

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/13/2011 11:15 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: DC Preparatory Academy (U282M110035)

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	1
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the eligible applicant		
1. Quality of the Applicant	50	45
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	23
Quality of the Evaluation Plan		
1. Quality of the eval. plan	5	5
Total	120	104

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel - 3: 84.282M

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: DC Preparatory Academy (U282M110035)

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:

Over 80% of the students served are low-income.

Weaknesses:

None

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:

None

Weaknesses:

While DC Prep is replicating its own success, it did not set up a partnership with a LEA for this purpose.

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 applicant provided extensive documentation of results from its current 3 schools as well as comparable data for surrounding schools. DC Prep excels.

Edgewood Middle school includes a high proportion of students with disabilities (17%).

The number of students with ELL is comparable to other schools in DC.

Weaknesses:

The percentage of students served with IEPs in some of DC Prep's schools is only 1-4%.

The applicant did not elaborate on its policies for recruiting or serving English Language Learners or students with disabilities.

Reader's Score: 1

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:

DC Prep showed significant achievement gains over the past three years.

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided little information either services to students with disabilities or their achievement levels; some of the applicant's schools served a very low number of students with disabilities.

Reader's Score: 45

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:

On the 2011 DC CAS, 100% of DC Prep's 8th graders were proficient or advanced in both Reading and Math., schoolwide 92% of students (4th-8th) scored proficient or advanced in Math, 74% scored proficient in Reading. Results are shown for subgroups.

The Edgewood Elementary Campus is demonstrating strong progress. Edgewood is in the top ten highest performing charter schools in DC (#6 in Reading and #8 in Math).

Weaknesses:

In some cases the number of students with disabilities is very small (1-4%).

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:

DC Prep students are outpacing their peers .

Data were given for Black, economically disadvantaged, and special education students. (p. e27) Each of these showed significant increases in the past 3 years.

Sub Question

Significant gains have been obtained at the elementary level with percentage increases of almost 20% in both reading and math in the past 3 years. Data for subgroups show the similar gains.

Weaknesses:

The number of students with disabilities served is very low at some sites.

Reader's Score: 13

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:

Students have achieved impressive gains.

Attendance records are 90-96.8%.

Presented NCLB attendance data by subgroups. Ranged from 90-97%)

High school acceptance-- ALL 165 students of DC Prep's first five graduating classes have been accepted by a college-preparatory high school (p.e28).

Over 95% of alumni have completed high school.

DC Prep is Targeting 50% to complete college; this is five times the graduation rate of peers from regular DC public schools.

Weaknesses:

None

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:

Applicant showed impressive gains for these students. DC Prep plans to expand to a former DC Public School building in Ward 8. Proposed sites include areas of DC presented in a map on p. e56.

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:

DC Prep was founded in 2003 and has a successful history since then. Applicant presented its educational model (p. e36), that includes a focus on pride, energy, and shared senses of mission. Classrooms are lively, engaging places where students are challenged and inspired." (p. e36)

The goal is to expand to four new campuses to provide 1,500 new seats for students in pre-school-8th grade. (p. e355). The applicant presented its PBIS plan, behavior plans, and walk through rubrics.

DC Prep campuses are open from 7:30 a.m. for breakfast until 6 p.m.) for elementary and 5:00 p.m. for middle school. DC Prep uses a Reader's Workshop for students in k-3 and a Writer's workshop for students at the middle school campus. Reading mastery is used at the elementary level. Go Math, Envisions Math, TAI, and Everyday math, and Saxon and connected math are used. They use STEP a developmental literacy assessment. Twice weekly tests are given at the middle school level using Fountas and Pinnell assessment. Targeted interventions include: Read Naturally, Wilson Reading, and Waterford Early Reading.

Prep sessions are held for differentiated instruction and intensive support twice daily. Students are grouped and regrouped into small leveled groups.

Applicant also presented substantial information on its Board, its staff, and its plan for expansion. This included measurable goals and detailed timelines by objectives.

Weaknesses:

None

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.

(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:

Staff appear to be well qualified. DC Prep is planning to add a Director of Teacher Development to work with instructional coaches to accelerate staff ability to deliver effective instruction. There is a student Enrollment Associate.

The COO convenes a weekly meeting to facilitate sharing best practices. Goldstar is the accounting vendor who assists with managing state and federal revenues. Fund raising has been led by a Director of Development and Director of Special Projects.

The applicant presented a detailed workplan (beginning on p. e61). Included were timelines with milestones by Quarters (p. e65)

The applicant has a stellar staff and presented an organizational chart (p. e73) which shows the current structure.

Weaknesses:

Applicant presented little information on its financial operations.

Reader's Score: 23

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:

For each goal, the applicant included a process and measurable outcome (p. e75).

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 5

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: DC Preparatory Academy (U282M110035)

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	1
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the eligible applicant		
1. Quality of the Applicant	50	48
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	22
Quality of the Evaluation Plan		
1. Quality of the eval. plan	5	4
Total	120	105

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel - 3: 84.282M

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: DC Preparatory Academy (U282M110035)

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 currently manages 3 schools serving more than 1,000 students in preschool to grade 8. Over 80% of these students are low income.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

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 were noted.

Weaknesses:

No formal partnerships exist between DC Prep and LEAs to turn around failing schools.

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 special education population at Edgewood Middle is 17%

Weaknesses:

The total school population varies from 94-97% African American, and the special education population is very low at two schools: 4% at Edgewood Elementary and 1% at Benning Elementary. The ELL population is 2% at Edgewood Middle and Benning Elementary and 7% at Edgewood Elementary. No information is provided related to how the schools promote or celebrate diversity.

Reader's Score: 1

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 did an excellent job of presenting very convincing data related to the quality of the organization.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide multi-year data supporting the closing of achievement of subgroups at the current schools.

Reader's Score: 48

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 data presented demonstrates that the school is very successful in comparison with district schools in reading and math, and that growth over time is very significant (pages 2-3 and 7-8). Data is also presented related to the success of the preschool in preparing students for kindergarten.

Weaknesses:

Multi-year data is not provided for subgroups.

Reader's Score: 18

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:

In 2011, Edgewood Middle was the top performing charter middle school in Washington DC for all charters, including those serving middle and upper income students, and for the second consecutive year was the highest performing middle school citywide for low income students in both charter and regular public schools. This was true across the subgroups of Black/Non-Hispanic, Economically Disadvantaged, and Special Education in both reading and math in grades 4-8 (page 9). Similar data is provided on 3rd graders served by DC Prep on pages 14 and 15 by both total students and subgroups.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 15

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

Sub Question

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:

Every DC Prep 8th grade graduate has been accepted by a college-prep high school. 95% of the first graduating class earned their high school diplomas and more than 80% of them will matriculate to college. Attendance rates have increased at every level except Edgewood Elementary (K-3) where it has held steady at 94% and includes increases in attendance at both preschools. Subgroup attendance figures are provided with similar results. Support is provided for both high school placement and maintaining a college-bound trajectory. They also provide intensive college guidance to students beginning in the 11th grade (page 23).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

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 current schools have very strong proof that they are assisting educationally disadvantaged students. They even have impressive data on students that have completed their preschool programs. 87% of students who participated in Edgewood Elementary's early childhood program were on grade level at the beginning of kindergarten compared to 60% of students new to DC Prep. At Benning Elementary these figures were similar, 81% compared to 58% (page 16). The proposed locations for new schools are in similar neighborhoods that include a large number of low income students. The emphasis on rigorous academics, character development, longer school days, continuous assessment, targeted intervention, and high school placement and alumni support is designed specifically to be effective with educationally disadvantaged students.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted

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 five objectives are clearly stated on pages 42-46. They include a rationale and specific explanations related to how the grant funding will be used to attain each objective. They also include a systematic expansion of the central office in order to support the growth long term and the hiring of a principal and operations manager for each site with sufficient time prior to opening. The financial plan includes how the expansion will become sustainable by 2014. The growth plan (page 3) is controlled and steady, building capacity as schools are started and expanded. In response to past experiences, the CMO has decided to build new schools one grade at a time, in order to carefully replicate the elements that make their schools successful.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

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.

(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 management team has all had school based experience in the organization prior to assuming home office duties. They are very well educated and experienced. They are charged with responsibility for the faithful implementation and continuous refinement of the Educational Model. The management model includes "looking ahead" plans for expansion of school support as the organization grows purposefully. In addition to academics, the plan covers talent, student recruitment, facilities, operations and finance, financial sustainability, compliance and governance, organizational culture building, charter climate, and authorizer relationship. A project work plan is included that is divided into home office and campus activities. Timelines and activities are included. A five year financial plan is attached to the application.

Weaknesses:

Specific responsibilities are not provided and it is not clear who the Project Director will be. A plan for closing underperforming schools is not provided

Reader's Score: 22

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 evaluation will be done by the CMO but with an external measurement, the Performance Management Framework. In addition, each objective will have both process and outcome measures (pages 57-59).

Weaknesses:

It is not clear who will have the responsibility of collecting and analyzing each evaluation measure or how, when, and to whom reporting will be done.

Reader's Score: 4

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Applicant: DC Preparatory Academy (U282M110035)

Reader #3: *****

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Competitive Preference Priority 3		
Promoting Diversity		
1. Promoting Diversity	5	5
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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	20
Quality of the Evaluation Plan		
1. Quality of the eval. plan	5	5
Total	120	115

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel - 3: 84.282M

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: DC Preparatory Academy (U282M110035)

Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Low-Income Demographic

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Strengths:

The applicant clearly identifies the 80% low income students in the wards 5,7,8 areas of Washington, D.C. with the highest concentration of low-income families. Data charts on pg. 27 provide a reasonable documentation of the economically disadvantaged students attending the school.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses found in this area.

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:

The applicant provided clear proposed and measurable objectives for assisting disadvantaged students in the proposed served areas of Washington D.C. There is evidence on the achievement progress at the DC. public schools.

Weaknesses:

There are no weakness area areas in this application.

Reader's Score: 5

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 applicant since 2003 has one evident goal, which is to promote diversity by increasing the number of low-income communities it service's with the academic preparation and personnel. It succeeded in providing competitive, rigorous High School to bring a high quality education on a large scale to D.C. The charts on pgs. 7, 8-11 show the achievement data for the diverse students' population. The D.C. Way has a unique cultural and educational model that promotes diversity and academic excellence for the D.C. students.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses found in this area.

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:

The applicant has demonstrated with data consistency over the last three years that they have increased students achievement for minority students. The applicant has documented and demonstrated sound innovative, comprehensive strategies for increasing students achievement and attainment for all students. Accordingly the school and administration have been recognized in numerous professional organizations for their excellence.

Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses found under this area in the application.

Reader's Score: 50

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 with data consistency over the last three years that they have increased students achievement for minority students (pg. 19 - 27) and (pg. 38 - 39).

Weakness; No weaknesses areas were found in this application

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses areas were found in this application

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:

The applicant has demonstrated success in decreasing the achievement gap with subgroups. The details and documentation are presented in pg. 2, 5-9. [15]

Weaknesses:

No weakness was found in this area.

Reader's Score: 15

Sub Question

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 applicant has consistently been innovative in presenting comprehensive data on academic test scores and achievement between subgroups (pgs. 7 - 18). [15]

Weaknesses:

No weakness was found in this area.

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 applicant has documented their contribution in assisting disadvantaged students with data and compelling evidence which attest to clear and reasonable objectives that exceeded expectations (pgs. 7-18).

Weaknesses:

There are no weakness found under this area.

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 applicant has proposed a focused extensive DC Prep plan with a stellar new comprehensive work-plan that details each objectives and the staff responsible for meeting each objective. The work-plan provides reasonable timeline to meet each listed objective.

Weakness; There are no weaknesses found under this area.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses found under this area.

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.

(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 applicant has proposed an exhaustive and specific management plan for the project. Every manager is qualified with justified experience to lead in the DC prep way. Managers' experience presents significant assurance towards the success of the proposed project.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses found under this area.

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:

The applicant describes an extensive well documented evaluation process with appropriate detailed aspects of the projects (pgs. 56-59).

Weaknesses:

There were no weaknesses found under this area.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

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