

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/09/2011 12:22 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Success Charter Network (U282M110031)

Reader #1: *****

| | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| Questions | | |
| Competitive Preference Priority 1 | | |
| Low-Income Demographic | | |
| 1. Low-Income Demographic | 10 | 10 |
| Competitive Preference Priority 2 | | |
| School Improvement | | |
| 1. School Improvement | 5 | 0 |
| Competitive Preference Priority 3 | | |
| Promoting Diversity | | |
| 1. Promoting Diversity | 5 | 4 |
| Selection Criteria | | |
| Quality of the eligible applicant | | |
| 1. Quality of the Applicant | 50 | 46 |
| Educationally Disadvantaged Students | | |
| 1. Assisting Students | 10 | 10 |
| Quality of Project Design | | |
| 1. Quality of Project Design | 10 | 9 |
| Quality of the management plan and personnel | | |
| 1. Quality of Mngt. Plan | 25 | 24 |
| Quality of the Evaluation Plan | | |
| 1. Quality of the eval. plan | 5 | 4 |
| Total | 120 | 107 |

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.282M

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Success Charter Network (U282M110031)

Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Low-Income Demographic

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that at least 60 percent of all students in the charter schools it currently operates or manages are individuals from low-income families.

Individual from a low-income family means an individual who is determined by an SEA or LEA to be a child, ages 5 through 17, from a low-income family, on the basis of (a) data used by the Secretary to determine allocations under section 1124 of the ESEA, (b) data on children eligible for free or reduced-price lunches under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, (c) data on children in families receiving assistance under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, (d) data on children eligible to receive medical assistance under the Medicaid program under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, or (e) an alternate method that combines or extrapolates from the data in items (a) through (d) of this definition (see 20 U.S.C. 6537(3)).

Strengths:

The applicant's schools are at an average of 80% of its students are from low income families, exceeding the 60% threshold to qualify for this competitive preference priority. (page 9)

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - School Improvement

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that its proposed replication or expansion of one or more high-quality charter schools will occur in partnership with, and will be designed to assist, one or more local educational agencies (LEAs) in implementing academic or structural interventions to serve students attending schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, closure, or restructuring under section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), and as described in the notice of final requirements for the School Improvement Grants, published in the Federal Register on October 28, 2010 (75 FR 66363).

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

The application does not describe a partnership with a local education agency for the purpose of assisting it in implementing academic or structural interventions.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Promoting Diversity

1. This priority is for applicants that demonstrate a record of (in the schools they currently operate or manage), as well as an intent to continue (in schools that they will be creating or substantially expanding under this grant), taking active measures to--

- (a) Promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation;
- (b) Serve students with disabilities at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area; and
- (c) Serve English learners at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area.

In support of this priority, applicants must provide enrollment data as well as descriptions of existing policies and activities undertaken or planned to be undertaken.

Note: An applicant addressing this priority is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project will encourage approaches by charter schools that help bring together students of different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body. The applicant should discuss in its application how it would ensure that those approaches are permissible under current law.

Strengths:

The application identifies Success has a lottery priority for English Language Learners (page 13) and has created teams to better meet the needs of special education scholars (pages 13-15). The applicant's random lottery and extensive waiting lists demonstrate strong commitment to the community and its high academic achievement and "flip" of achievement gaps (as defined in the application) meet the intent of this selection criterion.

Weaknesses:

The application could have benefited from a discussion of developing an appreciation for cultural differences as part of its curriculum.

Reader's Score: 4

Selection Criteria - Quality of the eligible applicant

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

(1) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (20 points).

(2) Either (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant, or (ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant and to which

significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (15 points).

(3) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including performance on statewide tests, annual student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates where applicable and available) for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State (15 points).

Strengths:

Please see comments in sub category sections.

Weaknesses:

Please see comments in sub category sections.

Reader's Score: 46

Sub Question

1. (1) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (20 points).

Strengths:

All schools operated by the applicant serve 100% educationally disadvantaged students. The data provided on page two of the application provides evidence of three years of 100% proficiency and advanced scores on state summative assessments.

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 20

2. (2) Either (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant, or (ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant and to which significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (15 points).

Strengths:

Data on page 2 of the application documents three years of proficiency and advanced scores for HSA 1 of 100%. 94% of black students and 97% of Hispanic students passed the math exam, compared to 73% of white students statewide, "flipping" the achievement gap as defined in the application. Data demonstrating success continues on page three for ELA and for several pages on other demonstrations of success.

Weaknesses:

Special education and ELL population performance data is not described.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 12

3. (3) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including performance on statewide tests, annual student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates where applicable and available) for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State (15 points).

Strengths:

All of the population at Success schools falls into the category of educationally disadvantaged.

Attendance rates are higher than average (above 95% in most cases). The application describes a college going culture starting in kindergarten, and academic achievement that is significantly above that of all students, not just demographically similar students.

Weaknesses:

Retention data was not included in the application.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Educationally Disadvantaged Students

1. Contribution in assisting economically disadvantaged students

The contribution the proposed project will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged students served by the applicant to meet or exceed State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, and to graduate college- and career-ready. When responding to this selection criterion, applicants must discuss the proposed locations of schools to be created or substantially expanded and the student populations to be served.

Strengths:

The data-rich, detailed, and specific application comprehensively describes numerous, layered, thoughtful, researched and tested, policies and practices aimed at maximizing every moment that the school works with its enrolled students (almost all of whom are educationally disadvantaged), as well as with the community at large, neighboring schools, and the entire education community to better meet the needs of all students. Of commendation is the family outreach and programs to support learning not only for students but for their families.

Weaknesses:

none

Reader's Score: 10

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 extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and attainable. Applicants proposing to open schools serving substantially different populations than those currently served by the model for which they have demonstrated evidence of success must address the attainability of outcomes given this difference.

Strengths:

Specifically, the application describes using grant funds to support a robust teacher training program in order to create deep understanding of effective education strategies, and to develop leaders for its new schools. The application also provides great detail in the components of its plan for establishing additional schools and preparing for immediate academic success in those schools.

Weaknesses:

The description of the project goals were not accompanied by detailed specific measurable time specific outcomes as required by the this selection criterion.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the management plan and personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate and substantially expand high-quality charter schools. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

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

(2) The business plan for improving, sustaining, and ensuring the quality and performance of charter schools created or substantially expanded under these grants beyond the initial period of Federal funding in areas including, but not limited to, facilities, financial management, central office, student academic achievement, governance, oversight, and human resources of the charter schools.

(3) A multi-year financial and operating model for the organization, a demonstrated commitment of current and future partners, and evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success.

(4) The plan for closing charter schools supported, overseen, or managed by the applicant that do not meet high standards of quality.

(5) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, chief executive officer or organization leader, and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The application outlines a business plan of slow and steady growth based on pure demand, leveraging that demand and forging relationships. Proposed expansion is based on research into effective schools, and opening new schools will only occur after policies, systems, and processes are in place.

Schools will be sustainable in three years, and grant funds will leverage not only immediate grant funded school growth, but will impact growth for the next 10 years, doubling the number of impacted students beyond the grant program.

Extensive description of pre opening, operating (including adjustments), and indicators and interventions for the possibility of low performing schools are discussed, including closure decision making.

Timelines and activity charts were provided.

School leadership and board members all have extensive experience in operating and overseeing high performing schools and are nationally renowned for their success and wisdom.

Weaknesses:

Although the application provides its plan for the technical aspects of closing a school, it does not describe whether and how it will determine whether a school should be closed for low performance.

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Evaluation Plan

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 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.**

Strengths:

The application articulates clear goals to measure project success. The application provides information regarding how it will evaluate the success of the schools it opens which are specific, measurable, attainable, and time specific. It further describes a robust, research-based external evaluation of its training program which is the main project to be implemented with grant funds.

Weaknesses:

The application would have been stronger had the applicant identified the tools and/or rubrics for the assessments, surveys, and observations. (page 42)

Reader's Score: 4

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/09/2011 12:22 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/08/2011 05:09 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Success Charter Network (U282M110031)

Reader #2: *****

| | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| Questions | | |
| Competitive Preference Priority 1 | | |
| Low-Income Demographic | | |
| 1. Low-Income Demographic | 10 | 10 |
| Competitive Preference Priority 2 | | |
| School Improvement | | |
| 1. School Improvement | 5 | 0 |
| Competitive Preference Priority 3 | | |
| Promoting Diversity | | |
| 1. Promoting Diversity | 5 | 5 |
| Selection Criteria | | |
| Quality of the eligible applicant | | |
| 1. Quality of the Applicant | 50 | 39 |
| Educationally Disadvantaged Students | | |
| 1. Assisting Students | 10 | 10 |
| Quality of Project Design | | |
| 1. Quality of Project Design | 10 | 10 |
| Quality of the management plan and personnel | | |
| 1. Quality of Mngt. Plan | 25 | 24 |
| Quality of the Evaluation Plan | | |
| 1. Quality of the eval. plan | 5 | 5 |
| Total | 120 | 103 |

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.282M

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Success Charter Network (U282M110031)

Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Low-Income Demographic

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that at least 60 percent of all students in the charter schools it currently operates or manages are individuals from low-income families.

Individual from a low-income family means an individual who is determined by an SEA or LEA to be a child, ages 5 through 17, from a low-income family, on the basis of (a) data used by the Secretary to determine allocations under section 1124 of the ESEA, (b) data on children eligible for free or reduced-price lunches under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, (c) data on children in families receiving assistance under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, (d) data on children eligible to receive medical assistance under the Medicaid program under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, or (e) an alternate method that combines or extrapolates from the data in items (a) through (d) of this definition (see 20 U.S.C. 6537(3)).

Strengths:

The application indicates that 80% of current students receive free and reduced lunch. Contextual information and data sources were provided on page 9.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - School Improvement

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that its proposed replication or expansion of one or more high-quality charter schools will occur in partnership with, and will be designed to assist, one or more local educational agencies (LEAs) in implementing academic or structural interventions to serve students attending schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, closure, or restructuring under section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), and as described in the notice of final requirements for the School Improvement Grants, published in the Federal Register on October 28, 2010 (75 FR 66363).

Strengths:

No strengths found.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address how their work will be done in partnership with, and will be designed to assist, one or more LEAs.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Promoting Diversity

1. This priority is for applicants that demonstrate a record of (in the schools they currently operate or manage), as well as an intent to continue (in schools that they will be creating or substantially expanding under this grant), taking active measures to--

- (a) Promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation;
- (b) Serve students with disabilities at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area; and
- (c) Serve English learners at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area.

In support of this priority, applicants must provide enrollment data as well as descriptions of existing policies and activities undertaken or planned to be undertaken.

Note: An applicant addressing this priority is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project will encourage approaches by charter schools that help bring together students of different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body. The applicant should discuss in its application how it would ensure that those approaches are permissible under current law.

Strengths:

The percentage of special education students is 12.5% (page 13), and the numbers are growing (page 14). Because the school is over-subscribed, enrollment is done by lottery. Success gave special preference to ELL students during the 2011 and 2012 lotteries (page 13). Success has demonstrated very high proficiency rates with both populations: 76.7-100% of special education scholars across the K-5 grade levels were reading at grade level at the end of the year, and 69-100% of ELL students across the K-5 grade levels were reading on grade level at the end of the year.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the eligible applicant

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

- (1) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (20 points).
- (2) Either (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant, or (ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant and to which significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of students

served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (15 points).

(3) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including performance on statewide tests, annual student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates where applicable and available) for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State (15 points).

Strengths:

See comments on each subsection below.

Weaknesses:

See comments on each subsection below.

Reader's Score: 39

Sub Question

1. (1) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (20 points).

Strengths:

Harlem Success Academies have been top scorers in several measures over the past years. They have been recognized as the top charter school in NY and are tied for the #1 public school in the NY State. Research done by the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education showed that HSA students performed 13-20% better than students that applied but did not get in to the school. 2011 data for Grades 3 (ELA and Math), Grade 4 (ELA and Math) and Grade 5 (ELA and Math) are provided with comparative data for the State, NYC, nearby districts, and the Edgemont and Scarsdale Districts. The Success schools are outperforming in every category for every grade. Literacy results from the Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) are provided for the 2009, 2010 and 2011 school years for grades K-5, and demonstrate that the school is seeing growth in the number of students at grade level each year.

Weaknesses:

Academic achievement data in Math was not provided for the 2010 and 2009 school years. Cohort growth or value added growth would be helpful.

Reader's Score: 17

2. (2) Either (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant, or (ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant and to which significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (15 points).

Strengths:

Data shows strong academic achievement, for special needs and ELL students in particular. 94% of black students and 94% of Hispanic students outperformed their white peers in the state (page 2).

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide within school achievement data by ESEA subgroups.

Reader's Score: 12

3. (3) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including performance on statewide tests, annual student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates where applicable and available) for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State (15 points).

Strengths:

The schools have a 96% average attendance rate (pages 11-12). Data is provided for each HSA school as well as the district school, showing that HSA schools have higher attendance rates than the district schools.

A college going culture is emphasized, and there is a mission that all children can and will learn.

While the applicant does not currently serve high school aged students, there are plans to track the high school completion, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates of their students as the students progress through the educational system (page 28).

Weaknesses:

Retention data was not provided for all three years. The applicant did not discuss how they will assure students will transition to high performing secondary schools so that academic achievement can be continued.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Educationally Disadvantaged Students

1. Contribution in assisting economically disadvantaged students

The contribution the proposed project will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged students served by the applicant to meet or exceed State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, and to graduate college- and career-ready. When responding to this selection criterion, applicants must discuss the proposed locations of schools to be created or substantially expanded and the student populations to be served.

Strengths:

Socio-economic indicators for the neighborhood are provided to substantiate need for school expansion. Proposed locations are Brooklyn, and Districts 13 and 14, and the population will be the students currently served in the public schools in those catchment areas. The school model provides for continual assessment, including early intervention and early literacy to address student needs in the critical early years. The project includes a Parent Education program to teach parents how to support their child's learning throughout their school years, including the secondary and postsecondary years. High expectations promote the belief that all HSA scholars will go to college and college preparedness is the core mission of the Success Charter Network.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 10

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 extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and attainable. Applicants proposing to open schools serving substantially different populations than those currently served by the model for which they have demonstrated evidence of success must address the attainability of outcomes given this difference.

Strengths:

The design and practice of T-school reflects the high level of attention to effective instructional practices and teacher support. The leadership purposely grows the capacity of their staff and prepares future leaders.

The students to be served in the proposed project are not substantially different from the current population, thus it is reasonable that because of the demonstrated level of success, the applicant will create high quality schools.

The grant request includes specific, measureable and attainable academic, programmatic and operational goals (pages 41-42).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the management plan and personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate and substantially expand high-quality charter schools. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

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

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- (3) A multi-year financial and operating model for the organization, a demonstrated commitment of current and future partners, and evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success.

- (4) The plan for closing charter schools supported, overseen, or managed by the applicant that do not meet high standards of quality.

- (5) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, chief executive officer or organization leader, and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant has a well developed model and materials for expansion. A great deal of effort is placed on instructional efficacy, and structures and supports (including an online learning network for staff) are devoted to this focus. The applicant will create a playbook to disseminate successful practices. Project timelines and milestones were provided.

The SCN network is skilled at financial and grant management, and fundraising. The business plan is designed so that schools will be able to operate solely on state and federal funds after the grant, thus there is evidence of long term sustainability.

A multi-year financial and operating model for the organization, a demonstrated commitment of current and future partners, and evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success are found in the application..

Project leadership has the necessary experience, skill and acumen to realize project goals. The scope of the project is manageable. There is a strong governance team in place. There is evidence of support from stakeholders, and financial commitments from major foundations.

The proposal includes a plan for intervention if a school is not meeting goals, and a statement that SCN will work with the authorizer to close the school if any goal is not met for a third straight year at a school (page 42).

Weaknesses:

The application did not include letters of support from the local communities where the new schools will be located.

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Evaluation Plan

- 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 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.**

Strengths:

The applicant has a plan and process to continually monitor and evaluate program success (pages 38, 40-42). An external evaluation will be performed by the Education Innovation Laboratory at Harvard University. The focus of the research is on the effectiveness of T-School.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/08/2011 07:35 PM

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Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.282M

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Strengths:

At Harlem Success Academies, 80% of students are from low-income families. Multiple data sources were provided to substantiate the demographic information provided.

Weaknesses:

There is no weakness.

Reader's Score: 10

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - School Improvement

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that its proposed replication or expansion of one or more high-quality charter schools will occur in partnership with, and will be designed to assist, one or more local educational agencies (LEAs) in implementing academic or structural interventions to serve students attending schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, closure, or restructuring under section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), and as described in the notice of final requirements for the School Improvement Grants, published in the Federal Register on October 28, 2010 (75 FR 66363).

Strengths:

There is no strength.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide information about an LEA partnership to facilitate school improvement.

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Promoting Diversity

1. This priority is for applicants that demonstrate a record of (in the schools they currently operate or manage), as well as an intent to continue (in schools that they will be creating or substantially expanding under this grant), taking active measures to--

- (a) Promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation;
- (b) Serve students with disabilities at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area; and
- (c) Serve English learners at a rate that is at least comparable to the rate at which these students are served in public schools in the surrounding area.

In support of this priority, applicants must provide enrollment data as well as descriptions of existing policies and activities undertaken or planned to be undertaken.

Note: An applicant addressing this priority is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project will encourage approaches by charter schools that help bring together students of different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body. The applicant should discuss in its application how it would ensure that those approaches are permissible under current law.

Strengths:

The application identifies target areas in Districts 13 and 14 for new schools. District 13 has 4.3% ELL and 71.8% of the population are eligible for FRL; 86% of District 14 is eligible for FRL and 12.7% of the population are ELL. Racial demographics are provided (20). Harlem Success uses collaborative team teaching and serves 12.5% SPED students (13). Of all SPED students, 76-95.9% are on grade level, with academic proficiency increasing over time. Of all ELL s 69-100% were at grade level with proficiency increasing over time. Strong attention is paid to ELL and SPED students throughout the application.

Weaknesses:

No admission and enrollment policies to promote diversity were referenced in the application. The application would have benefitted from a discussion on embracing cultural differences.

Reader's Score: 4

Selection Criteria - Quality of the eligible applicant

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

(1) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (20 points).

(2) Either (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant, or (ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant and to which significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (15 points).

(3) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including performance on statewide tests, annual student attendance and retention rates, high

school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates where applicable and available) for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State (15 points).

Strengths:

The applicant has demonstrated consistent success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students over the past three years, including, educationally disadvantaged students. Despite being 80% FRL, independent research shows Harlem Success increases student achievement by 13-20%. The applicant outperforms their co-located schools, other schools within the district and many of the wealthiest communities in New York State. Across 4 schools, 94% of students were proficient in math, as compared to 60% of 3rd-5th graders, citywide. Seventy-eight percent of students were proficient in ELA compared to 49% citywide. HSA 1 is tied for #1 school in NY state. One hundred percent of HSA 4th graders passed the math exam and 86% passed the ELA exam. At HSA 1, 98% of 5th graders passed the math exam, and 90% of 5th graders passed the ELA exam. All four schools represented the top 5 elementary schools in Harlem. Three of the four schools are in the top 5% of all public schools on the NY math exam. All 4 Harlem success schools are in the top quarter of NY state public schools in 3rd grade ELA (2011; 3).

Weaknesses:

There is no weakness

Reader's Score: 47

Sub Question

- 1. (1) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant (20 points).**

Strengths:

The applicant has demonstrated consistent success in significantly increasing student academic achievement and attainment for all students over the past three years, including, educationally disadvantaged students. Despite being 80% FRL, independent research shows Harlem Success increases student achievement by 13-20%. The applicant outperforms their co-located schools, other schools within the district and many of the wealthiest communities in New York State. Across 4 schools, 94% of students were proficient in math, as compared to 60% of 3rd-5th graders, citywide. Seventy-eight percent of students were proficient in ELA compared to 49% citywide. HSA 1 is tied for #1 school in NY state. One hundred percent of HSA 4th graders passed the math exam and 86% passed the ELA exam. At HSA 1, 98% of 5th graders passed the math exam, and 90% of 5th graders passed the ELA exam. All four schools represented the top 5 elementary schools in Harlem. Three of the four schools are in the top 5% of all public schools on the NY math exam. All 4 Harlem success schools are in the top quarter of NY state public schools in 3rd grade ELA (2011; 3).

Weaknesses:

There is no weakness.

Reader's Score: 20

- 2. (2) Either (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant, or (ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant and to which significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant**

Sub Question

(15 points).

Strengths:

Over the past three years, the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students. There have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students. Of all SPED students, 76-95.9% are on grade level, with academic proficiency increasing over time. Of all ELLs, 69-100% were at grade level with proficiency increasing over time. Significant gains in student academic achievement have been made with all populations of students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant. Over the past three years, the applicant has achieved results for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State. Harlem success black and Hispanic students outperform their Caucasian peers across the state. This past year, 94% of black and Hispanic students at Harlem Success passed the math exam compared to 73% of students statewide. 79% of black students and 89% of Hispanic students passed the ELA exam compared to 66% of Caucasian students, statewide.

Weaknesses:

Data was not clearly presented to demonstrate three years of proficiency data.

Reader's Score: 12

- 3. (3) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including performance on statewide tests, annual student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates where applicable and available) for low-income and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter schools operated or managed by the applicant that are significantly above the average academic achievement results for such students in the State (15 points).**

Strengths:

There is a plan to track graduation, college-going and college matriculation rates, once students are of the appropriate age. The Harlem Success has a strong, college-going culture. To emphasize a college-bound culture, scholars are known by their college classes. Every classroom has a college corner and classes take trips to colleges and speak with faculty and alumni (22). SCN plans to track the number of high school graduates who attend and graduate college (28) Attendance rates in 2011 were 96% compared to the collocation schools 89% and HSA students routinely outperform their state and district peers. HSA has a low retention rate, which the application addresses.

Weaknesses:

There is no weakness.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Educationally Disadvantaged Students

1. Contribution in assisting economically disadvantaged students

The contribution the proposed project will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged students served by the applicant to meet or exceed State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, and to graduate college- and career-ready. When responding to this selection criterion, applicants must discuss the proposed locations of schools to be created or substantially expanded and the student populations to be served.

Strengths:

The proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students served by the applicant to meet or exceed State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, and to graduate college- and career-ready. Harlem success black and Hispanic students outperform their Caucasian peers across the state. This past year, 94% of black and Hispanic students at Harlem Success passed the math exam compared to 73% of students statewide. 79% of black students and 89% of Hispanic students passed the ELA exam compared to 66% of Caucasian students, statewide. Numerous research-based, thoughtful policies on successfully working with educationally disadvantaged students were proposed in the application. The proposed program features comprehensive parent education programs and outreach. The applicant discusses the proposed locations of schools to be created in Brooklyn and the Bronx and has successfully educated similar students to the proposed student populations.

Weaknesses:

There is no weakness.

Reader's Score: 10

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 extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and attainable. Applicants proposing to open schools serving substantially different populations than those currently served by the model for which they have demonstrated evidence of success must address the attainability of outcomes given this difference.**

Strengths:

The goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and attainable. T School is a rigorous, accountability based teacher training program. T School is based on a successful compilation of pedagogical strategies, hands on training and classroom experience, serving 3,500 leaders in the next 5 years. Training is focused on the achievement gap and college preparation (24). State of the art teacher feedback will be provided, conferences held and lab sites created (26). SCN has a playbook for opening and running great schools that includes operations, recruitment, teacher and leader development, school opening and public policy (27). A thorough rationale is provided for the creation of T School (37). A phased plan for project milestones is in place.

Weaknesses:

The rationale for student performance goals as related to better teacher training is not clearly stated.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the management plan and personnel

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate and substantially expand high-quality charter schools. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:**

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

(2) The business plan for improving, sustaining, and ensuring the quality and performance of charter schools created or substantially expanded under these grants beyond the initial period of Federal

funding in areas including, but not limited to, facilities, financial management, central office, student academic achievement, governance, oversight, and human resources of the charter schools.

(3) A multi-year financial and operating model for the organization, a demonstrated commitment of current and future partners, and evidence of broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success.

(4) The plan for closing charter schools supported, overseen, or managed by the applicant that do not meet high standards of quality.

(5) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director, chief executive officer or organization leader, and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.

Strengths:

1) 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 is well thought-out. A process and timeline are in place for all aspects of school startup. The curriculum and financial models have proven to be scalable, replicable and financially sound (29). The school has established a demand with a waiting list of 8,000 students. Harlem Success has a well developed model and plan for expansion.

(2) The business plan for improving, sustaining, and ensuring the quality and performance of charter schools created or substantially expanded under these grants includes plans for facilities, financial management, central office, student academic achievement, governance, oversight, and human resources of the charter schools. A business plan of slow and steady growth has been developed. The home office has nearly 50 operations staff to develop systems for scalable replication and expansion. SCN has proven to be effective at its goal to educate students more effectively on less money per pupil than traditional public schools (30). SCN has raised \$28M in private funds to date (32). Schools are designed to be self-sustainable by year 3 and each year the funding request is a smaller percentage of the total grant request budget in order to bring schools to self-sustainability. New schools are planned to open based solely upon per pupil enrollment.

(3) The schools extensive waiting list of over 8,000 students demonstrates community interest in the schools and support for additional schools in the community.

4) The plan for closing charter schools supported, overseen, or managed by the applicant that do not meet high standards of quality is referenced.

(5) The qualifications of the project director, chief executive officer or organization leader, and key project personnel are impeccable. Key personnel have experience in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project. A system of peer review, feedback and collaboration is in place to train staff. The organizations hiring processes are rigorous and well thought out. School leaders are well-renowned and have successfully run a high performing charter network.

Weaknesses:

Community partnerships and outreach were not mentioned in developing the schools to meet the needs of the community or the project's long-term success.

The rationale and decision making process for closure are not provided (41).

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Evaluation Plan

- 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 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.

Strengths:

External evaluation is ongoing at Harlem Success. 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. Results from the Harvard School of Education will be used to refine the school model. The academic and operational goals are explicit and measureable (41).

Weaknesses:

It is unclear precisely how specific, measureable goals will be evaluated by a third party operator.

Reader's Score: 4

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