

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/01/2023 03:29 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: BELIEVE STL Academy (S282E230011)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	14
<b>Sub Total</b>	20	14
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	35	32
<b>Sub Total</b>	35	32
<b>Continuation</b>		
<b>Quality of the Continuation Plan</b>		
1. Continuation Plan	10	10
<b>Sub Total</b>	10	10
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	10	9
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need for Project	25	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	35	34
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
1. CPP	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	5	5
<b>Total</b>	105	95

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - CSP Developers Replication Panel - 2: 84.282E

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

Applicant: BELIEVE STL Academy (S282E230011)

## Questions

### Quality of the Eligible Applicant - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

#### 1. (1) Quality of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 points).

In determining the quality of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 14

#### Sub

1. (i) The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, postsecondary enrollment and persistence rates, including in college or career training programs, employment rates, earnings and other academic outcomes) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students served by other public schools in the State (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)

#### Strengths:

The applicant outlines current student success at the original campus noting six graduates with post-secondary plans, three juniors with associate degrees, and an estimated 40% of founding students will earn an associate by December 2023 (pg. e25). Additionally, the applicant describes other academic performance such as SAT growth, AP pass rates, dual enrollment, and WIDA growth of +1 compared to -0.3 statewide average growth (pg. e26).

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant lacks data on student attendance, retention rates, high school graduation rates, postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and other metrics (pg. e25-26).

Reader's Score: 3

2. (ii) The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)

#### Strengths:

The applicant notes the operation of one high school and states their local funders and authorizer have requested expansion/replication (pg. e26).

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant states "no BSI charter schools have closed," it is unclear whether they have been voluntarily disaffiliated (pg. e26).

**Reader's Score: 4**

3. (iii) **The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant states they have had no significant issues or problems with financial or operational management. Additionally, they report exceeding standards on financial matters, consistently clean audits, and meeting all academic metrics (pg. e26).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not provide any measured data to support the claims of exceeding standards on financials, audits, or academic metrics nor financial or operational audits or inspections (pg. e26).

**Reader's Score: 4**

4. (iv) **The extent to which the schools operated or managed by the applicant demonstrate strong results on measurable outcomes in non-academic areas such as, but not limited to, parent satisfaction, school climate, student mental health, civic engagement, and crime prevention and reduction (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a convincing description of their culture including the Level Up System (LUS), designed to prepare students for life after college. In addition, the applicant provides data supporting their culture including suspension rate, attendance rate, teacher retention, and parent satisfaction (pg. e28).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not provide measures on mental health and crime prevention (pg. e28).

**Reader's Score: 3**

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

1. (2) **Quality of the Charter School's Management Plan (up to 35 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: 32

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 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

**Strengths:**

The applicant thoroughly describes their management relationship with the CMO and provides examples of split responsibilities such as the school's responsibility for meeting goals related to student performance, budget tracking, oversight, and legal compliance (pg. e28-29). The applicant provides a table organizing roles and responsibilities in Years 1 and 2, noting roles will change as enrollment increases (pg. e30). The applicant provides a narrative overview of the timeline and key milestones for the new school authorization (pg. e30). In addition, the applicant provides a detailed list of key milestones and activities in Appendix G (pg. e115-118).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 5

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 provides a compelling rationale for costs including the replication will result in 400 high-quality seats by 2027 and the cost per seat estimated at \$ [REDACTED] with data from other authorized charters with CSP grants (pg. e22).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant budgets \$ [REDACTED] for kitchen equipment in Year 1, however, the rationale for the need is unclear since the school is already serving students (pg. e121).

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 has budgeted a full-time Project Director for the first year of the grant period with a time reduction as the school and leadership team grows. In addition, they allocate percent time and effort for the Project Director, Dean of Partnerships, Assistant Dean of Partnerships, Dean of Operations, and Community Engagement and Enrollment Manager. The applicant also notes a three-person network team to assist in leading and stewarding funds (pg. e35).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant is unclear on the roles and responsibilities of the provided key personnel, it is difficult to measure the extent of appropriateness without this information (pg. e34-35).

Reader's Score: 4

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

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides data on returning staff rate of 98% compared to an average of 80% locally amidst the pandemic (pg. e35). The applicant provides relevant education and experience including resumes (in Appendix B) for all leadership roles (pg. e37). Additionally, the applicant provides extensive information on board members and their expertise (pg. e37-38).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant states a current contract with Joule Growth Partners (JGP) and will expand this contract to include CSP compliance upon award (pg. e38). The applicant states adherence to accounting guidelines of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as well a thorough description of all other accounting practices and compliance standards (pg. e38).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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 presents various types of decision-making practices including iterative processes, data-driven, and start-stop continue analysis. The applicant also notes including community, teacher, and student voices as well as using Ed Reports to assess the quality of curriculum (pg. e39-40).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant lacks information regarding who will make programmatic decisions or the decision-making hierarchy for the program (pg. e39-40).

**Reader's Score: 4**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant discusses various methods and processes for the administration of the grant, including utilizing Joule Growth Partners (JGP) to track expenditures, with the Program Officer approving expenditures, and the Project Director serving as a bridge between the school and program officer, as well as a list of tasks related to administration and oversight by the Project Director (pg. e40).

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Continuation - Quality of the Continuation Plan**

**1. (3) Quality of the Continuation Plan (up to 10 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 states [REDACTED] of total project costs are start-up costs and details additional funding already secured such as increased state funding and philanthropic revenue at approximately \$ [REDACTED] (pg. e41).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**1. (4) 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: 9**

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 thoroughly details their theory of change and educational programming model to demonstrate the quality of the school program. The applicant's logic model includes the following components: village model, financial literacy, Montessori, purpose pathways, dual enrollment, mental health, and gifted and talented (pg. e42). The rationale of educational programming and school replication provided supports the need presented by the applicant. Additionally, the applicant provides a draft course sequence and education partnership with local institutions of higher education (pg. e45).

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

The rationale demonstrated is overly ambitious and thus, may be difficult to execute (pg. e42-48).

**Reader's Score: 4**

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 provides a logic model with inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes which includes SMART goals and objectives (pg. e50). The provided objectives and goals are appropriate and realistic for the launch of a new school.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Need for Project**

1. (5) Need for Project (up to 25 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: 25**

**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 thoroughly and convincingly describes the local municipality and demographics demonstrating racial inequities, poverty, food insecurity, and lack of educational opportunities (pg. e53). Additionally, enrollment is supported through population analysis. The applicant outlines data on nearby schools including traditional and charter with a focus on the declining traditional public school (pg. e54-58). The applicant also cites academic performance data of neighboring schools demonstrating a need for expanded high-quality education (pg. e60).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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 10 points). (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(ii))



**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The applicant cites the need expressed by civic leaders in St. Louis, as well as, their partnership with The Opportunity Trust to meet these needs (pg. e62). The applicant provides the identified need, approach, and results (pg. e62). The applicant also narrates other considerations such as location, transportation, and accessibility as well as student performance indicators (pg. e63-64).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 provides a comprehensive description of meaningful and ongoing engagement with community members including students, educators, families, and other community members which includes methods and timeframes for feedback as well as metrics and goals for response rates (pg. e13-14). The applicant details prior community engagement informing the design and launch of the replicated school and ways in which community partners will contribute to the school (pg. e15-16). The applicant also outlines the specific partnerships with letters of support and details of the partnerships from Goldfarb, BJC Healthcare, St. Louis Community College, Harris-Stowe, and Next Prep (pg. e16-25).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: BELIEVE STL Academy (S282E230011)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	12
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	35	31
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Continuation</b>		
<b>Quality of the Continuation Plan</b>		
1. Continuation Plan	10	10
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	10	10
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need for Project	25	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
1. CPP	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>93</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - CSP Developers Replication Panel - 2: 84.282E

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

Applicant: BELIEVE STL Academy (S282E230011)

## Questions

### Quality of the Eligible Applicant - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

#### 1. (1) Quality of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 points).

In determining the quality of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 12

#### Sub

1. (i) The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, postsecondary enrollment and persistence rates, including in college or career training programs, employment rates, earnings and other academic outcomes) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students served by other public schools in the State (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)

#### Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates promising academic achievement results through a year-over-year SAT growth for its students in grades 9-11 (e26).

#### Weaknesses:

While achieving laudable outcomes for its six graduates so far and promising academic achievement, the applicant's first charter school in Indianapolis is still in a heavy growth phase. Student retention is unclear, as well as high school graduation, and other key metrics demonstrating success.

Reader's Score: 3

2. (ii) The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)

#### Strengths:

As the Believe model is in its third year overall of operation on its first charter, it has not had its charter revoked and no schools have closed. This meets the requirement of this sub-criterion in part (e26).

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

It is not clear whether any schools have ever disaffiliated with the applicant, as that was not expressly addressed.

**Reader's Score: 4**

3. (iii) **The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant details how its finances and operations have thus far had a strong financial position and no operational mismanagement (e26-27).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant states that it has consistently clean audits but has not provided an audit in its application, nor has it shared the budget for its current operation. As a result, the applicant has provided insufficient evidence of a strong financial position.

**Reader's Score: 3**

4. (iv) **The extent to which the schools operated or managed by the applicant demonstrate strong results on measurable outcomes in non-academic areas such as, but not limited to, parent satisfaction, school climate, student mental health, civic engagement, and crime prevention and reduction (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)**

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly describes its high scores on parent satisfaction survey (POSSIP Survey) and strong teacher retention and student attendance rates in the early years of its school, demonstrating a positive culture and climate in the school (e27).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant has not provided any information about non-academic supports for students except for the creation of goals and milestones; for example, it has not identified ways that it might be connecting its students to resources or providing any wraparound services for students who may need them. While the applicant describes its Level Up System (LUS), which it will use to build its own structured school culture, it is still in development and does not yet provide its results. As culture can be attempted to be replicated, it does not logically follow that a positive culture in its Indianapolis campus will translate to one in a replicated St. Louis campus.

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

1. (2) **Quality of the Charter School's Management Plan (up to 35 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: 31

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 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

**Strengths:**

The applicant has provided a robust project plan for the expansion proposal that provides many necessary steps and milestones to accomplish the project tasks (e113-117). The applicant has also provided major activities and milestones across various workstreams to be repeated cyclically depending on the year and quarter.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

Reader's Score: 5

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 bulk of the costs for personnel and their benefits, which shift year over year due to changing intensity of the roles of startup, appear reasonable. The applicant provided a strong description of roles and costs aligned to the life of the proposed project, where the Dean of Partnerships and Project Director roles take on less of the funding as the program is stood up (e120). The applicant suggests that it is achieving a high-quality school through this grant at a cost of ~\$ [REDACTED] per enrolled student (e34), which, if multiplied, matches the overall grant funding request of \$ [REDACTED] over the 5 years of the grant (e123).

**Weaknesses:**

There is a lack of clarity as to the need for food service costs, as those would normally be spent with charter funds. It is also unclear about what purpose bike desks and treadmills will serve; they are mentioned only in the budget but the applicant has not provided a rationale as to why. (e121-122)

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 identifies various percentages of time for each of the key project personnel, but it does not seem to be allocated based on any standards or task (e35).

**Weaknesses:**

It is unclear what the contours of the project are based on the time commitments identified for the proposed project. For example, if the objective is to start up via replication a successful Indianapolis charter model in St. Louis, then it is unclear why the Assistant Dean of Partnerships is spending only [REDACTED] of their time on the project; it seems that all of the Assistant Dean's time should be spent on performing their role, which is a component of the project. Same with all of the personnel. In other words, based on the application, the budget, and the milestones identified, it is difficult to ascertain where the proposed project requiring this grant ends and where continued operation of a

**Sub**

charter school begins.

**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:**

Among the identified key project personnel, the executive director of the charter network (also serving as community engagement manager for this proposed project) and the project director each have very strong backgrounds leading successful charter school programming, including at Believe (e35-36). These experience directly bear on their relevant training and experience to make this project successful. Similarly, the proposed Director of Partnerships has both a relationship with the community being served and strong experience with students and instructional leadership at a Believe charter school (e36-37).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant identifies a robust plan with an external accountant, audits, records maintenance, and an understanding of the federal and state guidelines regarding funding administration, as well as data retention, funding reconciliation, and security, to provide a convincing explanation of its plan to maintain control over funding (e38).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**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 describes a community and stakeholder data-driven decision-making process (e39); coupled with the memorandum of understanding that clearly identifies decision-making responsibilities of central vs. local autonomies, the applicant presents an adequate plan to make all programmatic decisions.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant has not differentiated its general decision-making process for operating the school with decision-making with respect to the proposed grant project. (e39-40).

**Reader's Score: 4**

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

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The applicant details a sound plan that includes using an external accounting firm to prepare required documentation for drawdowns when necessary and interacting with the federal system (e40). In addition, the applicant clearly understands the activities required for a project director regarding tracking completion and providing performance reports, attending required meetings, and coordinating any required documentation (e40).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Continuation - Quality of the Continuation Plan**

**1. (3) Quality of the Continuation Plan (up to 10 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 convincingly describes that the proposed project is primarily for startup of a school that will be able to continue operating on per-pupil state funding, which is set to increase, thus likely self-sustaining once in operation. As a one-time cost, much of the need for a continuation plan is obviated (e40). In addition, the applicant has identified over [REDACTED] in philanthropic revenue during its initial years of operation.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**1. (4) 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))**



**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The applicant's theory of change is comprehensive and boils down to thinking about the facets of what particular students need to be successful and providing it to them (e41-42). Assuming it is well executed, it is evident that it will cause students to succeed. The logic model provides a thorough list of facets needed to successfully open a school, and has outcome goals that start with the success of the project and continue with success of the school overall. (e50).

**Weaknesses:**

The rationale is overly ambitious. The intentions are all good but create a question of execution due to their multifaceted complexity.

**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 clearly identified short-term, mid-term, and long-term measurable goals based on particular achievements of the program (e.g., enrollment targets, establishing curriculum), and then student academic and retention achievements. The goals are quantified and, if achieved, would clearly demonstrate a successful program (e50).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Need for Project**

**1. (5) Need for Project (up to 25 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: 25**

**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 identifies a significant need for high quality programming in St. Louis, which has a poverty rate that far exceeds the state of Missouri and educational outcomes in terms of graduation and dropout that lag substantially behind the rest of Missouri (e54-55). The applicant also details every high school in St. Louis, demonstrating a disparity where some provide highly intimate, personalized learning environments and produce success, where, on the other hand, a vast majority do not provide strong outcomes for their students (e59-60). Thus, there is a significant problem that would be addressed by the proposed project.

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**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 10 points). (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(ii))**

**Strengths:**

As a charter school intending to provide individualized, culturally responsive services and instruction to students in need, and demonstrating that the model that Believe is offering is in short supply, the applicant has demonstrated convincingly that the services that it intends to provide will address a significant need of substantial magnitude.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 intends to use this grant to provide a robust, well-planned startup replicating an Indianapolis charter model that uses culturally-responsive practices, and builds partnerships within the community with leading employers and institutions that offer unique, local early college programming (e16). Throughout the proposal, the applicant notes how it will continue to engage its teachers in decision making and school management, as well as for their own professional development (e.g., e24, e43, e44). Finally, the applicant provides an in-depth project plan that identifies not just key milestones, but a majority of the significant activity required to make the project a success (e115-118).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score:** 5

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 08/01/2023 03:30 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/02/2023 11:38 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: BELIEVE STL Academy (S282E230011)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
<b>Quality of the Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Eligible Applicant	20	13
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	35	33
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Continuation</b>		
<b>Quality of the Continuation Plan</b>		
1. Continuation Plan	10	10
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	10	10
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need for Project	25	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>CPP</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
1. CPP	5	5
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>96</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - CSP Developers Replication Panel - 2: 84.282E

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

Applicant: BELIEVE STL Academy (S282E230011)

## Questions

### Quality of the Eligible Applicant - Quality of the Eligible Applicant

#### 1. (1) Quality of the Eligible Applicant (up to 20 points).

In determining the quality of the eligible applicant, the Secretary considers the following factors:

Reader's Score: 13

#### Sub

1. (i) The extent to which the academic achievement results (including annual student performance on statewide assessments and annual student attendance and retention rates and where applicable and available, student academic growth, high school graduation rates, postsecondary enrollment and persistence rates, including in college or career training programs, employment rates, earnings and other academic outcomes) for educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have exceeded the average academic achievement results for such students served by other public schools in the State (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)

#### Strengths:

The applicant notes a variety of student achievement accomplishments, including improvements in academic outcomes, specifically significant growth on average SAT scores for students.(e25-26)

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not compare academic outcomes statewide or to other school systems or schools. (e18)

Reader's Score: 2

2. (ii) The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have closed; have had a charter revoked due to noncompliance with statutory or regulatory requirements; or have had their affiliation with the applicant revoked or terminated, including through voluntary disaffiliation (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)

#### Strengths:

The applicant has never had a school closed, a charter revoked or had their affiliation revoked (e26).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Sub

3. (iii) The extent to which one or more charter schools operated or managed by the applicant have had any significant issues in the area of financial or operational management or student safety, or have otherwise experienced significant problems with statutory or regulatory compliance that could lead to revocation of the school's charter (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)

**Strengths:**

The applicant has clean audits and exceeds expectations in their quarterly assessments with their authorizer. (e26-7)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not provide adequate financial data to support their statements about their financial position.

**Reader's Score: 4**

4. (iv) The extent to which the schools operated or managed by the applicant demonstrate strong results on measurable outcomes in non-academic areas such as, but not limited to, parent satisfaction, school climate, student mental health, civic engagement, and crime prevention and reduction (up to 5 points). (2019 NFP)

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly demonstrates strengths in parent satisfaction and school climate through a survey (POSSIP). (e27-8)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not provide detail on mental health or crime prevention and reduction. While the school culture is reported as positive, the applicant has expelled a student early in their operation, leaving concern for future instances of outdated models of discipline, including suspension and expulsion. (e28)

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

1. (2) Quality of the Charter School's Management Plan (up to 35 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: 33**

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 5 points). (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

**Strengths:**

The applicant has a comprehensive and high level of detail MOU outlining the timeliness and anticipated completion timeframe of each objective while all within scope of the budget (e28-33).

Sub

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

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 has evaluated the costs versus recent grant awardees and they are well within the scope of these prior awardees. It is clear how the costs relate directly to the project. Their analysis is thoughtful and makes clear the rationale for the costs, which they clearly link to their target of [REDACTED] per student. (e34)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

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 time commitments are appropriate and staff will be appropriately scaled up as the school population grows. The applicant lays out specific percentages of time for key staff and is generous in the time allotted to the project. (e34-35)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant lacks clarity on the roles and responsibilities of each key personnel listed. Therefore, it is unclear as to what each role will complete what task on and how they will collaborate.

**Reader's Score:** 4

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant clearly demonstrates that key personnel have experience fit for the project, as they have experience in founding successful schools and turning around struggling schools. Overall, the key personnel chosen for the project demonstrate success in their resumes on similar projects, including creating new programs and program expansions. (e36-37)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

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

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The applicant details a strong process for proper stewarding of the funds which includes oversight from a variety of diverse stakeholders including external accountants, the board, various internal committees, and audits. (e38-39)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides insight into their decision making progress and the tools they utilize, including decision making protocols, decision making structures and processes as well as norms for their decision making. (e39-40)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not clearly identify who holds the final decision making authority as this is unclear from any of their protocols or tools.

**Reader's Score: 4**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant plans to work with an experienced consultant to manage the grant. This will provide procedural technical assistance and oversight of the workflow. It will also support staff in navigating the implementation of the grant in a financially sound manner. (e40)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Continuation - Quality of the Continuation Plan**

**1. (3) Quality of the Continuation Plan (up to 10 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 a detailed plan and the vast majority of costs associated with the grant are one time start-up costs (e40-41).



**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**1. (4) 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 defines in detail the rationale for their project. Their logic model clearly explains the rationale for their project by showing the needs of the student population and how the project directly addresses those needs in multiple ways. (e42-48)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a comprehensive logic model that details the goals, objectives and outcomes and how they will be measured. The applicant has presented ambitious outcomes that are at the same time achievable. (e49-50)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Need for Project**

**1. (5) Need for Project (up to 25 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: 25

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 demonstrates the severity of the problem by including high poverty rates and social struggle of the students and families who will be served by the project. (e53-54)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

2. (ii) The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project (up to 10 points). (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(ii))

**Strengths:**

The applicant demonstrates how the services will directly impact students and their families. The services will help to improve the students and families' economic outcomes through education and training which will enable them to build job skills and connect to future mentors and contacts. (e62-64)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

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 has worked closely with current teachers and various members of the community. Input has been gathered through a survey and is a component of the ongoing model. The applicant provides a clear plan to accomplish their goal through detailed steps and who is responsible for carrying out each component (e14-17).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**     **5**

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**Status:**           Submitted

**Last Updated:**   08/02/2023 11:38 AM