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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/23/2023 01:22 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Heartland Lakes Community School (S282B230017)

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

		Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Quality of the Management Plan			
1. Management Plan		40	25
	Sub Total	40	25
Continuation			
Quality of the Continuation Plan			
1. Continuation Plan		20	14
	Sub Total	20	14
Selection Criteria			
Quality of Project Design			
1. Quality of Project Design		10	10
Need for Project			
1. Need for Project		30	30
	Sub Total	40	40
Priority Questions			
CPP			
Competitive Preference Priority			
1. CPP		5	4
	Sub Total	5	4
	Total	105	83

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Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - CSP Developers New Panel - 4: 84.282B

Reader #1: *******

Applicant: Heartland Lakes Community School (S282B230017)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. (1) Quality of the Charter School's Management Plan (up to 40 points).

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

1. (i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (up to 10 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

Strengths:

The management plan is generally adequate to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The applicant appropriately describes the governance of the proposed project, which is effectively listed as the board of directors that fittingly includes representation from a licensed teacher who is employed at the school, one parent or guardian of a student attending the school, and one community member who is not employed at the school and does not have a child attend the school (p. e-20). The responsibilities of the board are effectively listed as carrying out the school's mission and goals; evaluating the execution of charter contract goals and commitments; evaluating student achievement, post-secondary and workforce readiness, and student engagement and connection goals; establishing a teacher evaluation process; and providing professional development related to the individual's job responsibilities which will support that project objectives will be achieved on time and within budget (p. e-20). The applicant proposes to hire a start-up coordinator, executive director, community site director, operations manager, and office manager for the proposed project (p. e-30). The Board will hold the Director and their team responsible for achieving all project milestones to ensure the project is on schedule, on budget, and moving towards realizing the proposed goals (p. e-23). The applicant proposes a generally detailed timeline that includes several relevant activities to achieving the proposed objectives, a general timeline for completing the activities, and the personnel responsible (p. e-26-27). For example, the Director and Start-up Coordinator will purchase curriculum between March 2024 and June 2024.

Weaknesses:

The management plan is not fully adequate to achieve the proposed objectives on time and within budget. The project's Director will not be hired until the start of year two of the proposed project when services to students are to begin. This is generally problematic as all other personnel such as the Start-up Coordinator and the Community Site Director will be hired before the Director (p. e-27). For an increased likelihood of achieving project objectives on time and within budget, the leadership team should be complete so that collaborations on creating a feasible

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management plan can include the Director, especially since they are responsible for performing the mission of HLCS, include recruiting and hiring staff, recruiting students and families, and overseeing purchase of equipment, technology, supplies, and communication. (p. e-200). The applicant does not demonstrate the qualifications of its board members to ensure they have the skills to manage the proposed project for the first year of the grant. The staff who is assuming the position of board chair and management of the grant until a start-up coordinator is hired, does not seem to have the qualifications in project management as her expertise is listed as a mental health professional. A Restorative Practices/SEL Coordinator is proposed to be hired during year four of the proposed project which considerably delays these services to students who begin attending the school at the beginning of year two (p. e-24). Conflicting information regarding the project's leadership team is provided, and it is unclear who will have the responsibilities to lead the project. For example, on p. e-23, the applicant indicates that the school's leadership team will be composed of the Director, the Business Manager, and the Community School Site Coordinator. However, on p. e-30, the applicant indicates that key project personnel include the Board of Directors, a Volunteers of America field representative, and a Board Consultant (p. e-30). The management plan's timeline does not include milestones that would help ensure that the proposed objectives will be achieved on time and within budget. The activities are not described in sufficient detail. For example, the activity of purchasing school vans requires more detail to ensure it adequately supports the management of the proposed project. The timelines do not include activities such as collaboration efforts to ensure the effective management of the proposed project (p. e-26-27).

Reader's Score: 6

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

Strengths:

The project costs are mostly reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. The applicant is proposing a budget of for the five-year project (p. e-236). The applicant proposes to serve 85 students in grades Kindergarten through 6th grade in its first year and expand to serving 160 students in grades Kindergarten through 8th grade by its fifth year of operation (p. e-10). The proposed outcomes are effectively listed as the following: (1) HLCS will meet its enrollment goals for each year of the project, (2) HLCS students will demonstrate proficiency in state assessment testing in ELA and mathematics, (3) HLCS will create a learning community where families and students report feeling a sense of belonging, (4) HLCS will establish partnerships with local providers, nonprofits, and service agencies to implement the Community Schools Model and address the full needs of each community member, and (5) All HLCS instructional Staff will participate in yearly professional development (p. e-10).

Weaknesses:

The costs of the proposed project are not fully reasonable in relation to the potential significance. For example, the anticipated academic outcomes after five years of services are mostly lower than the current target area's achievement scores. For example, the reading proficiency percentage among target area elementary-aged students in 2021, was 55.7% while the math proficiency rate was 70.6%. The applicant anticipates that 60% of students will achieve proficiency in ELA by the end of Year 5 of the grant, and that 60% of students will achieve proficiency in mathematics by the end of Year 5 of the grant.

Reader's Score: 4

3. (iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(iv))

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Strengths:

The applicant indicates that it will hire the following full-time personnel which include the Start-up Coordinator, Executive Director, Community School Site Director, Operations Manager, Office Manager, Restorative Practices/Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Coordinator, and Grant Manager (p. e-22-26).

Weaknesses:

The time commitments of the proposed personnel are excessive in achieving the objectives of the proposed project. The proposed project lists only the Directors and Managers of the proposed project but does not include time commitments of teachers who will serve the students.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The applicant indicates that the key personnel for the proposed project are the Board of Directors, a Volunteers of America field representative, and a Board Consultant (p. e-30).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide qualifications including relevant training and experience for the project's key personnel. The applicant provides resumes for individuals who have experience teaching, but the applicant does not indicate if these individuals will serve as teachers in the proposed project or whether they will hold other responsibilities. The applicant provides a resume for the grant manager who is a mental health professional and does not have demonstrated experience in grant management. The applicant does not provide job descriptions for the key project personnel and only lists general tasks to be performed.

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates an adequate plan to maintain control over all CSP grant funds. Proposed controls appropriately include monthly reconciliation with expenditure reports, monthly disclosure to the Board of Directors, expenditures, authorized approval documentation on appropriate transactions, and employment of a system of checks and balances in processing financial transactions. Responsibility for the oversight of the school's operations will effectively include the Director and the Board of Directors. Additionally, each year an independent audit will be conducted of the financial affairs of Heartland Lakes Community School, including external grants to verify the accuracy of financial statements and internal controls (p. e-35).

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Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a list of questions to help determine if programmatic decisions are equitable and serve all students well. For example, the questions raised help to establish that programmatic decisions will not interfere with someone's opportunity to bravely live their truth, help students become wise stewards of the land, and ignite students' curiosity. In addition, the applicant reflects on programmatic decisions to ensure they do not have negative unintended outcomes for racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and other marginalized groups (p. e-36).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not demonstrate a plan to make all programmatic decisions related to the management of the proposed project. The applicant indicates that teachers are the engine and driving force behind the success of the HLCS community. In addition, the applicant proposes that teachers have agency in the design of the program but does not provide evidence that teachers are included in the programmatic decision-making of the proposed project (p. e-55-56).

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The applicant generally states that all grant activities will be executed by the Board, Start-Up Coordinator, Community School Site Coordinator, and Executive Director (p. e-37). All grant activities will be supervised by the Board. The Start-Up Coordinator will inform the board monthly on progress and deadlines at scheduled board meetings (p. e-37).

Weaknesses:

The applicant's plan to administer or supervise the administration of the grant lacks detail and practical application. For example, there is not sufficient evidence regarding the day-to-day management of the proposed project which would support the effective administration of the proposed project. Simply informing the board of directors monthly of project progress and deadlines is not adequate to administer or supervise the proposed project (p. e-37).

Reader's Score: 2

Continuation - Quality of the Continuation Plan

1. (2) Quality of the Continuation Plan (up to 20 points).

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

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Strengths:

The applicant indicates that it will be able to sustain operation of the proposed project as long as its charter will be renewed through the Volunteer of America in 2029 and per pupil funding from the Minnesota Department of Education continues. The applicant effectively estimates that its enrollment funds will cover the majority of operational costs of HLCS (p. e-38). In addition to these public funds, the Board plans to fund raise approximately each year (p. e-38).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not describe its fundraising activities which would support the continuation plan. The applicant does not indicate how other components such as capacity building through professional development will support its continuation plan.

Reader's Score:

14

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. (3) Quality of the Project Design (up to 10 points).

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

Reader's Score:

10

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a logic model that demonstrates a rationale for the proposed project. The rationale for the proposed project is to achieve short, mid, and long-term outcomes as a result of the proposed project services. The logic model lists inputs such as hiring a leadership team, which correspond to the outcomes of outperforming neighboring districts on state assessment test (p. e-88-89).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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

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Strengths:

The proposed objectives and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable (p. e-43-47). The applicant proposes several objectives that include meeting enrollment goals for each year of the project, demonstrating proficiency in state assessment testing in ELA and mathematics, creating a learning community where families and students report feeling a sense of belonging, establishing partnerships with local providers, nonprofits, and service agencies to implement the Community Schools Model and address the full needs of each community member, and all instructional Staff will participate in yearly professional development (p. e-10). The proposed project outcomes include holding monthly community events, training all school staff in a variety of relevant topics, purchasing supplies, equipment, curriculum, seeing academic growth in our students, retaining both staff and teachers, outperforming neighboring districts in state assessment tests, and establishing community partnerships to serve students and their families (p. e-47).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. (4) Need for Project (up to 30 points).

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

Reader's Score: 30

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant comprehensively demonstrates that traditional public schools do not empower students with the skills and knowledge they need to make choices that lead to positive change in themselves and their community (p. e-48). In addition, limited options for schools other than public schools exist with the nearest charter school being 40 miles away (p. e-48). The applicant appropriately proposed corresponding solutions to the problems identified which effectively include:

Academic Proficiency: Our Solution: Expeditionary Learning, Outdoor Education, Inclusive Learning Community Grant Aim #2: HLCS learners (staff and students) are given equitable access to high quality learning experiences and are able to build knowledge and skills to address the challenges that face them in a changing world (p. e-55). Belonging: Our Solution: Creating a positive school culture, Social Emotional Learning, Trauma-Sensitive Practices, Community Partnerships Grant Aim #1: The vision of HLCS is to create a safe and supportive community with a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment that is relevant, welcoming, and validating for all (p. e-55). Addressing needs outside of Academics (Mental Health, Exposure to Adversity, Poverty): Our Solution: Community School Model, Community Partnerships, Active Family and Community Partners, Collaborative. The HLCS community is a true community, where each member contributes strengths and finds support for their weaknesses. HLCS takes ownership of the larger community and invests in people by standing in the gap and meeting the needs of the whole person. This includes the development of sound and sustainable financial and business practices (p. e-55).

Non-Exclusionary Discipline: Our Solution: Restorative Practices, Positive School Culture, Social Emotional

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learning, Trauma-Sensitive Practices, Creating an Inclusive Learning Community Grant Aim #1: The vision of HLCS is to create a safe and supportive community with a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment that is relevant, welcoming, and validating for all (p. e-56)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 15

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

Strengths:

The applicant appropriately plans to implement the framework from the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL). This model has five competency areas including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. In addition to these five competency areas, CASEL promotes creating equitable learning environments and coordinating practices across the settings of classrooms, schools, families, and communities (p. e-72). The applicant effectively proposes to use a variety of curricula, tools, methods, and instructional techniques. Each one of these practices will support its mission to teach scholars how to bravely live their truth, to become wise stewards of the land and resources, and to ignite curiosity that will lead to positive changes in their school, their communities, their world, and themselves. HLCS believes scholars should be active participants in their educational journey instead of passive observers (p. e-69).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Priority Questions

CPP - Competitive Preference Priority

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority—Promoting High-Quality Educator- and Community-Centered Charter Schools to Support Underserved Students (up to 5 points).
 - (a) Under this priority, an applicant must propose to open a new charter school, or to replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that is developed and implemented—
 - (1) With meaningful and ongoing engagement with current or former teachers and other educators; and
 - (2) Using a community-centered approach that includes an assessment of community assets, informs the development
 - of the charter school, and includes the implementation of protocols and practices designed to ensure that the charter
 - school will use and interact with community assets on an ongoing basis to create and maintain strong community ties.
 - (b) In its application, an applicant must provide a high-quality plan that demonstrates how its proposed project would meet the requirements in paragraph (a) of this priority, accompanied

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by a timeline for key milestones that span the course of planning, development, and implementation of the charter school.

Strengths:

(a)(2) The applicant demonstrates that it is using a community-centered approach in the development and implementation of the proposed charter school. The applicant proposes to connect scholars and their families to community resources by using the Community School Model. The Community School Model is an evidenced-based strategy for creating excellent schools that partner with families and community organizations to provide well-rounded educational opportunities and support for scholars' success (Partnership for the Future of Learning, 2020). Community Schools use four key pillars that combine to create optimal conditions for learning: (1) integrated student support, (2) expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities, (3) active family and community engagement, and (4) collaborative leadership practices. In addition to these four pillars, Community Schools hire a Community School Site Coordinator - who works to assess the learning community's needs and to establish partnerships with community service organizations to meet those needs (p. e-17). (b)The applicant proposes a timeline that spans the course of planning, development, and implementation of the charter school. For example, the applicant effectively proposes to conduct a needs assessment to determine its target area needs and establish community partnerships (p. e-17).

Weaknesses:

(a)(1) The applicant does not demonstrate how current and former teachers and other educators were engaged in the development and implementation of the charter school. Instead the applicant indicates that the members of its founding board have both personal and professional experience working in and around public schools - with four out of the eight members being licensed teachers or administrators in the state of Minnesota and the other four members of the founding board having other supplemental roles in education including a birth to five provider, a licensed mental health clinician providing school-based mental health services, and a paraprofessional in an Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities elementary classroom (p. e-16).

Reader's Score: 4

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/23/2023 01:05 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Heartland Lakes Community School (S282B230017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	40	26
Sub Tota	I 40	26
Continuation		
Quality of the Continuation Plan		
1. Continuation Plan	20	15
Sub Tota	I 20	15
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	10	10
Need for Project		
1. Need for Project	30	30
Sub Tota	I 40	40
Priority Questions		
Priority Questions		
CPP		
Competitive Preference Priority 1. CPP	5	4
Sub Tota	I 5	4
Total	105	85

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Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - CSP Developers New Panel - 4: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Heartland Lakes Community School (S282B230017)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. (1) Quality of the Charter School's Management Plan (up to 40 points).

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 26

Sub

1. (i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (up to 10 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

Strengths:

- The proposal is detailed in clearly defined roles and responsibilities in both the narrative of the timeline and the actual table (page, e19-28).
- The timeline to hire specific personnel including the start-up coordinator and community school site coordinator (page, e26) is consistent with expectations.

Weaknesses:

- No evidence of project milestones.
- No evidence of teachers projected for year one.
- The outputs in the logic model lacks sufficient details to demonstrate an alignment to the outcomes (page e.88).

Reader's Score: 6

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

Strengths:

- The budget narrative detailed in pages e200-229, provides a reasonable ask and plan in relation to the objectives, design, and proposed impact of the school.
- The small progression from year to year as the school grows demonstrates an awareness of need and costs (page, e204-229).

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Weaknesses:

• While the applicant states that Professional Development is a goal for teachers, there is no evidence of a goal for delivery of the training. The applicant listed salaries for professional development, but not costs for delivery (page e170-8).

Reader's Score: 4

3. (iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(iv))

Strengths:

- The applicant indicates in detail the hiring of key staff including the site coordinator, start-up coordinator, and executive director (page, e22-23) and provides detail about their responsibilities and justifications for each.
- The applicant, by proposing to hire the executive director in May of 2024, has given thought to the needs and time of effective school start-up and best practices (page, e22).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide the time commitment for the key personnel (page, e22-23).

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

• The selected site-coordinator and start-up coordinator represent the relevant background and experience for the task (page, e.179-191), including early childhood development, project management, and community development.

Weaknesses:

- The applicant does not provide qualifications for relevant trainings and experiences.
- The applicant does not distinguish between who are teachers and who are board members.
- There is no evidence of job descriptions for the critical key personnel.

(pages, e.179-191)

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

- The applicant has provided detail (page, e.35-36) related to the control and management of the CSP grant funds, including monthly reports and oversight by their authorizer.
- The applicant references the state standards and fiscal management obligations in being fiscally compliant (page, e.36).

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Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses observed.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

- The applicant indicates that they will make all programmatic decisions (page, e.36).
- The applicant also details the six questions that will be asked at each decision point to demonstrate the process by which they will make decisions (page, e.36-37).

Weaknesses:

• The applicant does not provide a detailed plan to ensure the adequacy of programmatic decision making (page, e36-37).

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

• The applicant details on page e37 that "All grant activities will be executed by the Board, Start-Up Coordinator, Community School Site Coordinator, and Executive Director (beginning May, 2024)." The tasks will be executed by the key personnel and within the timelines noted. The applicant also addresses supervision by the Board, the Start-up Coordinator, and the VOA-MN duties (page, e37).

Weaknesses:

• There is evidence of duplication with key tasks including the operations manager, the board, and the site coordinator (e24, e26, and e37).

Reader's Score: 3

Continuation - Quality of the Continuation Plan

1. (2) Quality of the Continuation Plan (up to 20 points).

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

Strengths:

- The applicant has made an ask for CSP funds that seems reasonable and consistent for the length of the grant period to support the eventual full reliance on per-pupil funding as the school matures to growth (page e.37).
- The applicant also demonstrates a commitment by the board to support start-up with a commitment of each year (page e38).
- The board has also expressed the goal of engaging the listed partners and partnerships in on-going fundraising (page e38).

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Weaknesses:

- The applicant does not provide a future breakdown into how per pupil funding will sustain the school (page, e38).
- The applicant does not detail its fundraising plan to provide evidence how it will supplement the resources (page, e38).

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. (3) Quality of the Project Design (up to 10 points).

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

Reader's Score:

10

Sub

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

Strengths:

- The applicant has illustrated throughout the application a need and commitment for and to the school that is specifically created with the community need in mind. Through the use of interest surveys and a needs assessment, the applicant is aligning objectives to need (page, e39).
- The applicant highlights on page(s) e39-40, the mirroring between the gaps in poverty and joblessness with what the proposed school will do to close those gaps.
- On pages e41-42, the applicant offers some supportive strengths of the community and how they will tap into those assets.

Weaknesses:

There are no observable weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

- The applicant has provided 4 specific objectives with 2 or more performance measures each (page, e44).
- These objectives and consequent performance measures are specific, measurable, attainable, relative, and time-bound (page, e44-47).
- The applicant demonstrates making a substantial investment in people, community development, the

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delivery of high-quality learning experiences, ensuring security and support, and empowering teachers. (page, e44-47).

Weaknesses:

There are no observable weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. (4) Need for Project (up to 30 points).

30

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

Reader's Score:

Sub

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

Strengths:

- The applicant details outcome data in 3 key areas: state assessment, graduation rates, and drop-out rates (page, e47-52) that paints a striking need.
- The applicant also illustrates a lack of school options, page e48).
- The applicant details demographic data highlighting the poverty level and other insecurity areas that are a result of the systemic issues (page, e48).
- On page e49, the applicant highlights the two studies conducted by community organizations that further demonstrate the deep need as it aligns to their proposed school.

Weaknesses:

There are no observable weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 15

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

Strengths:

- Beginning on page e55, the applicant identifies the need as academic proficiency, belonging, beyond academic needs, and non-exclusionary discipline with detailed alignment to how the school will address these needs.
- The applicant provides evidence of appropriately licensed staff to meet the needs of specific groups of students identified in the application.
- The applicant also lists the corresponding grant aims that align to each of those needs (page, e54-55).

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Weaknesses:

There are no observable weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 15

Priority Questions

CPP - Competitive Preference Priority

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority—Promoting High-Quality Educator- and Community-Centered Charter Schools to Support Underserved Students (up to 5 points).
 - (a) Under this priority, an applicant must propose to open a new charter school, or to replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that is developed and implemented—
 - (1) With meaningful and ongoing engagement with current or former teachers and other educators; and
 - (2) Using a community-centered approach that includes an assessment of community assets, informs the development

of the charter school, and includes the implementation of protocols and practices designed to ensure that the charter

school will use and interact with community assets on an ongoing basis to create and maintain strong community ties.

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

Strengths:

- The founding board's composition extends beyond traditional teaching roles. It includes individuals with diverse roles in education, such as a birth-to-five provider, a licensed mental health clinician providing school-based mental health services, and a paraprofessional in an Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities elementary classroom. This diversity in roles brings a broad perspective to the table and ensures that the school's educational approach is well-rounded and inclusive (page, e16).
- The school's engagement with educators is not limited to traditional classroom teachers. It extends to mental health professionals and early childhood educators, indicating a holistic approach to education that takes into account the various needs of students (page, e16).
- The school's plan is rooted in evidence-based strategies, as indicated by references to research and studies supporting the effectiveness of the Community Schools model. The comprehensive review of over 140 studies demonstrates a commitment to using proven methods to benefit scholars and improve school outcomes (page, e16-18).
- The plan states that the Community Schools model is a core element of an equity strategy. This demonstrates the school's dedication to addressing systemic barriers that have historically limited opportunities for scholars and families, especially those based on race and class. This aligns with a critical priority in education today, making it a strong approach for ensuring equal access and opportunities for all students.
- The school's plan demonstrates a timeline for hiring a Community School Site Coordinator, with a set deadline of January 1, 2024 (page, e19).

Weaknesses:

There is not sufficient evidence concerning how the teachers are engaged in the application process (page e16).

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Reader's Score: 4

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/23/2023 01:05 PM

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/22/2023 01:27 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Heartland Lakes Community School (S282B230017)

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

		Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions			
Selection Criteria			
Quality of the Management Plan			
1. Management Plan		40	25
	Sub Total	40	25
Continuation			
Quality of the Continuation Plan			
1. Continuation Plan		20	15
	Sub Total	20	15
Selection Criteria			
Quality of Project Design			
1. Quality of Project Design		10	10
Need for Project			
1. Need for Project		30	30
	Sub Total	40	40
Priority Questions			
CPP			
Competitive Preference Priority			
1. CPP		5	4
	Sub Total	5	4
	Total	105	84

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Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - CSP Developers New Panel - 4: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Heartland Lakes Community School (S282B230017)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. (1) Quality of the Charter School's Management Plan (up to 40 points).

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 25

Sub

1. (i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (up to 10 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

Strengths:

The applicant provides a Logic Model that includes some of the project's tasks with related short-, mid- and long-term outcomes. (p. e88)

The applicant states that the board will hire a Start-Up Coordinator by November 1, 2023 to oversee fiscal management and the pre-operational activities for the school funded by grant funds until a Business Manager is hired. (pgs. e22; e25)

The chart on pgs. e26-29 indicates an Operations Manager role with responsibilities including the following: oversight of equipment and technology (hardware and software), reporting for state agencies, and coordination of contracted services. (p. e200)

The Board Chair will serve as the Project Manager until the Start-Up Coordinator is hired. (p. e25)

The applicant indicates that the leadership team includes the Executive Director, Business Manager and Community School Site Coordinator. (p. e23) The board will hire the Executive Director in May 2024. This role will oversee academic instruction, all aspects of staffing, financial planning, operational and strategic planning. (pgs. E22-e33) The Community School Site Coordinator will supervise recruitment, management, and the coordination of community partners. (p. e23)

The applicant indicates that the business management tasks will be contracted out during the pre-operational stage for payroll, HR, financial accounting, auditing and the automated reporting student system. (p. e24)

The Office Manager will be hired in July 2024 with responsibilities related to administrative office tasks, student information systems, enrollment and interfacing with parents and community members. (p. e24)

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The chart on pgs. e26-29 provides the project tasks, with start/end dates and the person responsible for completion of the task. For example, the Start-Up Coordinator in collaboration with the Board will begin the hiring process for the Community School Site Coordinator in November 2023 with the anticipated completion of the process before January 2024. (p. e26)

Weaknesses:

There is no evidence of project milestones provided by the applicant. (pgs. e26-29)

The applicant indicates that the Business Manager role is a member of the leadership team yet the budget indicates that this is a contracted position. (pg. e198)

There is no evidence of the number of teachers needed to support the intended enrollment for Year One. (pgs. e135; e200-229)

The Logic Model includes some tasks that lack alignment with the project goals. (p. e88) For example, professional development is a key component for the teachers to gain strategies in areas including SEL and Differentiated Instruction.

There is indication of staff training as an activity but lacks evidence in the outputs. Moreover, the outcomes do not quantify the timeframe. For example, there is no evidence to indicate that the short-term outcomes apply to Year 1 or Year 2 of the project timeline.

There is no evidence of strategies to articulate the boundaries that define the scope for each of the noted key personnel. (pgs. e22-e33)

Reader's Score: 6

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

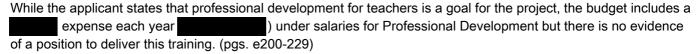
Strengths:

The applicant substantiates the relevance of hiring the Start-Up Coordinator during the pre-operation phase. (p. e29) For example, this role oversees the pre-operation tasks and activities.

Based upon the project rationale and the determined needs to meet the project goals and objectives, the budget indicates reasonable costs for salaries/benefits, supplies, equipment, and technology expenditures. (pgs. e200-229)

The budget narrative indicates reasonable salaries and benefits for the following positions: Start-Up Coordinator, Executive Director, Operations Manager, Community School Site Coordinator, SEL Coordinator, Teachers (Regular, Specialty, ELL), SPED teachers, and SPED paraprofessionals. (p. e198)

Weaknesses:



The budget indicates teacher salaries, but there is no evidence for the number of teachers participating in the

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professional development activities. There is evidence of four credentialed individuals that are included in the proposal. (p. e112)

Reader's Score: 4

3. (iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project (up to 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(iv))

Strengths:

The applicant states the	e time commitment for key personnel as follows:	Executive Director @	for Year 2
then decrease to	for the remaining years; Office Manager @	for Year 4; Community	School Site
Coordinator @	for Year 4. (pgs. e200-229)		

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide the time commitment for the Operations Manager, Start-Up Coordinator, SEL Coordinator, or teachers and paraprofessionals. (pgs. E21-25; e30)

There is no evidence of time commitment in FTE terms for any project personnel during Year 1 of the project. (pgs. E200-229)

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides sufficient expertise, professional skills, and appropriate certification to substantiate the educator roles. (pgs. e30-34) For example, the applicant provides evidence of the appropriate teacher certification for the four teachers included in the proposal.

Weaknesses:

There is no evidence of a job description providing the professional skills and qualifications to fulfill the roles of Start-Up Coordinator, Community School Site Coordinator, Executive Director, Operations Manager, or SEL Coordinator. (p. e30)

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

The applicant includes that the Start-Up Coordinator will include a monthly report to the Board indicating the financial standing of the project, progress of the grant funded activities, student enrollment and benchmark measurement. (p. e25)

The applicant states that monthly reconciliation will occur with expenditure reports, as well as a system of checks and balances that will be supervised by the Executive Director and the Board of Directors. (p. e35)

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An internal audit will be conducted to examine all grant funding sources. (p. e35)

The charter authorizer will conduct an evaluation of the school's fiscal performance with findings compiled in a report. (p. e36)

The applicant states that the financial analyst will provide oversight of CSP grant reporting and compliance. (p. e65)

Weaknesses:

While there are tasks noted to provide oversight of the CSP grant funds, there is no clear evidence of the key role that is responsible for the big picture and/or the strategies for key personnel to contribute to the oversight. (pgs. e25; e35-36; e65)

Reader's Score: 4

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

Strengths:

The Board of Directors is comprised of five non-related members, one certificated educator, one parent, and one community member (also a parent) to provide oversight of school operations, budget maintenance, curriculum, personnel, and operations. (p. e20)

The applicant states that the role of the Board is to develop policies related to school operations, and the School Executive Director will provide oversight of the day-to-day school operations. (p. e20)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide a plan with strategies to ensure an adequate process is in place for programmatic decision-making. (pgs. e36-37)

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The Operations Manager and Executive Director will collaborate to provide oversight of managing grants and compliance tasks. (p. e24)

The applicant states that the Board will supervise all grant management and grants related activities. (p. e26; e37)

All grant activities will be executed by the Board, Start-Up Coordinator, Community School Site Coordinator and Executive Director. (p. e37)

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Weaknesses:

There is evidence of duplication of efforts with the tasks of grant administration and oversight of the grant-funded responsibilities. (pgs. e24; 26) For example, the applicant states that grant management will be provided by the Operations Manager, Executive Director, Board, Start-Up Coordinator and Community School Site Coordinator rather than one key role serving as the responsible point of contact. (pgs. e24; e26; e37)

Reader's Score: 3

Continuation - Quality of the Continuation Plan

1. (2) Quality of the Continuation Plan (up to 20 points).

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

Strengths:

The applicant anticipates that increased enrollment, per pupil funding from the Department of Education, and stable financial planning will allow for a smooth transition once grant funds have been exhausted. Moreover, fundraising strategies will be implemented to raise each year to supplement state funding. (pgs. e38-39)

The applicant states that future sustainable strategies for continuation of the project include future fundraising plans to solicit community monetary donations, as well as volunteer hours, marketing materials provided through private donors, and a functioning website for increased visibility to solicit support to sustain programmatic components. (p. e64)

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide a detailed breakdown of how future funds acquired through state funding allocations or fundraising efforts will sustain expenditures such as staffing, technology, and expenses related to the vehicle purchases beyond the life of the grant funds. (pgs. 38-39)

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. (3) Quality of the Project Design (up to 10 points).

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

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Reader's Score:

Sub

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

Strengths:

10

The applicant provides evidence regarding the population of the surrounding communities experiencing poverty and a lack of educational choices to sufficiently meet student needs. (p. e39)

The applicant reports that a community needs assessment of the surrounding communities indicates significant mental health needs and adverse childhood experiences, both of which are currently not adequately being met. (p. e39).

The applicant establishes alignment with the needs identified within the community with the design of the mission to include a community school model, social emotional learning, and restorative practices in addition to instructional strategies and curricula to meet student needs. (p. e43).

Weaknesses:

There are no identified weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

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

Strengths:

The applicant promotes the mission of an expeditionary school which is to emphasize outdoor learning through the use of structured and unstructured classroom space. (pgs. e62-63)

The applicant states the following project objectives: 1. meet annual student enrollment goal, students will achieve proficiency in Math and ELA per state assessment results, 2. develop a learning community that engages both students and families, 3. establish key partnerships with local organizations to meet the needs of the community, and 4. provide professional development for teachers. (p. e10)

The applicant includes the following outcomes for the objectives: holding monthly events, teacher training in a variety of topics, acquire operational supplies (equipment, curriculum), student achievement, staff retention, and community partnerships. (p. e10)

Weaknesses:

There are no identified weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. (4) Need for Project (up to 30 points).

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

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Reader's Score:

30

Sub

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

Strengths:

The applicant states that the traditional public school programs do not provide empowerment with skills necessary for students to navigate their futures. (p. e48)

The area does not provide adequate academic options for students other than traveling to the closest traditional public schools, 40 miles from the community or homeschooling which is a significant challenge for families experiencing poverty. (p. e48)

The applicant provides evidence of the project design including alignment between the reported needs of the community (mental health, poverty) and increased academics for students (staff training in SEL strategies, Differentiated instruction). (p. e49)

The applicant has stated a plan to establish a partnership with the White Earth Nation tribal community to extend enrollment opportunities for students within the community. (p. e241)

The applicant states that key curricula will be implemented to meet the identified needs of students. (pgs. e76-77; e134) For example, the expeditionary curriculum will provide strategies for students to learn through investigation and self-reflection, the curriculum developed by EL Education provides modules that integrate ELA, Social Studies and Science common core standards and Zearn Math curriculum that provides lessons to build math foundations to be integrated with expeditionary learning.

The applicant states that the use of outdoor classrooms is a strategy that will be used to maintain student engagement during class instruction and classrooms will incorporate multi-age learning to foster a positive peer learning environment. (p. e78-79)

Weaknesses:

There are no identified weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 15

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides evidence of community partnerships established to meet the needs of the community members experiencing poverty and/or substance abuse as well as students living with adverse childhood experiences. (p. e49)

The applicant states that the Community Site School Coordinator position will be the key person to engage and

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sustain partnerships with non-profit organizations and service organizations to meet the needs of families and surrounding community members. (p. e18; e23)

The applicant provides evidence of addressing the need for families to obtain transportation for students to and from school. For example, one task of the proposed transportation plan includes establishing a partnership with the neighboring public school district to add stops to the existing bus routes. (p. e41)

The applicant provides evidence of the identification of organizations that provide services related to the identified needs of the community. (p. e130) For example, Lake Country Associates mental health clinic and Stellher Human Services mental health agency.

The applicant provides evidence that appropriately credentialed staff will be provided through contracted services to meet the academic needs of enrolled EL and Special Education students. (pgs. e26; e57; e61)

Weaknesses:

There are no identified weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 15

Priority Questions

CPP - Competitive Preference Priority

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority—Promoting High-Quality Educator- and Community-Centered Charter Schools to Support Underserved Students (up to 5 points).
 - (a) Under this priority, an applicant must propose to open a new charter school, or to replicate or expand a high-quality charter school, that is developed and implemented—
 - (1) With meaningful and ongoing engagement with current or former teachers and other educators; and
 - (2) Using a community-centered approach that includes an assessment of community assets, informs the development
 - of the charter school, and includes the implementation of protocols and practices designed to ensure that the charter
 - school will use and interact with community assets on an ongoing basis to create and maintain strong community ties.
 - (b) In its application, an applicant must provide a high-quality plan that demonstrates how its proposed project would meet the requirements in paragraph (a) of this priority, accompanied by a timeline for key milestones that span the course of planning, development, and implementation of the charter school.

Strengths:

The applicant states that four of the eight founding members are certificated teachers and administrators and engaged in the academic-related and instructional tasks in the project. (p. e16)

The applicant plans to create a Community School Coordinator position with the responsibility of evaluating the needs of the community as well as coordinating school/community partnerships and monthly community events. (p. e18; e23)

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The applicant states that a community assessment will be completed prior to October 1, 2024. (p. e19)

The applicant is hiring a Restorative Practices SEL Coordinator to coordinate professional development and provide support to teachers to ensure alignment with Restorative and SEL best practices. (p. e25)

The applicant anticipates establishing three community partnerships in addition to a Neighborhood Advisory Group during the first year of the project, a strategy that the applicant will use to invite collaborative leadership (pgs. e19; e24)

The applicant provides a table of grant activities that includes start and end dates and the person responsible for the completion of tasks related to engaging educators and implementing a community centered approach. (pgs. e26-29) For example, tasks include the following: organize community events, create a professional development plan for teachers, plan community informational meetings, and conduct a community needs assessment.

The applicant provides evidence of professional development to all educators in the following areas: the natural environment, integrating the outdoors into curriculum, creating an inclusive classroom culture, the significance of Adverse Childhood Experiences and learning, understanding the science of reading/structured literacy, restorative practices, adverse childhood experiences, diversity, equity & inclusion, trauma informed approaches, Fast Bridge for success in screening students, differentiated learning and the Expeditionary Learning Institute. (pgs. e29-30; e47; e200)

Weaknesses:

While the applicant states that half of the founding members are educators and/or administrators, the applicant does not address how teachers are engaged or indicate the types of engagement offered to teachers outside of the stated professional development. (p. e16)

While the applicant intends to create a Community School Site Coordinator position as a project component, there is no evidence of an assessment to determine the needs of the community prior to implementing the project. The applicant states that the needs of the community are unknown but anticipates the ability to establish a system to both identify and meet the needs of the community. (p. e18)

There is no evidence of protocols and practices designed to ensure that the charter school will use and interact with community assets on an ongoing basis. (pgs. e16-18)

The applicant does not provide evidence of milestones that span the course of planning, development, and implementation of the charter school. (pgs. e26-29)

Reader's Score: 4

Status: Submitted

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