awards based on the type of awards. The applicant did not clearly provide enough information about the methodology and calculations used to determine the number of proposed subgrant awards and the average subgrant award amount. There is insufficient information about how the amounts were determined (e41-e42). For example, the applicant indicated the New Mexico's FY17 CSP award demonstrated that financial needs for expanding schools are higher than new and replicating schools without explaining the relationship to the current proposed project. In addition, it was unclear how the [REDACTED] for new and replicating schools reserved for pre-opening expenses would support the proposed project. The applicant did not provide the financial projections of the proposed project (e42). The absence of clear information regarding the process of the projections' calculations undermined the assessment of the need. This criterion was thoroughly discussed, and my score reflects my professional assessment of this section.

Reader's Score: 6

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Eligible Applicants Receiving Subgrants**

**1. The likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet the State entity's objectives for the quality charter school program and improve education results for students.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided well developed information about the likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants would meet the objectives for a quality charter school program to address the objectives of the proposed project (e42-e52). The applicant provided a developed plan that includes detailed descriptions of activities, timelines, and/or processes for all the required components of the subgrant application. For example, the applicant provided information about the competition component, task/milestone, and timeline of the subgrantee's award process to determine the award of high-quality subgrant programs (e42). The applicant described in detail how the subgrant process would support diverse charter models, including models that serve rural communities as well as prioritize the opening of high schools. For example, competitive preference priorities would be requested to be included in the subgrantee's narrative about (1) Innovative Models for High School Students; (2) Models that Serve Rural Communities Without a Significant Charter School, Presence; (3) Models that Serve Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations; (4) Models that are Educator-Driven; and (5) Models that are Community-Centered. Models (e48-e50). The applicant provided information about how the opportunity for a subgrant award would be publicized through partners (e.g., Excellent Schools New Mexico, PCSNM's website, monthly Charter School Newsletter, and Schools Networks) to promote the availability of subgrants, the requirements, and the process (e45-e46). The applicant also described the subgrant application requirements including five components (e43-e52). The component technical assistance relates to support to potential subgrantees to produce

applications aligned with the vision of the proposed project through orientation meetings about eligibility criteria, pertinent timelines, budget spreadsheets, and narrative. The component of Peer Review would include recruiting a diverse set of peer reviewers who will independently read, score, and provide timely and constructive comments on each subgrant application. The component Subgrant Application would include Phase I to determine if prospective applicants would be invited to submit a complete proposal and Phase II to submit a complete proposal including (1) Assurances, (2) Planned Activities, (3) Budget and Financial Information, and (4) Competitive Preference Priorities, as well as a capacity interview. The component Continuous Improvement among subgrantees to inform updates/changes to the subgrantees' selection process. The applicant effectively demonstrated that eligible applicants receiving subgrants are likely to achieve the objectives of a quality charter school program as outlined in the proposed project. The applicant's plan was well-developed, incorporating in-depth descriptions of activities, timelines, and processes for all the essential components of the subgrant application.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not clearly explain the requirements to be included in the subgrantees selection process related to family and community engagement activities addressing needs of the diverse target population. For example, the need of marketing materials in other languages (e.g., Spanish for the Hispanic).

**Reader's Score: 13**

**Selection Criteria - State Plan**

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

**Reader's Score: 30**

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provided a well-developed plan to monitor the subgrantee's awards (e52- e57). The applicant provided a monitoring plan timeline connecting the monitoring phase to the monitoring tasks and timeline. There are three monitoring phases (pre-award, pending award finalization, and post-award). The pre-award phase included activities regarding the award process. The Pending Award Finalization (e53-e54) phase information about expectation and reimbursement process would be reviewed including refining budget narratives and revision of measurable performance objectives to ensure appropriate alignment between project goals and proposed expenditures. The Post-Award phase (e54-e56) would include monitoring expenditures; routine check-in meetings to provide subgrantees with opportunities to discuss pertinent updates, share concerns, and request specific technical assistance related to the program; site visits to review documentation related to the subgrantee program; risk assessments and corrective action related to the assessment of the subgrantee's program and their progress to desired outcomes. A correction plan (e56) would be developed as needed including areas of concern, summaries of recommended follow-up, plans for remedying the finding(s) of noncompliance, responsible parties, timelines and target dates for completion, and a description of how the corrective action plan implementation would be monitored and evaluated. To ensure transparency of the results, the applicant would annually publish on its website a comprehensive list of monitoring findings and an overview of the corrective action plans that have been imposed and fulfilled (e56-e57). The applicant meticulously developed a plan to effectively monitor the awards granted to subgrantees. The applicant's monitoring plan included a comprehensive timeline that establishes a clear connection between the monitoring phases, monitoring tasks, and their respective timelines.

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not clearly explain the processes to evaluate the subgrantees' plans for sustainability once the funds are no longer available.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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 fully developed a narrative indicating a plan is in place to collaborate with authorizers to avoid duplication of work for eligible sub-applicants and the authorizers (e57-e59). The applicant presented a detailed plan of how to avoid the duplication of work for charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies to reduce the burden for both. For example, it is expected that the monitoring process would minimize redundancies due to the selection process in place. Additionally, collaborative work through a steering committee including Public Education Commission, Albuquerque Public Schools, and charter school administrators would leverage the subgrantees' work, proposed program implementation, and minimize duplication work (e58). The applicant thoroughly articulated a comprehensive narrative outlining their strategy to collaborate with authorizers, thereby mitigating duplication of work for eligible sub-applicants and authorizers by providing a detailed plan to prevent redundancies.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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:**

i. The applicant presented a comprehensive plan to provide technical assistance (TA) to support subgrantees in opening and operating new charter schools, and in replicating high-quality charter schools. The applicant indicated that three strategies would be implemented ((1) TA for subgrant applicants, (2) TA for charter school developers and operators, and (3) TA in support of quality authorizing efforts) to provide technical support awarded subgrantees (e59-e62). The applicant indicated a variety of activities to be offered such as financial training to develop the school-level capacity to build budgets associated; facilities training to build the capacity of operators to manage day-to-day facility operations; access and equity training to ensure all the students eligible to attend the school have access to resources, particularly in areas like school lunch and transportation; to grow the internal leadership in the schools; family engagement training to provide workshops and sessions to parents to engage them in this schools; and leadership roundtable to share discuss common challenges promising practices and learn from partners. The applicant sufficiently outlined a plan to offer technical assistance to support subgrantees throughout the process of opening and operating new charter schools, as well as in replicating high-quality charter schools. The plan demonstrates the applicant's commitment to providing the necessary guidance and support to ensure the success of subgrantees in these critical endeavors.

ii. The applicant provided a comprehensive plan to support quality authorizing efforts by authorized public chartering agencies in the State (e63-e64). The applicant indicated that the Public Education Commission and Albuquerque Public Schools would work on implementing three resources developed through the proposed project (New Mexico Principles and Standards for Quality Authorizing, the Authorizer Self-Evaluation Tool, and the Authorizer Annual

**Sub**

Report Template). A steering committee would communicate with local authorizers to establish clear plans and procedures to assist students enrolled in a charter school that closes. The applicant effectively presented a comprehensive plan to support authorized public chartering agencies in the State with their quality authorizing efforts. The plan provided by the applicant demonstrates a strong commitment to enhancing the capacity of these agencies and ensuring their success in upholding rigorous standards for charter school authorization.

**Weaknesses:**

- i. The applicant did not fully present information about student recruitment, enrollment, and retention that promotes the inclusion of all students, including educationally disadvantaged students and students with disabilities.
- ii. The applicant did not clearly state the technical assistance topics, activities, and modalities to deliver assistance to address assessing annual performance data of the schools; financial annual audits; holding charter schools accountable to their performance agreements; etc.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**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 adequately described the policy framework of the state, which indicates the solicitation and consideration of the input from parents and other members of the community to implement a charter school (e64-e66). The applicant described the 2021 New Mexico Parents Together Education Fellowship seven-week program participating in sessions such as Overview of New Mexico Public Education, Parent Power (Organizing, Telling Your Story, Improving Public School Quality, Using Your Voice to Create Change), and Advocacy Planning. The applicant provided a satisfactory description of the state's policy framework, highlighting its commitment to soliciting and considering input from parents and other community members for the implementation of a charter school. This acknowledgment underscores the importance placed on engaging stakeholders in the decision-making process and promoting inclusivity within the charter school system.

**Weaknesses:**

The plan presented by the applicant does not contain enough information about how the information collected from the variety of activities would be used when implementing or operating charter schools. For example, it is unclear how the parent information would be utilized to implement the proposed project. Moreover, it is unclear about the timeline of the activities to be implemented (e64-e66).

**Reader's Score: 3**

**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 clearly demonstrated the flexibility offered by the State's charter law by indicating the possible waivers of requirements so that charters could take advantage of the policy under state law. The applicant also indicated the afforded flexibility with respect to the charter school's budgeting (e66-e67). The applicant effectively showcased the flexibility provided by the State's charter law by highlighting the potential waivers of requirements, enabling charter schools to leverage the policy provisions under state law. This demonstration underscores the state's commitment to empowering charter schools with the necessary flexibility to innovate and tailor their programs to best meet the needs of their students and communities.

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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:**

**Reader's Score: 12**

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 well-developed management plan connecting activities/tasks/milestones to responsible staff, timing, and year to be implemented for the project management, subgrant competition, monitoring, and technical assistance to be completed on time and within budget (e69-e71). The applicant clearly detailed the responsibilities of personnel such as the Executive Director with experience managing schools that outperformed local districts by 5–25 percentage points in all tested subjects (e72). It was indicated that the Chief Learning Officer who has experience as a teacher, a special assistant within the New York City Department of Education, a charter school evaluator for School Works, and the National Director of Learning for Schools (e72) to demonstrate the experience of this person to support the proposed project. The responsibilities of the Executive Director and the Chief Learning Officer were indicated as support to develop high-quality charter leadership for the potential subgrantees. The Chief Learning Officer would serve as Readiness Review Partner and as an evaluator to conduct needs and formative assessments to assist with the school-level needs of each sub-grantee (e73). The proposed project would have a 100% FTE Grant Manager and a Fiscal Coordinator (e73). The applicant provided resumes of the personnel (e85-e97) to demonstrate the qualifications, skills, and experience of the personnel part of the proposed project (e331-e333). The applicant provided information about the budget and the different expenses per year including information about the technical assistance costs, personnel, fringe benefits, travel expenses, supplies, contractual, and subgrant distributions (e239-e345). The different components were adequately described in the management plan indicating that the proposed project would be completed on time and within budget.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not disaggregate activities, tasks, and milestones; thus, it is unclear what are the milestones of the proposed project (e69-e71). There are activities such as website maintenance that were not indicated as part of the management plan. The applicant's documentation lacks specific details regarding the qualifications of key personnel. It remains unclear what qualifications are required for each position in the event of personnel resignations. The management plan does not include sufficient detail about the management of external partners.

**Reader's Score: 8**

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

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The applicant adequately explained the plans to review the progress of the proposed projects and the subgrantees to make improvements to the proposed project as needed. The Executive Director, Deputy Director, Grant Manager, and Fiscal Coordinator would meet monthly to coordinate workflows, track progress toward grant goals, and review interim feedback, and students' performance data. The steering committee would meet semiannually to determine areas of improvement (e73-e74). The applicant adequately described the different personnel involved in the proposed project to ensure adequate feedback is collected as part of the continuous improvement.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not clearly explain how the project personnel would use the information gathered by the Executive Director, Deputy Director, Grant Manager, and Fiscal Coordinator as feedback to make improvements in subsequent years, as well as limited information, was provided about the Steering Committee's feedback information (e73-e74).

**Reader's Score: 2**

**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 fully provided information about the key personnel to be part for the proposed project (e75-e76). For example, the Executive Director would be serving as the NMCSP Project Director and dedicate 36% FTE to the project (75% located for Technical Assistance (TA) and 25% to administration); the Deputy Director would commit 61% FTE to assisting the project (43% TA and 57% Admin), Field Director would use 13% FTE to assist with the proposed project (75% TA and 25% admin), the Grant Manager and a Fiscal Coordinator (to be hired) would dedicate 100% FTE to the project. The time dedicated to the project is appropriate and adequate to meet the goals and objectives of the grant. The applicant provided sufficient information about the different staff involved in the proposed project to meet the goals and objectives of the proposed project.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1**

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

**a. Allows at least one entity that is not a local educational agency (LEA) to be an authorized public chartering agency for developers seeking to open a charter school in the State ; or**

**b. In the case of a State in which LEAs are the only authorized public chartering agencies, the State has 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 the appeal must have the authority to approve the charter application over the objections of the LEA.**

**Please specify whether they meet (a) or (b) and clearly explain why in the strengths.**

**(0 or 1 points)**

**Strengths:**

b. The applicant clearly explained that the New Mexico law permits charter school developers to seek approval from a non-LEA authorizer and outlines an appeal process for the denial of a charter application (e20). Moreover, it was stated that developers and operators can appeal with the Secretary of Education regarding issues of denial, nonrenewal, suspension, or revocation of charter schools (e20). The Secretary of Education has the authority to reverse a decision of the charter school.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 1**

**Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2**

- 1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it is located in a state that ensures equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner.**

**(up to 2 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant fully developed information about equitable financing. The applicant demonstrated that the states receive equitable financing in comparison to traditional public schools. The applicant stated that the state law provided 98% of the school-generated program cost as the amount of funding allocated to a charter school and charter schools are entitled to 100 percent of the state and federal revenues attributable to the students enrolled. Charter schools are eligible to receive funding, which is calculated in the same manner as for traditional public schools (e20-e21).

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

- 1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it is located in a state that uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and LEAs.**

**(up to 2 points)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant fully developed information explaining best practices to improve struggling schools and local educational agencies. The applicant demonstrated that the State of New Mexico is using best practices to help improve struggling charter schools. Whittier Elementary School in Albuquerque was provided as an example of an implementation of a rigorous intervention to improve the charter school. The interventions included extending the school day, extending the school year, and adding a "Genius Hour" to provide enrichment activities to the students. The interventions were supported with citations to demonstrate best practices implemented within the charter school (e22).



**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score:** 2

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

1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it is located in a State that 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
- f) Low- or no-cost leasing privileges

(up to 2 points)

**Strengths:**

The applicant fully developed the information regarding the funding for facilities and access to public facilities from charter schools. The applicant demonstrated that the State is actively working to provide charter schools with facilities access by explaining the cost of leasing a classroom (██████) per student. This calculation has led to an annual reimbursement of ██████ to charter operators (e23). Moreover, it detailed the types of access to public facilities by the charter schools due to laws enacted to ease the facilities-related financial burdens imposed on charters (e24).

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness found.

**Reader's Score:** 2

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

1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, a State entity must demonstrate that it supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services.

(up to 3 points)

**Strengths:**

The applicant developed the information about supporting students at risk. The applicant indicated that besides the desire to support students at-risk stated in the law, charter schools have been leading the implementation of many school activities such as school-based programming for performing arts, project-based learning, STEM, blended learning, etc. All these innovative programs have been implemented in different schools (e.g., Public Academy for Performing Arts, Leadership High Schools, Albuquerque Institute of Math and Science, Taos Academy, etc.) to demonstrate the ability of charter schools to engage students at risk. In addition, these programs are providing quality education for students who are eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch and students in jail (e24-e26).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide enough information about the technical assistance to support subgrantees regarding how serve at-risk students through activities that would address dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive

career counseling services for the target population (Free or Reduced-Price Lunch and students in jail) (e24-e26).

**Reader's Score:** 2

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