

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/12/2014 08:16 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Association of Charter School Authorizers (U282N150004)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	24
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	7
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	13
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	89
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Students with Disabilities		
1. CPP 1	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
English Learners		
1. CPP 2	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	110	99

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Charter Schools National Leadership - 2: 84.282N

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: National Association of Charter School Authorizers (U282N150004)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

(i) The national significance of the proposed project.

(ii) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

(iii) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant provides evidence that the project will have national significance in that it will involve 40% of the nation's charter schools and authorizers, and yield products capable of being modified to address local needs (p8). The existence of the applicant's network of authorizers and the degree of accountability built into the authorizing process also increases the potential significance and impact of the project. Revised authorizing standards will be disseminated through network authorizers and the applicant's web-based knowledge library (p10-11). Project activities and resultant standards currently serve as the primary reference for research-based benchmarks for authorizing (p10). Improvements to the standards would, therefore, have a lasting impact on how authorizers make critical decisions regarding charter renewal and closing.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

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

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1 (c)).

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to discuss how its proposed project addresses the

absolute priority to which the applicant has responded.

(iv) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.

Strengths:

Project objectives align with major activities in the project narrative, which strengthens project design. The inclusion of a structured logic model that references project objective and activities and clearly demonstrates how they will be used to achieve outcomes is a strength of the narrative. The applicant provides ample evidence that the ability of authorizers to hold schools accountable for achievement and operation increases accountability and school performance (p14). The application is also strengthened by the letters of support and partnership that indicate the project's focus on refining the authorization process will lead to improvements in charter performance (appendix 11, appendix 14). This is critical support given these organizations have direct relationship with actual charters and are ultimately accountable for charter school operation. The project represents an exceptional approach to addressing the priority because of its potential national impact on member and non-member schools. The use of standardized, updated expectations for charter renewal, case studies and exemplars that further defines best practice, and a focus on each stage of the authorization process clearly addresses the absolute priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly define how objectives will be measured (p14, 18, 22, 29, 31). The lack of quantified benchmarks that clearly define how the applicant will measure, for example, increased understanding or improved practice weakens the proposal. The applicant also does not clearly indicate that all resources developed under the proposal will be open resource materials accessible by non-members of the applicant-group and partner-groups. The intent to direct primary outreach to members of the applicant group and its partners (p10-11) and the lack of detail regarding broader outreach is potentially problematic. The lack of a statement ensuring that the applicant's web-based knowledge library will allow full access to products and data weakens this section of the application (p10-11,33).

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

In addition, the Secretary considers:

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

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The project director is qualified to serve in this role. She was the project director for the 2010 funded grant project and has experience providing direct services to charter authorizers (p39). She also currently works with authorizer development, an assignment that should provide the project with insight on authorizer needs and strategic contacts in selected implementation sites. Moreover, she has experience working with an urban charter authorizer, a major focus area in the

proposed project (p e201).

Other key project personnel are also qualified to support the project. Among slated personnel, the project will have access to expertise in authorizer evaluation, educational leadership and policy, and LEA authorizing processes (p e178-e209). The varied skills and talents among intended project personnel and their knowledge of organizational resources are strengths of the application.

Weaknesses:

The narrative does not provide adequate information on the training and experience of the intended project financial manager, who is listed as key personnel (p50-52, appendix). Information indicating his level of training and expertise is critical information given his critical function on the management team. The applicant also does not clearly discuss how it will encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. Although the project is currently staffed, the lack of detail regarding the process the applicant will use to fill open positions is not clearly described (p36-48). Stating the intent to broadly advertise, without details regarding what outreach efforts will entail, weakens this section of the narrative.

Reader's Score: 7

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(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.

(ii) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The management timeline is appropriately detailed for the project period. The matrix in appendix fifteen aligns monthly/quarterly objectives and activities with persons responsible and milestones (p e266). Activities are clearly worded and reflect major components of the proposal.

Weaknesses:

Neither the narrative nor the project timeline provide adequate detail regarding the frequency of communication between project staff or with partners to ensure feedback and continuous improvement throughout the project (p50). Stating that meetings will be held on a regular basis and that data collection/evaluative efforts will be used to ensure feedback, without references to specific frequency to engage participating sites and partners, weakens this section of the narrative (p53-54).

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

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

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well- implemented, produce evidence of promise (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how evaluation activities will contribute to research and the knowledge base in the field regarding the project s focus area.

Strengths:

The project evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures clearly related to the project objectives. Evaluation methods include both quantitative (i.e., numeric participation benchmarks) and qualitative (i.e., work plans, interviews) (appendix 9). Detail provided in the plan is a strength of the proposal because it identifies yearly activities, research questions and evaluation outcome measures by project objective. The matrix on page e670-e673 will likely facilitate on-time execution of the evaluation plan in that it aligns milestones with deliverables and time targets. The methods of evaluation will also likely provide valid and reliable performance data on outcomes in that they involve standard quantitative and qualitative measures and will gather primary data from authorizers with varied structures. The applicant increases the likelihood that evidence of promise will result given its intent to link three or more authorizer practices to at least one academic, financial or operational outcome metric in the project (p. e656).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Students with Disabilities

1. This priority is for projects of national significance and scope that are designed to increase equitable access to charter schools for students with disabilities and increase charter schools' enrollment of students with disabilities, as well as improve achievement (including student achievement and student growth) and attainment (including high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities in charter schools, through one or more of the following activities:

1. Developing strategies and tools to increase equitable access to charter schools for students with disabilities and increase charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve students with disabilities, and improve student achievement, including student growth, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities.

2. Disseminating promising practices for increasing equitable access to charter schools for students

with disabilities; increasing charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve students with disabilities; and improving student achievement, including student growth, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities.

3. Promoting collaborative activities between charter schools, non-chartered public schools, and key special education stakeholders designed to improve student achievement, including student growth, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities.

Strengths:

The applicant intends to disseminate promising practices for equitable access, capacity building and improving student achievement for students with disabilities. The intent to gather exemplars that refine strategies for students with disabilities is clearly noted in the narrative. (p2-3, 24, 30-31). The intent of these exemplars to serve as guidance for participants may impact achievement, given a focus on improving services for students. The engagement of communities of practice and partner networks around this work will likely ensure that best practices are applicable in varied charter frameworks (p32-33). The connection between targeted practices and their impact on improving access, enrollment, outcomes/academic performance, equity is a focus of this project and will likely inform best practice (p24, 28, 32). The project has national significance given the use of targeted states across the nation and involvement of national charter advocacy organizations, including Council of Chief State School Officers (p7-8, 10).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - English Learners

1. This priority is for projects of national significance and scope that are designed to increase equitable access to charter schools for English learners and increase charter schools' enrollment of English learners, as well as improve academic achievement (including student achievement and student growth) and attainment (including English proficiency, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates) for English learners, through one or more of the following activities:

1. Developing strategies and tools to increase equitable access to charter schools for English learners; increase charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve English learners; and improve student achievement, including student growth and English proficiency, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for English learners.

2. Disseminating promising practices for increasing equitable access to charter schools for English learners; increasing charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve English learners; and improving student achievement, including student growth and English proficiency, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for English learners.

3. Promoting collaborative activities between charter schools, non-chartered public schools, and key English learner stakeholders designed to improve student achievement, including student growth and English proficiency, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for English learners.

Strengths:

The project meets this priority through its intent to disseminate best practices for English learners regarding access to services, increasing school capacity and student achievement(p2-3, 24, 31). The engagement of communities of practice, partner networks and professional development will allow best practices to be effectively disseminated to a broad audience (p32-33). The project has national significance given the use of targeted states (i.e., California, Florida,

Minnesota, North Carolina, Texas) and involvement of groups like the Council of Chief State School Officers (p7-8, 10).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 5

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Association of Charter School Authorizers (U282N150004)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	25
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	15
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	93
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Students with Disabilities		
1. CPP 1	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
English Learners		
1. CPP 2	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	110	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Charter Schools National Leadership - 2: 84.282N

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: National Association of Charter School Authorizers (U282N150004)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

(i) The national significance of the proposed project.

(ii) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

(iii) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

Strengths:

The proposed program includes components that are of national significance. The applicant plans to address quality authorizing to improve charter school quality and student outcomes. National concerns in the charter school movement include school choice, low performing schools, difficulty of students with disabilities and English Language Learners. The outcomes of the proposed project include developing national authorization standards, increasing knowledge and understanding of authorization practices, and providing national exemplars of quality practice. The applicant clearly presented the import and national significance of the proposed program.

PAGE #: 3 - 5

The applicant plans to share the results of the proposed project with others. Specifically, the applicant plans to disseminate the results of the proposed project by reaching out to NACSA partner organizations (which represent 92 percent of charter authorizers), presenting information in various formats based on the needs of the different audiences, publishing newsletters and online announcements, and sponsoring project participant meetings. Other districts and agencies will be able to apply the information and strategies to other charter schools.

PAGE #: 9 - 11

The proposed project will increase knowledge and understanding of educational problems and issues. The proposed project will address target four levels of authorizers: day-to-day staff, the organizational leadership, education stakeholders, and decision makers. The applicant plans to create national exemplars for quality and practice and work with large charter systems to create solutions to challenges that may occur across the country.

PAGE #: 7 - 9

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

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

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1 (c)).

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to discuss how its proposed project addresses the absolute priority to which the applicant has responded.

(iv) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.

Strengths:

The applicant presented goals, objectives, and outcomes. The goals include identify academic, financial, and operational metrics; review authorizer evaluations; and convene consensus panels.

PAGE #: 20 – 22/35

The applicant used theory and a logic model to support the project design. The applicant used the Logic Model Reflecting Theory of Action and results from the 2013 study by the Center for Research on Educational Outcomes to guide the study. The logic model and theory are applicable to the proposed project.

PAGE #: 12 - 13

The proposed project represents an exceptional approach to charter schools. The project design includes the following strategies: convene consensus panels, evaluate authorizer practice and portfolio quality, develop individual authorizer work plans, customize and deliver quality authorizer services, and create regional and national exemplars for working with students with disabilities and English Language Learners. The applicant discussed how the proposed project will address absolute priority #2.

PAGE #: 12; 20 - 35

The proposed project includes services that will lead to improvements in student achievement based on rigorous academic standards. As outlined in the Logic Model, the applicant plans to create strengthened authorizing standards and disseminate the results. As more authorizers get access to the information, the leaders will adopt and faithfully implement the standards. The results of the first two components of the logic model should lead to improved charter schools and advances in student achievement. The proposed project is unique in the sense that it aims to create best practice and exemplars for stakeholders at all levels of the charter school authorization process. It is likely that the proposed project design will advance student achievement.

PAGE #: 14; 35

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not include clearly measurable and quantifiable objectives. Without clear objectives and goals, it is difficult to fully assess the project design of the proposed project.

PAGE #: 20 – 22/35

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

In addition, the Secretary considers:

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

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The applicant presented the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director. The project director will possess the following qualifications, training, and experience: managing grants and providing direct service to authorizers. The qualifications, training, and experience are suitable to carry out the proposed project.

PAGE #: 39 and 49

The applicant presented the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of some of the key personnel: research lead and regional and national exemplar developer,. The research lead will possess the following qualifications, training, and experience: research experience, director of an educational organization, and charter school authorizer. The regional and national exemplar developer will possess the following qualifications, training, and experience: two decades of experience in public education, policy researcher, and Assistant Superintendent. The financial coordinator serves as NACSA's Chief Financial Officer.

PAGE #: 39 - 50; 49 - 50

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide a resume or detailed description of the financial coordinator's qualifications, training, and experience. The applicant only mentioned that the NACSA's Chief Financial Officer would support the proposed project. However, the applicant did not include a detailed description of the person's qualifications or a resume. It is difficult to fully assess how well the person will support the needs of the proposed project based on one job title.

The applicant did not clearly address the extent to which employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability will be encouraged.

PAGE #: 50

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(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.

(ii) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant presented a clear and detailed management plan. The management plan includes timelines, responsibilities, and milestones. Examples of the milestones include, but are not limited to, administer surveys, convene panel meetings, conduct site visits, and summarize findings. It is likely that the proposed project can achieve the stated objectives based on the tasks presented in the management plan.

PAGE #: Appendix XV pages 18 - 20

The applicant plans to receive feedback for the proposed project. Creating a built-in loop and conducting formative and summative evaluations are ways in which the applicant will gather and use the view of stakeholders to inform the operations of the proposed project. The management plans includes specific means of ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

PAGE #: 53, Appendix XV pages 18 - 20

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

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

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well- implemented, produce evidence of promise (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how evaluation activities will contribute to research and the knowledge base in the field regarding the project s focus area.

Strengths:

The evaluation plan includes clear objective performance measures. The applicant plans to assess the intended outcomes using qualitative and quantitative data such as survey results, review documents, program attendance records, and interview transcripts. The data collected is directly linked to the stated outcomes and will advance knowledge of charter school management and leadership.

PAGE #: 54, Appendix X 10 - 15

The evaluation plan for the proposed program, if well-implemented, will produce evidence of promise. The evaluation plan includes milestones, deliverables, and timelines. Data collection, analysis, and reporting are included on the timeline.

PAGE #: 54, Appendix X 15 - 18

The evaluation plan for the proposed project will provide valid and reliable performance data. The evaluation plan will measure the proposed outcomes. The evaluation measures and data collected are specifically aligned to the goals and objectives of the proposed program. The evaluation plan will contribute to knowledge in the proposed project's focus area.

PAGE #: 54, Appendix X 10 - 20

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Students with Disabilities**

1. This priority is for projects of national significance and scope that are designed to increase equitable access to charter schools for students with disabilities and increase charter schools' enrollment of students with disabilities, as well as improve achievement (including student achievement and student growth) and attainment (including high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities in charter schools, through one or more of the following activities:

1. Developing strategies and tools to increase equitable access to charter schools for students with disabilities and increase charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve students with disabilities, and improve student achievement, including student growth, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities.

2. Disseminating promising practices for increasing equitable access to charter schools for students with disabilities; increasing charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve students with disabilities; and improving student achievement, including student growth, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities.

3. Promoting collaborative activities between charter schools, non-chartered public schools, and key special education stakeholders designed to improve student achievement, including student growth, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities.

Strengths:

The applicant plans to develop strategies and tools to increase equitable access to charter schools for students with disabilities. Specifically, the applicant plans to create regional and national exemplars about how charter schools can serve students with disabilities. The strategies and tools mentioned support increasing the schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve students with disabilities. Based on the plan the applicant presented, it is likely that the innovative strategies will improve achievement for students with disabilities.

PAGE #: 30

The applicant plans to disseminate information to other charter school authorizers and schools. The applicant will create communities of practice, build online resources and libraries, and leverage partner networks. The dissemination plan is through and will increase charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve students with disabilities.

PAGE #: 31 - 34

The applicant plans to promote collaboration between charter and non-charter schools and key stakeholders. The applicant will continue to sponsor an annual conference; developing partnerships with the Educational Commission of the States, Council of Chief State School Officers, and Civil Rights Solutions; and creating communities of practice.

PAGE #: 31 - 34

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - English Learners

1. This priority is for projects of national significance and scope that are designed to increase equitable access to charter schools for English learners and increase charter schools' enrollment of English learners, as well as improve academic achievement (including student achievement and student growth) and attainment (including English proficiency, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates) for English learners, through one or more of the following activities:

1. Developing strategies and tools to increase equitable access to charter schools for English learners; increase charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve English learners; and improve student achievement, including student growth and English proficiency, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for English learners.

2. Disseminating promising practices for increasing equitable access to charter schools for English learners; increasing charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve English learners; and improving student achievement, including student growth and English proficiency, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for English learners.

3. Promoting collaborative activities between charter schools, non-chartered public schools, and key English learner stakeholders designed to improve student achievement, including student growth and English proficiency, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for English learners.

Strengths:

The applicant plans to develop strategies and tools to increase equitable access to charter schools for English Language Learners. Specifically, the applicant plans to create regional and national exemplars about how charter schools can serve students with disabilities. The strategies and tools mentioned support increasing the schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve English Language Learners. Based on the plan the applicant presented, it is likely that the innovative strategies will improve achievement for English learners.

PAGE #: 30

The applicant plans to disseminate information to other charter school authorizers and schools. The applicant will connect policymakers and practitioners across the country, develop online resources, and provide in-person learning opportunities. The dissemination plan is thorough and will increase charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve English Language Learners.

PAGE #: 31 - 34

The applicant plans to promote collaboration between charter and non-charter schools and key stakeholders. Opportunities to collaborate include the NACSA Annual Leadership Conference, partnering with the National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools and Education Commission of the States, and establishing communities of practice.

PAGE #: 31 - 34

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/10/2014 11:30 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/19/2014 10:39 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Association of Charter School Authorizers (U282N150004)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	35
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	23
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	7
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	11
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	10	10
Sub Total	100	86
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Students with Disabilities		
1. CPP 1	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
English Learners		
1. CPP 2	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Total	110	96

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Charter Schools National Leadership - 2: 84.282N

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: National Association of Charter School Authorizers (U282N150004)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

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

(i) The national significance of the proposed project.

(ii) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

(iii) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

Strengths:

NACSA is a nationally recognized leader in this field having written the current national exemplar for authorizing. Applicant has strong existing networks through which to disseminate and a respected, leading national voice (pages 4 – 5).

This project encompasses important diversities for increased national significance and relevance: geographic, kinds or types of authorizers, urban/rural settings, LEA and SEA. (pages 7-9)

This project involves proposed partnership with national organizations: CCSSO, ECS, NCSECS, CRS, all increasing the each for dissemination. (page 9)

This project combines research with implementation and could impact more than 1,000,000 students, increasing our national body of research about effective educational strategies. (page 8)

Dissemination plans are strong and active: include consensus panels, communities of practice, virtual and in person learning experiences, online resource library. Lead applicant has strong dissemination networks and track record. (pages 31-35).

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

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

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1 (c)).

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to discuss how its proposed project addresses the absolute priority to which the applicant has responded.

(iv) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.

Strengths:

Project design is built on strong theory of action, expanding on research from 2013 that established a link between authorizer practices and student achievement. This link highlights the potential for this project to positively impact student outcomes for 100,000 students. (page 12 -13)

Project design connects theory to practice, spanning studies and research to implementation in key sites, demonstrating an exceptional approach to demonstrating how accountability systems support achievement. (page 12)

Application includes evidence of success nationally with similar project designs for this applicant, and connects to prior research efforts. (Pages 13-17)

Application defines specific project objectives and activities to achieve them. (pages 20 – 34)

Weaknesses:

Objectives are not clearly measurable. (pages 18, 22, 29, 31)

It was unclear whether online resources and libraries would be open source/access.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.**

In addition, the Secretary considers:

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

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

The lead applicant and multiple partners are strong and expert with a breadth of national experience in charter schools (authorizing, advocacy, research and evaluation). (pages 36-37, 42-47).

Team members bring a diversity of experience and strengths to the project. (pages 36 – 47)

Team members are already identified and have a track record of relevant experience working on similar projects. (pages 36 – 47)

The key project staff have demonstrated experience with successfully managing projects of similar size and scope, working nationally, and deep expertise with charter school authorizing, research, and project management/reporting. (pages 49-52)

The project director has worked successfully nationally and with specific sites to implement performance frameworks,

which will serve the kinds of work needed to make this project a success. She has also worked for a large scale urban authorizer. (page 39)

Weaknesses:

Additional background/qualifications needed for financial manager. No resume was included.

The applicant did not address how to encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

Reader's Score: 7

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

(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.

(ii) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Strengths:

Key staff and responsibilities are identified for project staff. (pages 49 – 5)

Timelines and milestones are included in Appendix XV, giving a clear picture of how the proposes objectives of the project will be achieved within timelines.

The lead applicant has demonstrated experience with successfully managing projects of similar size and scope. (pages 51-52)

Builds on ongoing work of lead applicant, along with regular ways of conducting work, informing their board/partners and seeking feedback, integrating other projects and knowledge. (page 53).

Weaknesses:

Role of partners is unclear. In the project timeline (Appendix XV) it appears that their only role is dissemination. There is no information included about how the organizations will work together.

There is minimal information about how the partners play a role in feedback and continuous improvement. (page 53)

While the applicant describes this project as building on internal processes and routines for accomplishing their organization's work, the details are missing about how that happens, and what it looks like. (page 53)

Reader's Score: 11

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

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

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well- implemented, produce evidence of promise (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)).

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how evaluation activities will contribute to research and the knowledge base in the field regarding the project s focus area.

Strengths:

An external evaluator is identified and has a wealth of experience in data analytics and strategy, to enhance the evaluation plans to evaluate both the implementation of the project and the impact of the project. (page 1, Appendix IX)

The proposal describes outcome measures, research questions, evaluation methods, and data collection. (pages3-17, Appendix IX) and is grounded in the goal to respond to addressing equity and quality within the charter school authorizer sector. The proposal includes a comprehensive evaluation timeline. (pages 18 – 21, Appendix IX) and is clearly aligned with the intended outcomes of the project.

The evaluation is planned to understand the impact on charter authorize, barriers to implementation, and contribute to significant national research, knowledge, practice, and policy at the state and national levels. (page 2, Appendix IX)

A logic model included on page 14. It appears likely that the evaluation will produce valid and reliable information.

It is likely that this evaluation will produce evidence of promise. (page 54)

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Students with Disabilities

1. This priority is for projects of national significance and scope that are designed to increase equitable access to charter schools for students with disabilities and increase charter schools' enrollment of students with disabilities, as well as improve achievement (including student achievement and student growth) and attainment (including high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities in charter schools, through one or more of the following activities:

1. Developing strategies and tools to increase equitable access to charter schools for students with disabilities and increase charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve students with disabilities, and improve student achievement, including student growth, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities.

2. Disseminating promising practices for increasing equitable access to charter schools for students with disabilities; increasing charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve students with disabilities; and improving student achievement, including student growth, and attainment (e.g., high

school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities.

3. Promoting collaborative activities between charter schools, non-chartered public schools, and key special education stakeholders designed to improve student achievement, including student growth, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for students with disabilities.

Strengths:

Project will address access, increased enrollment, and increased achievement for students with disabilities through the development of regional and national exemplars, various resources, and revised authorizer materials that incorporate best practice related to students with disabilities. (page 30)

Project will develop strategies, tools for schools use and disseminate promising practices. (pages 2-3)

Project will create regional and national exemplars of best practice in serving students with disabilities (access and performance). (pages 30-31)

Applicant will release authorizer performance reports that include metrics on success with serving the needs of students with disabilities. (pages 28-29)

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - English Learners

1. This priority is for projects of national significance and scope that are designed to increase equitable access to charter schools for English learners and increase charter schools' enrollment of English learners, as well as improve academic achievement (including student achievement and student growth) and attainment (including English proficiency, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment rates) for English learners, through one or more of the following activities:

1. Developing strategies and tools to increase equitable access to charter schools for English learners; increase charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve English learners; and improve student achievement, including student growth and English proficiency, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for English learners.

2. Disseminating promising practices for increasing equitable access to charter schools for English learners; increasing charter schools' capacity to recruit, enroll, and serve English learners; and improving student achievement, including student growth and English proficiency, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for English learners.

3. Promoting collaborative activities between charter schools, non-chartered public schools, and key English learner stakeholders designed to improve student achievement, including student growth and English proficiency, and attainment (e.g., high school graduation rates, college enrollment rates) for English learners.

Strengths:

Project will address access, increased enrollment, and increased achievement for English language learners through the development of regional and national exemplars, various resources, and revised authorizer materials that incorporate best practice related to English language learners. (page 30)

Project will develop strategies, tools for schools use and disseminate promising practices. (pages 2-3)

Project will create regional and national exemplars of best practice in serving English language learners (access and performance). (pages 30-31)

Applicant will release authorizer performance reports that include metrics on success with serving the needs of English language learners. (pages 28-29)

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

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