

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: West Virginia Professional Charter School Board (S282A230010)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	29
Quality of Eligible Applicants Receiving Subgrants		
1. Eligible Applicants	15	14
State Plan		
1. State Plan	35	29
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	13
Sub Total	100	85
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP1	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. CPP3	2	1
Sub Total	2	1
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. CPP4	2	1
Sub Total	2	1
Competitive Preference Priority 5		
Competitive Preference Priority 5		
1. CPP5	3	1
Sub Total	3	1

Total

110

91

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - State Entities - 8: 84.282A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: West Virginia Professional Charter School Board (S282A230010)

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: 29

Sub

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

Strengths:

The application sufficiently addresses some details of the proposed project's components, such as:

- a. The application addressed the goal of doubling the number of charter schools over the next five years (with research supporting the overall positive impact of offering additional educational options, particularly charters to families) {Page e22}. The applicant included their goal of doubling the number of charter schools from 7 to 14 and tripling the number of students enrolled in charters by 2028. The applicant justified the well-balanced support of new charters and replication of high-quality charters.
- b. The application presents convincing methods to support the agency's goal of opening and supporting more charters such as recruiting activities engaging current charter networks to expand in West Virginia, as well as the implementation of the subgrant program to encourage the opening of new schools. These strategies are likely to aid in the opening of more charter schools in the future. The application also details activities for specific outreach plans to increase the number of charter school students in the state. The plans include sufficient project details with activities supporting the opening of new charter schools and the expansion of high-quality charter schools (Pages e23-27). The application details subgrant monitoring via site visits, document reviews, and performance assessments (page e25). The application also details the barriers to new schools opening/expanding and highlights how the agency will remedy this and reach the goal (pages e23-24). Overall, the application clearly specifies the proper steps the agency will use, such as recruiting charters and charter leaders to open schools in the state, implementing the subgrant program, providing pre- and post-authorization technical support and feedback, and a detailed plan to monitor subgrantees.
- c. The application outlines plans to utilize case studies from promising charter school practices to help improve outcomes of students in struggling schools (pages e27-28).
- d. The application provides details about increasing the achievement of students in charters and mentions increasing achievement in traditional public schools via sharing of best practices (page e27).

Sub

Weaknesses:

While the application generally speaks to the impact charters have on student achievement, the specific activities cited in the application and elements need to be strongly informed by research. The application needs more research for the activities/strategies listed beyond the need for more school options (pages e23-27).

While the application mentions increasing achievement with an emphasis on struggling schools, it would be strengthened by including more research-based improvement strategies besides providing case studies on best practices and promising innovations.

The application failed to address how they will support charters in LEAs with many schools that identified by the state of West Virginia as needing comprehensive state support and improvement.

Reader's Score: 4

- 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:

All presented performance measures are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. There is evidence of both quantitative and qualitative data for performance measures. The performance measures are related to the intended outcomes. The application demonstrates that at least one performance measure for each objective can be reported annually (pages e28-29).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

- 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 application clearly articulates enrollment trend data to support the ambitiousness of the entity in increasing its charter schools (page e29). The application details declining enrollment statewide while also including sound data supporting that its goal exceeds that of nearly 14 other states (page e30). In addition, the application presents convincing evidence of charter growth data (pages e29-30).

The application also outlines several trusted data points to support the need for the objectives' ambitiousness and clearly outlines strategies to reach the objective and performance measures by implementing the documented activities (pages e29-30).

The numbers presented are ambitious yet attainable based on the entity's current trends in authorizing charters.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

Sub

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 application clearly outlines the proposed number of subgrants per year (Table 2, page e34), along with a detailed justification. Details such as the precise amount of per pupil funding and maximum funding were in the narrative. Additionally, the application presented data from the inaugural charter schools in their state to calculate average funding amounts for the subgrants.

The applicant appropriately included a budget narrative with a precise alignment to the subgrant descriptions with a thorough breakdown of how the grant will be used over the five project years (page e61).

Weaknesses:

The applicant failed to adequately provide supporting documentation regarding the methodology and calculations used to determine the average and maximum subgrant awards and amounts. The application's explanation of calculating the pre-opening year budget based on year 1 projections seems insufficient in equitably dispersing funds. The application did not provide sufficient detail as to how those projections would be calculated, taking into consideration the differences in regions, school models, concentration of at-risk students, and grade levels served (pages e32-35).

Reader's Score: 15

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 outlines a reasonable plan to ascertain applicant eligibility and award subgrants (page e35). The application also outlines the baseline criteria for eligibility. Details surrounding the application for the subgrant are included for all charters authorized under the entity. Likewise, the applicant explains that subgrant applicants must first be authorized through the State entity to be eligible for subgrants. The application outlines a rigorous process by which the entity will ensure eligibility for CSP funding. It includes signing numerous legal assurances, submitting a project narrative, 5-year budget, and budget narrative, including expenditures, and aligning the grant to the school's ability to achieve its mission. As such, the entity describes several ways the subgrant competition will be communicated to the public through press releases, emails, and promotional materials.

The application includes a priority preference for schools serving at-risk, rural, and high school students (page e37). The application clearly outlines the inclusion of parental involvement. A transportation plan is outlined in the application.

Weaknesses:

The application fails to completely detail how they will select peer reviewers but mentions merely soliciting them. The methods and channels used to locate peer reviewers was not included (pages e39-40).

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - State Plan

1. The State entity's plan to--

Reader's Score: 29

Sub

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

Strengths:

The application clearly outlines the immediacy of monitoring and provides insight into the two ways grantees will be monitored (on-site and desk) and the frequency of monitoring (page e39). The application also outlines a risk assessment framework as well as details surrounding the identification of high-risk grantees (page e40). A timeline of monitoring activities was provided, including corrective actions (pages e40-41). The application details how the State entity will gather information on the subgrantees support of English language learners and special education students via their internally created form requiring subgrantees to code the use of each expenditure. The application sufficiently explains that the use of this drawdown form is to have subgrantees document the use of funds as they are used. The application appropriately addresses how the data from these forms can be used to determine next steps or support in the subgrantee monitoring process (pages e41-42).

The applicant discusses the monitoring of financial documents via annual audits and review of financial records, procurement, and budget plans (page e40).

The applicant demonstrates an adequate plan for monitoring sustainability after the CPS subgrant period expires (page e42).

Weaknesses:

The application did not outline the specific types of support offered to high-risk grantees, aside from creating a corrective action plan.

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 identifies that they are the only authorizing body in the state for the foreseeable future. Thus, there is no duplication of work. The applicant also specifies the method for diminishing duplication with charter schools by delineating duties during and after the contract process (pages e42-43).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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;

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant detailed a plan to provide technical assistance to applicants (page e44). Related personnel and a point of contact were included in the plan as well. The application demonstrates sufficient technical support through pre-application webinars and application completion support, post-award webinars, governing board training, and outreach support (page e44).

The application presents information on the entity's commitment to fulfilling its authorizing responsibilities and details how they are aligned to West Virginia state laws on assessing performance data, financial oversight, performance agreement accountability, renewal, non-renewal, revocation and closure (page e45).

Weaknesses:

The application fails to describe the rationale for all mentioned strategies and does not explicitly address the need to minimize ineffective discipline strategies and keep students in the classroom. The response in this section is limited due to the entity's short duration of authorizing schools (pages e44-45). As such, much of the plan was referred to in the application as a task for the future as the authorizer grows its charter school portfolio.

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 application presents three main strategies for parent engagement that span from pre- to post- authorization. The implementation of the community forum, requirement for authorized schools to present the findings from their annual parent surveys in report form to the authorizer, and the authorizer's commitment to creating a research-based streamlined survey for parents of students attending all charters in the state are evidence of the plans (page e46). These strategies are acceptable and likely to contribute to the goal of engaging families.

Weaknesses:

The application presents vague timelines for parent involvement. The application mentions that the community forum must happen within 90 days of the charter application being submitted (page e45) but does not provide a clear timeline for the parent surveys and trend report review cycle.

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 and adequately outlines flexibility and limitations in charter programming allowed by the West Virginia state legislature. The applicant notes their ongoing plans to advocate for charter autonomy at the state level (pages e47-48).

Weaknesses:

The application did not present a comprehensive plan for maximizing the flexibility in support of their charter schools.

Sub

Reader's Score: 4

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: 13

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates knowledge of a sound management plan that aligns with the objectives of the application. The provided timeline provides a realistic time frame for completing the subgrant activities (pages e48-53).

The staff directly working with subgrantees and the CSP have the background for successfully implementing the subgrant process and monitoring phases (page e48). The budget includes all personnel and related costs associated with the grant (Page e60).

Weaknesses:

The application does not provide details on the management of work with external partners

Reader's Score: 9

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

Strengths:

The application presents some information regarding collecting feedback from various stakeholders (lawmakers, developers, parents, administrators, residents, and board members) on the implementation of the CSP as well as general feedback on charter improvement and student outcomes in West Virginia. The application also presents email and phone as mediums to receive this feedback (page e53). The application details how the staff will use the feedback to develop action plans to implement future changes in its authorizing practices (page e53).

Weaknesses:

The application is lacking sufficient details surrounding the specific steps that will be taken to analyze and organize the data, particularly for feedback provided via phone. The application also lacked sufficient details regarding how the feedback data will be used to improve the proposed project.

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.**

Sub

Strengths:

The application provided a detailed breakdown of the FTE for both the Grants Coordinator and Project Manager with percentages of times each will spend on technical assistance and grant administration (pages e48-49).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

The application completely addresses priority one and indicates that the West Virginia Public Charter School Board is:

- 1) authorized by the state of West Virginia as a public chartering agency
- 2) Not a local LEA
- 3) Provides an appeals process by which denied applicants can apply to the West Virginia Board of Education.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 application details the state of West Virginia's statute requiring "90 percent of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance follows the student to the public charter school." Additionally, the application states that effective July 1, 2023, the percentage is raised to 99. This presents strong evidence that the state the entity is in has a focus on equitable funding for charters (page e20).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 application addresses West Virginia legislature's requirement that the Board of Education present a report to the governor and legislature that shares best practices and innovation from charters that can be implemented in other schools (page e20). The application sufficiently addresses the rationale for improving student learning by communicating successful charter school innovations that can be implemented in other schools. The application presents a reasonable assumption that creating more diverse schools with high standards will have an overall impact on student achievement (page e20).

Weaknesses:

While the legislature mentions the sharing of innovative and successful practices, the application makes no mention on using these to help improve struggling schools (Page e21).

Reader's Score: 1

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 presents information regarding the State of West Virginia's commitment to offer its charter schools' access to public facilities. The application also details provisions for charter schools to lease public facilities at or below market

value. As such, the applicant sufficiently addresses points c and f of Competitive Priority 4 (page e21).

Weaknesses:

The application includes no evidence that the State entity provides funding for facilities, assistance with facilities acquisition, ability to share in bonds or mill levies, or right of refusal to purchase public buildings. The application presents weak evidence that the State's activities are enough to help charter schools fully access facilities (page e21).

Reader's Score: 1

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 provides evidence of the State entity's commitment to have charter schools in West Virginia expand options for at-risk students by encouraging subgrant applicants to open schools with high concentrations of at-risk students and English language learners. (page e21).

Weaknesses:

The application does not provide adequate detail of the type of at-risk programs its supports (page e21).

Reader's Score: 1

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: West Virginia Professional Charter School Board (S282A230010)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	29
Quality of Eligible Applicants Receiving Subgrants		
1. Eligible Applicants	15	14
State Plan		
1. State Plan	35	29
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	13
Sub Total	100	85
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP1	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. CPP3	2	1
Sub Total	2	1
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. CPP4	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 5		
Competitive Preference Priority 5		
1. CPP5	3	1
Sub Total	3	1

Total

110

92

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - State Entities - 8: 84.282A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: West Virginia Professional Charter School Board (S282A230010)

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: 29

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant cites two pieces of research for their theory of action in the second paragraph of page e22 that they believe support their objectives of increasing the number of charter schools, students enrolled in these schools, and increasing student achievement in all West Virginia public schools.

The applicant adequately addresses the key priority of supporting the opening of new charter schools with an objective, first paragraph on page e23, of doubling the number of authorized schools (7 to 14) and tripling the number of enrolled students (from 1,248 to 3,744), and provides adequate detail on the following activities:

- a recruiting strategy that proposes to engage with existing charter school networks, building relationships with community organizations and business leaders to increase quality charter school applicants and support charter school development in Activity 1.A. on page e23, second paragraph.
- providing financial assistance to new and expanding charter schools through a subgrant program managed by a new Grants Coordinator in Activity 1.B. beginning with the last paragraph on page e23 to page e24.
- providing subgrant monitoring to ensure compliance in Activity 1.C., first paragraph on page e25.

The applicant adequately addresses the key priority of developing a cohesive statewide system that supports the opening of new charter schools and the expansion of charter schools, with a second objective of increasing student achievement in all West Virginia public schools, by completing the following support strategies:

- pre-approval technical assistance that includes information on charter school law, program design, governance, financial planning, community engagement, compliance, and a pre-submission review process mentioned in Activity 2.A., beginning with the last paragraph on page e25.

The applicant adequately addresses the key priority of developing a statewide strategy to encourage collaboration and share best practices through the creation of the West Virginia Charter School Association, as a part of Activity 2.B. in the first paragraph on page e27, and the creation of peer learning networks to connect educators and administrators from charter and other public schools, as mentioned in the last paragraph on e27 under Activity 2.C.

Weaknesses:

The application could be strengthened on pages e22-e27 with additional research to support all of the activities so that they are strongly informed by research. The application could also be strengthened with an identifiable logic model table that includes all the elements. While Activity 2.B. on page e 26 describes the provision of technical

Sub

assistance for all charter schools to support growth and improvement through consultation, coaching sessions, and professional development, it is unclear if this will be a targeted approach to addressing the key priority of supporting schools in LEAs identified by the State for comprehensive support and improvement as it is provided to all charter schools. Further Activity 2.C., paragraph three on page e27, of disseminating charter school innovations and best practices through case studies posted on the applicant's website and shared with the state board of education may be insufficient to address the needs for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement. It is unclear if these activities will support the key priority of the use of charter schools to improve struggling schools (charter and other public schools).

Reader's Score: 4

2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and

Strengths:

The applicant provides six performance measures on pages e28-29 that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time oriented. The performance measures are clearly related to the objectives and outcomes and are both qualitative and quantitative. Both Objective 1 and 2 include three performance measures.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

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 adequately presents the objectives for the project on the top of page e23 and the middle of page e25. The data presented in the first paragraph on page e30 appears to be comprehensive and supports the first objective of charter school and enrollment growth. The data presented on the top of page e31 and in the first paragraph outlines the student achievement problem. The applicant reports on page e23 their ability to open four schools, with more than 1,200 students enrolled, within their first year as an authorizer, which would indicate that their ambitious goals are attainable.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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's explanation of the subgrant award amounts, averages, and maximums is documented on page e33-e34, and in the tables on pages e34-e35, provides supporting methodology and calculations used to determine the number of proposed subgrant awards. The applicant does make a convincing argument, in the second paragraph on page e32, that the lack of available funding for new charter schools is a barrier to growth.

Sub

Weaknesses:

The applicant's explanation of the demand and need for additional charter schools in the first paragraph on page e32 lacks depth and evidence of the need for the number of planned new schools. The application would be strengthened by including a quantifiable wait list, parent interest survey information, or other quantifiable data to support the demand and need for additional charter schools.

Reader's Score: 15

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:

Applicant provides a detailed description in the last paragraph on page e35 about how the subgrant program will be announced and publicized including eligibility requirements, application process, and submission deadlines. The applicant further describes in the second paragraph on page e37 that their process will include a competitive priority for high school children, schools in predominantly rural areas, community centered schools, and those serving at-risk students. The applicant provides a detailed list of the contents of the subgrant application project narrative in paragraph two on page e36 about how the funds will be used to achieve their mission, enrollment levels, external partners including management organizations/service providers, detailed management plan and timeline, receiving feedback from parents and community members, evidence of demand, a sustainability plan, and how the subgrant applicant will use the flexibility within the West Virginia's charter school law to innovate and improve student outcomes. The applicant documents in detail its requirement for charter schools to provide a plan for parent involvement and further details that applicants will be required to hold community forums, workshops, and focus groups to gather input and ensure that the proposed school is responsive to community needs. The applicant describes their process for selecting subgrant with peer reviewers and some detail on determining eligibility on the bottom of page e38 and top of page e39. The applicant reports in the last paragraph on page e37 that although West Virginia law does not require charter schools to provide transportation, the applicant does specify that they will request that subgrantees provide a comprehensive plan for student transportation that addresses the specific needs of their student population and geographic location.

Weaknesses:

The application could be strengthened by additional detail how the subgrant process will support diverse charter models, other than high school and rural schools. The application could be further strengthened by including the roles and responsibilities of all parties and the role of the authorizer in reviewing charter school performance and operations.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - State Plan

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

Reader's Score: 29

Sub

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a comprehensive monitoring plan that will provide regular oversight to assess if the subgrantees are implementing their grant projects with fidelity and in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, identify risks, and undertake corrective action. The applicant details in paragraph two, page e39, how it will provide the subgrantee with written information outlining the monitoring processes, timelines, and expectations with their award announcement. The applicant further details in paragraph two, page e39, how it will use personalized, desk-based monitoring for reviewing financial and programmatic reports submitted by subgrantees. The applicant describes a sound approach to ensuring expectations are met and the use of the desk monitoring to identify areas of concern or noncompliance which would lead to further support and possible corrective action. The applicant also describes in the first paragraph on page e40 how it will use a system of on-site monitoring to review subgrantee operations and program activities. The second paragraph on page e40 describes how the on-site monitoring activities, and the findings/corrective actions, will be documented by the applicant. The third paragraph on page e40 details how the findings and corrective actions will be reviewed at the public West Virginia Public Charter School Board meetings and posted on their website for full transparency.

The applicant describes in the third paragraph on page e40 how they will provide subgrantees with clear information on allowable expenses and reimbursement procedures, and that the applicant will regularly review the subgrantees’ purchases, budget plans and procurement processes. The applicant provides a table on the top of page e41 demonstrating a reasonable monitoring timeline.

Weaknesses:

The application could be strengthened by including additional and clear information on how it will monitor to ensure that subgrantees are using the funds for activities that will meet the educational needs of their students, specifically students with disabilities and English language learners. The application describes on the top of page e42 that subgrantees will be required to indicate how expenses reported on drawdown forms will meet only the needs of students with disabilities and English language learners. This priority is unclear within their monitoring plan.

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 an adequate explanation that they are currently the only entity in the state to authorize charter schools in the second paragraph on page e42 which aids in the avoidance of duplicative work. In addition, they identify the responsibilities of each party in the second paragraph on page e42, and they report a streamlined charter application and authorization process in the first paragraph on page 343 that are only required by law and nothing additional. Furthermore, the applicant reports in the third paragraph on page e42, continuing onto page e43, that the charter contracts detail the rights and specific responsibilities of each party, especially the charter school for academic accountability, financial management, compliance, and reporting.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

The applicant presents a sound plan, on the top of page e44, to offer a pre-application webinar, support on completing the subgrant application, and a post award webinar for subgrantees. In addition, in the first full paragraph on page e44 the applicant details a plan to use a state-based organization to help subgrantees design and implement community engagement activities and a nationally recognized charter school governance organization to provide support in governance board training and assistance. Regarding authorizing, the applicant provides a well-developed plan, detailed in paragraph one on page e45, that includes assessing performance data, financial oversight, and accountability for performance agreements.

Weaknesses:

The application could be strengthened by detailing a support strategy for the development of support services by subgrantees. In paragraph two, page e44, the applicant states they will “encourage” subgrantees to develop and implement a range of support services, without the inclusion of services to decrease the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom. The application could be strengthened by the inclusion of actual strategies to support the subgrantees in the development of all these support services on page e44. The application would further be strengthened by detailing a formal plan for renewal, non-renewal, and revocation of charters. Applicant states in paragraph one on page e45 that if they are awarded funding, these criteria will be established.

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 strategy of using a public forum to solicit local resident input on the bottom of page e45, that will in 2024-25 be combined with their own annual parent survey, which was described in the second paragraph on page e46. In addition, the applicant reports in the first paragraph on page e46 that it analyzes the parent survey data collected by their charter schools.

Weaknesses:

The application could be strengthened by providing a more thorough description on the public forum strategy mentioned at the bottom of page e45, and their past success in reaching the intended communities. In addition, the application could be strengthened with a clear, detailed plan, including a variety of activities and a thorough timeline on page e46, increasing the engagement possibility for all communities.

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 provides a description on how their state law supports flexibility in charter schools beginning in the last paragraph on page e46. The applicant further details the ability for charter schools to hire teachers who are subject matter experts regardless of their traditional teacher credentials in the second paragraph on page e47.

Sub

Weaknesses:

The application could be strengthened by detailing a comprehensive plan on how the applicant will work to maximize the flexibility provided by law.

Reader's Score: 4

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: 13

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a very detailed description of the project director's responsibilities and experience in the second paragraph on page e48 and with the included resume. The project milestones and timeline on pages e49-e53 is complete and thorough, contains the tasks that will be required of the Grants Coordinator, and is aligned with the included budget.

Weaknesses:

The application may be strengthened by the addition of a job description detailing the prior experience required and the responsibilities of the Grants Coordinator that they will be seeking, in lieu of their resume.

Reader's Score: 9

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a statement on the value of receiving feedback and will encourage stakeholders to provide feedback via email and phone calls, detailing the type of feedback they expect to receive and how it will be used in the last paragraph on page e53.

Weaknesses:

The application may be strengthened with a detailed, intentional continuous improvement plan to gather feedback through a variety of methods, including surveys, on a regular basis, and reporting that data, along with strategies for improvement, to administration and publicly reporting the information to their Board community.

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**

Sub

objectives of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant presented detailed and complete information on the time commitments of the project director and grants coordinator including the percentage of time each of them plans to spend on the project. The time commitments indicated on the bottom of page e48 and in the table on the top of page e49 appear reasonable.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

The applicant meets criterion (a) as the West Virginia Public Charter School Board is the authorized public chartering agency that is not a local educational agency, as noted in the last paragraph on page e19, which also indicates an available appeals process.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 provides information in the first paragraph on page e20 that state law effective July 1, 2023 increases the per pupil basic foundation allowance for charter school students up to 99 percent. In addition, in the first paragraph on page e21 the applicant indicates that subgrantees will have access to vacant public facilities at or below market cost, which helps to improve the cash flow for new charter schools.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 provides references to state statute in paragraph three on page e20 that they are required, and it is their goal, to share best practices, inclusive of innovations and successful strategies for improving student learning, with all non-charter public schools, through a report provided to their governor and state legislature.

Weaknesses:

The application could be strengthened by providing specific examples of how the applicant is disseminating best practices throughout the state. The applicant reports at the bottom of page e20 that they have not yet demonstrated how they have disseminated best practices throughout schools in their state.

Reader's Score: 1

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 provides information, in the first paragraph on page e21, regarding state law that allows a public charter school to access public facilities through requesting usage of public facilities from county boards, or other public entities, where the charter school is located or proposes to locate, that are either not used, whole or in part, for classroom instruction at the time the charter school seeks to use or lease the public facility. In addition, the public entities shall make facilities available at or under current market value. This effort demonstrates an appropriate response to the priority by

providing (b) assistance with facility acquisition and (f) low cost leasing privileges.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 provides information on their mission that specifically addresses authorizing schools that are designed to expand the opportunities for at-risk students in the last paragraph on page e21.

Weaknesses:

The application could be strengthened by a description of the opportunities for at-risk students in the areas of dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling in sufficient detail, and how they will ensure equitable access to these services.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/30/2023 10:04 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2023 04:46 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: West Virginia Professional Charter School Board (S282A230010)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	29
Quality of Eligible Applicants Receiving Subgrants		
1. Eligible Applicants	15	15
State Plan		
1. State Plan	35	27
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	14
Sub Total	100	85
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP1	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. CPP3	2	1
Sub Total	2	1
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. CPP4	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 5		
Competitive Preference Priority 5		
1. CPP5	3	1
Sub Total	3	1

Total

110

92

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - State Entities - 8: 84.282A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: West Virginia Professional Charter School Board (S282A230010)

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: 29

Sub

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

Strengths:

The application provides a logical and sound rationale in the abstract (p. e12) and Introduction (p. e16). For example, the state is not at 50% proficiency in any of the tested subjects on the NAEP test. Further, the WVPCSB is necessary to ensure charter schools continue to be authorized as local authorizers were not doing so when the initial charter law was passed. The application justifies the need for funding for subgrantees in naming a key barrier to opening or expanding charter schools in West Virginia as "the lack of direct state support for start-up costs," p. e24.

Weaknesses:

The application fails to demonstrate that it is strongly informed by research and evaluation findings that suggest the project is highly likely to realize the relevant outcomes.

Reader's Score: 4

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 comprehensively details the objective performance measures that are aligned to the intended outcomes of the project. It uses both quantitative measures, like growth in student achievement, p. e25, and in the number of charter schools and charter students, p. e23 and the table on p. e28. The application also details how the project will produce qualitative data, such as best practices that can benefit all students, p. e2 and the table on p. e29.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 5

Sub

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 a reasonable and ambitious goal of doubling the number of charter schools in the state and tripling the number of students enrolled, p. e23. It presents evidence that shows it has been able to manage this scale in the two years since the state entity’s inception, p. e16. It is also ambitious, and thus successfully meeting the purpose of this sub-criterion, to grow 5 percentage points per year in the number of students reaching proficiency, as indicated on p. e25.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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 application shows strength in indicating some demand for additional charter school seats through projected higher enrollment of existing charter schools in the state, p. e32. It also well-supports the claim that start-up funding is limited to non-existent for new charter schools, thus proving the need for the subgrant competition funds, p. e32. Further, the applicant successfully defends the amount of its intended subgrant award and aligns it to the amount needed to reach parity with local school districts, which can rely on local levy funds beyond state per-pupil funding, p. e33.

Weaknesses:

The application needs to better demonstrate the demand for more seats in charter schools. It would be strengthened by producing quantitative data on enrollment patterns, wait lists, or the number of charter schools ready to open if funding was available.

Reader's Score: 15

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 details a comprehensive set of best practices in charter school monitoring to ensure that subgrantees will meet the objectives of academic and enrollment growth. Some of these strong practices includes the WVPCSP’s use of a competitive charter school application, setting competitive priorities for high school and at-risk students, requiring an aligned project narrative and budget, among other things outlined in p. e36-39. Further, the applicant already requires a rigorous charter school contract for new charter schools and these contracts are “comprehensive documents that outline the specific responsibilities of each party, including academic accountability, financial management, compliance, and reporting requirements,” p. e43.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - State Plan

1. The State entity's plan to--

Reader's Score: 27

Sub

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

Strengths:

The state entity outlines several methods it intends to use to monitor subgrantees' programs and those monitoring touchpoints are exhaustive and appropriate in frequency for the grant period. Examples include desk and on-site monitoring (p. e39-40), initial and follow-up monitoring for two additional academic years (p. e39), and the development of a risk-assessment framework to support subgrantees with their performance or compliance (p. e40).

Weaknesses:

The application fails to outline the types of support to high-risk subgrantees or subgrantees that are in danger of not meeting the intended project outcomes.

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 is the only authorizer of charter schools in the state at the time of application. There is no risk of duplication of work and the applicant is successful in clarifying the delineation of duties between the authorizer and the school, p. e42.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

The application details sound methods for providing technical assistance and support to subgrantees, namely through its intentional consulting partnerships with experienced organizations and plans for charter board trainings, p. e44. The application also shows strength in planning for self-improvement which strengthens the quality of

Sub

authorizing in the state as it is the only entity currently authorizing charters in West Virginia, p. e45.

Weaknesses:

The application does not sufficiently address how it will provide technical assistance and support for quality authorizing efforts in West Virginia. It does not address its role as a state entity in supporting local authorizers around the state.

Reader's Score: 7

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 application shows two key strengths in its plan to solicit and consider input from parents and others in the community including surveying existing charter parents (p. e.46) and adhering to state law requiring a public forum for input on charters in the application stage (p. e45)

Weaknesses:

The applicant's plans to develop a parent survey is not immediate and the 1st survey administration to charter school parents won't begin until 2025, thus delaying the role parents play in charter school oversight and authorizing, p. e46. Further, the application is limited in the meaningful impact that parents or the community will play in ongoing operation of charter schools in the state outside of the application stage.

Reader's Score: 2

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 outlines a reasonable expectation from a state entity in maximizing the flexibility provided to charter schools under law when stating that "WVPCSB advocates for charter school autonomy with the state Department of Education and other executive branch agencies...while also defending charter schools against encroachment from other regulatory agencies in the state," p. e48. The application provides a clear and sound depiction of West Virginia law that codifies the flexibilities that charter schools have in the state, especially that of hiring teachers free from traditional educational or certification requirements, p. e46-e47.

Weaknesses:

The application lacks detail about how the state entity will work to maximize the flexibility provided to charter schools under law.

Reader's Score: 4

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: 14

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 outlines a reasonable and detailed timeline of milestones to accomplish on pages e49 through e53 that are aligned to the outcomes in the proposed project. The budget is reasonable and allocates sufficient funding to the subgrantees to meet their gaps in funding and keep dollars closest to students, beginning on p. e62.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

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

Strengths:

The application indicates reasonable intentions and procedures for gathering feedback and using it to ensure continuous improvement. Strengths include the solicitation of comments from a wide variety of audiences and the use of both formal and informal means of communication, p. e53.

Weaknesses:

The application does not provide an adequate process to convincingly suggest that feedback loops are a regular part of the organization and give confidence that the named practices will live beyond the application, p. e53.

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 application demonstrates strength in its time allocations for the Executive Director and Grants Coordinator to meet the objectives of the state entity and the proposed project, p. e48-e49.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

The applicant is “a statewide, independent body with a mission to ‘authorize high-quality public charter schools,’” p. e19. The application adequately meets this priority because the applicant themselves are the non-LEA entity that is a public chartering agency as specified in sub-priority (a), p. e19.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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:

West Virginia has shown progressive strength in ensuring equitable funding for charter schools by enacting law that initially called for “90 percent of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance” to follow students to charter schools, but will now be 99% effective July 1, 2023, p. e20. The application successfully meets all elements of this sub-criterion.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 application successfully demonstrates the state’s intention to use best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and LEAs; West Virginia goes beyond intention and codifies this in state statute W.V. Stat. §18-5G-4-b-

2-6-ix, p.e20. This demonstrates the applicant's ability to meet this priority during the grant period.

Weaknesses:

The application fails to fully meet the priority as it indicates that the state has not yet used best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and LEAs. Those best practices are still being compiled this early in their charter school program's lifespan, p. e20.

Reader's Score: 1

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 qualifies for full points in this priority because the applicant is in a state that provides access to public facilities (c) through W.V. Stat. §18-5G-12-a and low-cost leasing privileges (f) through W.V. Stat. §18-5G-12-b, p. e21.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses 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 application shows some strength for this priority by indicating that its mission specifically calls out expanding opportunities for at-risk students, p. e21. The application also shows strength in naming that the state entity prioritizes charter schools "with demonstrated experience serving at-risk students," p. e23.

Weaknesses:

The application fails to address how it will support subgrantees and charter schools to serve at-risk students and does not address any of the suggested activities in the priority. Further, it does not address how the charter schools it serves employ any of the activities listed in this priority. It does not go into detail enough to earn full credit for this priority.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2023 04:46 PM