

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/25/2014 05:23 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Great Oaks Foundation, Inc. (U282M140026)

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

|  | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Questions</b>                         |                 |               |
| <b>Selection Criteria</b>                |                 |               |
| <b>Eligible Applicant</b>                |                 |               |
| 1. Qual: Eligible Applicant              | 50              | 36            |
| <b>Significance</b>                      |                 |               |
| 1. Significance of Project               | 10              | 10            |
| <b>Quality of Project Design</b>         |                 |               |
| 1. Project Design                        | 15              | 13            |
| <b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>    |                 |               |
| 1. Management/Personnel Plan             | 20              | 20            |
| <b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b> |                 |               |
| 1. Evaluation Plan                       | 5               | 3             |
| <b>Priority Questions</b>                |                 |               |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Low Income Demographic</b>            |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 1                                 | 10              | 10            |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b> |                 |               |
| <b>School Improvement</b>                |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 2                                 | 4               | 0             |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Promoting Diversity</b>               |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 3                                 | 5               | 0             |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Promise Zones</b>                     |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 4                                 | 2               | 0             |
| <b>Overall Comments</b>                  |                 |               |
| <b>Overall Comments</b>                  |                 |               |

1. Overall Comments

0

0

**Total**

121

92

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - 84.282m - 3: 84.282M

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

Applicant: Great Oaks Foundation, Inc. (U282M140026)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Eligible Applicant

#### 1. Quality of the Eligible Applicant (50 points)

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

(Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.)

Reader's Score: 36

#### Sub Question

- 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 Great Oaks Foundation provides both student achievement data and Student Growth Percentiles for their Newark campus. The applicant explains that their schools begin at the 6th grade and students enter several years behind grade level. Even with this challenge - one that other high performing schools don't have - the school is scoring among the highest in the region, and outperforming Newark City schools by 15.1 percentage points in literacy and 38.7 percentage points in math (page 11). New Jersey Student Growth Percentiles show that GO-NWK made substantial gains from 2012 to 2013, ranking 9th in the state (page 9). Great Oaks NYC is still awaiting results of state testing from the past school year. However, the school participates with Achievement Network assessments, and performance results from these assessments show that the school is 1st in the Network for Math and tied for 2nd in Reading on the 4th interim (page 12). The table on page 10 provides English Language Arts and Math Proficiency rate data for 2012 and 2013. The data show increases in proficiency rates for both 6th and 7th grades in reading and math.

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide three years of data showing consistent increases in student achievement and attainment for all students.

Reader's Score: 15

#### 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

**Sub Question**

**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:**

Disaggregated data is provided in Table 10. African American and Latino students at GO-NWK outperform African American and Latino students in Newark on every indicator, and are scoring closer to the NJ averages for all students. This provides evidence that the school has been successful in closing achievement gaps. GO-NWK's economically disadvantaged students outperformed economically disadvantaged students in the state in Reading and Math in 2013 (page 11).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not provide data that clearly shows that their schools have consistently closed achievement gaps for student subgroups (students with disabilities and ELL students, for example) for three years.

**Reader's Score: 10**

- 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:**

GO-NWK, with 80% economically disadvantaged students, outperformed Newark City schools by 15.1 percentage points in literacy and 38.7 percentage points in math (page 11). Economically disadvantaged students at the school outperformed economically disadvantaged students in the state.

**Weaknesses:**

Attendance and retention data for the school and compared to the State was not provided. Three years of performance on statewide tests was not provided or compared to State averages.

**Reader's Score: 11**

**Selection Criteria - Significance**

**1. Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students (10 points)**

**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.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages applicants to describe their prior success in improving educational**

achievement and outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners. In addition, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how they will ensure that all eligible students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education and how the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners, in mastering State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.

**Strengths:**

80% of the student population at the Great Oaks schools are economically disadvantaged. Results show that students are meeting state standards at a higher rate than similar students (page 11). The Tutor Corps assures that students are given individualized supports and the mentoring needed to meet rigorous standards. Every student receives two hours of tutoring each day. Ongoing assessment data provides regular feedback on every student's progress and allows for targeted intervention. The emphasis on college readiness and college readiness activities will likely result in more educationally disadvantaged students graduating college and career ready.

The applicant provided information on the locations of schools to be expanded and created -Bridgeport, CT and Wilmington, DE, and information on the student population to be served at each - all locations will serve student populations where over 80% of are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The applicant describes how they will meet the needs of students with disabilities and ELL students (pages 56-58).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**1. Quality of the Project Design (15 points)**

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

(Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.)

**Reader's Score: 13**

**Sub Question**

- 1) 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 (5 points).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant is proposing to open schools serving similar populations than those currently served in existing schools. The goals are to expand two schools and launch two more, creating a total of 1,200 new high quality seats across the three-year grant period. The goal to significantly expand two high-performing schools is detailed by how many students and by when (page 22).

Student performance targets are provided on page 18.

## Sub Question

### **Weaknesses:**

The new schools to be opened will start with grade 6. Student performance targets (page 18) include items that do not directly align with the grade levels served (SAT scores and college courses while enrolled). High school programming and post graduation supports are not detailed, thus goals of “99% of graduating seniors to be admitted to a competitive four-year college or university” and “75% graduating from a competitive four-year college or university” do not appear measurable or attainable during the project or for several years after.

**Reader's Score: 3**

### **2. 2) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by evidence of promise (as defined in this notice) (10 points).**

#### **Strengths:**

The Theory of Change is provided on pages 14-15. The educational program and instructional services (including the Tutor Corps) follow the MATCH schools’ model. This model has been empirically tested.

MATCH was recognized eight times by the Effective Practices Incentive Community (Mathematica), which is more than any other school or network in the country. Data driven instruction, more time on task, character development, and relationships are practices of high performing schools, as evidenced in a Harvard study (page 19). High dosage tutoring was shown effective by the National Bureau of Economic Research (pages 19-20).

#### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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

### **Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (20 points)**

**The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate and substantially expand high-quality charter schools (as defined in this notice). In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:**

**(Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.)**

**Reader's Score: 20**

## Sub Question

### **1. 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 (4 points).**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes purchasing furniture and technology (necessary for PARCC testing), security systems and recruitment, and provides start and end dates and responsible parties. A Director of Talent and Recruitment will attend to the crucial task of human capital management. The applicant provides evidence of strategic planning and community engagement/launch campaign. The responsible party for specific tasks are defined (the Director of Operations at each site). A nicely detailed implementation plan is found on pages 17 and 18 of the appendix.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score:** 4

2. **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 (4 points).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides evidence of understanding of charter school financial management and has a Director of Finance that is a Certified Public Accountant (page 25). The business plan involves grants for startup, and sustainability by state and federal education funds after conclusion of the federal grant (page 25). Facilities needs are addressed (page 24). The Director of External Affairs raises capital to sustain start-up costs (25).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score:** 4

3. **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 projects long-term success (4 points).**

**Strengths:**

A five-year financial model for the organization is provided (page 28). Facilities have been identified. The applicant details fundraising from broad stakeholders. Letters of support from Newark Charter School Fund, NYCAn, and the Delaware Charter School Network are provided. \$1.3 million has been secured in foundation support for FY15 (page 29) and the applicant provides evidence of successful fundraising (page 46).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score:** 4

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

### Sub Question

#### Strengths:

A plan for closing non-performing schools is included on page 29. The applicant notes that contingency funds will assure that staff and vendors are paid. The applicant explains that they would work in partnership with the authorizer to notify parents, transfer records and dispose of school assets.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 4**

5. **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 (4 points).**

#### Strengths:

The President of Great Oaks Foundation has vast and deep experience in education reform, including being a founding board member of MATCH Charter School, one of the most successful schools in the nation. His professional history also includes work in civil rights, regulatory agencies and public policy. His education includes a Masters in Public Policy from JFK School of Government at Harvard University. The Executive staff have strong credentials - including work in TFA, KIPP, NYCAN, Success Academy Charter Schools, North Star Academy, Noble Network and MATCH. All have experience that align with the size and scope of the proposed project. Launch Directors are named. Several staff have roots in the community. The names and background of Board Members are provided.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 4**

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

#### 1. Quality of the Evaluation Plan (5 points)

**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 end of year evaluation in the areas of 1) student achievement, 2) student attendance and retention, 3) student demographics, 4) ELL data, 5) student and family surveys, 6) staff surveys, and 7) fiscal indicators. These align with the intended outcomes of the project - the expansion of two existing high quality schools and creation of two new high quality schools.

#### Weaknesses:

The evaluation plan lacked sufficient detail. The data to be collected for evaluation do not address several of the student performance targets described on page 18. The person responsible for the evaluation was not clear.

Reader's Score: 3

## Priority 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 (as defined in this notice).

**Note 1:** The Secretary encourages an applicant responding to this priority to describe the extent to which the charter schools it currently operates or manages serve individuals from low-income families at rates that are at least comparable to the rates at which these individuals are served by public schools in the surrounding area.

**Note 2:** For charter schools that serve students younger than 5 or older than 17 in accordance with their State's definition of "elementary education" or "secondary education," at least 60 percent of all students in the schools who are between the ages of 5 and 17 must be individuals from low-income families to meet this priority.

#### Strengths:

80% of GO-NWK and GO-NYC students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals (page 5). This is in comparison to the state rate of 35.5% (page 11).

#### 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 (as defined in this notice) 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).

**Note:** Applicants in States operating under ESEA Flexibility that have opted to waive the requirement in ESEA section 1116(b) for LEAs to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, their Title I schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two or more consecutive years may partner with LEAs to serve students attending priority or focus schools (see the June 7, 2012, "ESEA Flexibility" guidance at [www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility](http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility)). The Secretary encourages such applicants to describe how their proposed projects complement the efforts to serve students attending priority or focus schools described in States' approved requests for waivers under ESEA Flexibility.

#### Strengths:

No strengths were found.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address Competitive Priority 2.

**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 1: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Diversity, is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project would 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, or to avoid racial isolation.**

**Note 2: For information on permissible ways to meet this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice entitled, " Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools" at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf>.**

**Strengths:**

No strengths were found.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides demographic data to demonstrate that students at Great Oaks Charter Schools represent the ethnic and racial diversity of the communities in which they operate, but they do not provide enrollment data providing the percentage of students with disabilities served at the schools along with comparative data.

There is a lottery preference for ELL students and half of lottery applicants at GO-NYC came from homes where a language other than English is spoke (page 52). Efforts were made to make promotional materials and recruitment efforts in native languages. The applicant names specific strategies they will use to promote cultural understanding and respect for diversity, as well as attract students from different backgrounds (pages 6 and 7). The organization will make a specific effort to recruit Tutors that represent varied ethnicities and backgrounds.

Because this preference had an "all-or-nothing" scoring requirement and all components were not fully addressed, points could not be awarded.

**Reader's Score: 0**

## Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Promise Zones

1. This priority is for projects that are designed to serve and coordinate with a federally designated Promise Zone.

**Note:** Applicants should submit a letter from the lead entity of a designated Promise Zone attesting to the contribution that the proposed activities would make, and supporting the application. A list of designated Promise Zones and lead organizations can be found at [www.hud.gov/promisezones](http://www.hud.gov/promisezones).

### Strengths:

No strengths were found.

### Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this competitive priority.

**Reader's Score:** 0

## Overall Comments - Overall Comments

### 1. Overall/additional comments

#### General:

Great Oaks aspires to expand two existing high-quality schools (Go-NWK and GO-NYC) and launch two new schools. The areas that Great Oaks wants to expand to - Bridgeport, CT and Wilmington, DE - have a need for high quality education. Great Oaks model closely follows the highly successful and much acclaimed Match Charter School, including the Tutor Corps and Teacher Residency. Individualized support and mentoring is provided for students, enabling more low-income students to enter and complete college. The existing schools have evidenced strong academic results, both in achievement and growth. The applicant provides convincing evidence that they have the experience, documented success, and qualified staff to met the proposed project goals.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/25/2014 05:23 PM

Status: Draft

Last Updated: 08/11/2014 08:36 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Great Oaks Foundation, Inc. (U282M140026)

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

|  | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Questions</b>                         |                 |               |
| <b>Selection Criteria</b>                |                 |               |
| <b>Eligible Applicant</b>                |                 |               |
| 1. Qual: Eligible Applicant              | 50              | 42            |
| <b>Significance</b>                      |                 |               |
| 1. Significance of Project               | 10              | 8             |
| <b>Quality of Project Design</b>         |                 |               |
| 1. Project Design                        | 15              | 13            |
| <b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>    |                 |               |
| 1. Management/Personnel Plan             | 20              | 16            |
| <b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b> |                 |               |
| 1. Evaluation Plan                       | 5               | 5             |
| <b>Priority Questions</b>                |                 |               |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Low Income Demographic</b>            |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 1                                 | 10              | 9             |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b> |                 |               |
| <b>School Improvement</b>                |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 2                                 | 4               | 0             |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Promoting Diversity</b>               |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 3                                 | 5               | 4             |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Promise Zones</b>                     |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 4                                 | 2               | 0             |
| <b>Overall Comments</b>                  |                 |               |
| <b>Overall Comments</b>                  |                 |               |

1. Overall Comments

0

**Total**

121

97

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - 84.282m - 3: 84.282M

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

Applicant: Great Oaks Foundation, Inc. (U282M140026)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Eligible Applicant

#### 1. Quality of the Eligible Applicant (50 points)

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

(Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.)

Reader's Score: 42

#### Sub Question

- 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:

Only one of Great Schools' campuses has been open for three years and offers only two years worth of results. In those two years (2011-12, 2012-2013), student performance on the NJASK outperformed Newark Public Schools both years. The first year, GO-NWK outperformed the district by 1.4 points in literacy and 7.4 points in math. The second year, GO-NWK outperformed the local district by 15.1 percentage points in literacy and 38.7 percentage points in math. GO-NWK's FARM students outperformed the state average for FARM students by 13.1 percent (pgs 9-12).

#### Weaknesses:

Great Schools' results are limited. The Foundation only has one campus opened for three years, and only two years' worth of results are available.

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).

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

Go-NWK is the only Great Oaks school with test scores. There have not been significant gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in the ESEA Waiver; GO-NWK's Black and Latino students are outperforming state and district counterparts. GO-NWK's FARM students are also outperforming the state average for FARM students by 13.1 percentage points.

### Weaknesses:

Great Schools only has two years' worth of results for one campus. The results do not include Special Education students.

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:

Only one of Great Oaks' school sites (GO-NWK) has been open for three years. In that time, only two years worth of test results were available for inclusion in this application. However, between year one (2011-12) and year two (2012-13), GO-NWK's Student Growth percentiles were 9th highest in the state for math and language arts indicating that GO-NWK closes the learning gap for its students at a much higher rate than the most other public schools in the state.

Although they indicate that state standardized test scores should be higher, GO-NWK's African American, Latino and FARM subgroups outperform state averages in 2012-13.

### Weaknesses:

Go-NYC does not have state standardized test scores to include since its first year was 2013-2014. The application only discusses state standardized assessment scores and Student Growth Percentiles for only one of its campuses. It does not mention attendance or retention rates (the other indicators listed are N/A).

Reader's Score: 12

## Selection Criteria - Significance

### 1. Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students (10 points)

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.

**Note:** The Secretary encourages applicants to describe their prior success in improving educational achievement and outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners. In addition, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how they will ensure that all eligible students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education and how the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students, including students with

**disabilities and English learners, in mastering State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.**

**Strengths:**

Great Oaks Charter Schools uses ANet assessments to identify the needs of all students, not just economically disadvantaged, and assess their progress throughout the year. Assessments also inform tutor groupings. A unique component of Great Oaks Charter Schools is the Great Tutor Corps which provided all students with two hours of tutoring per day in groups no larger than 3 students to one tutor.

In a prior section, the applications discusses GO-NYC's ANet scores and and GO-NWK's NJACK State Assessment results. In SY13-14, GO-NYC tied for 2nd in the network in ELA and came in first in the network in Math. Despite having a student population that is 80% FARM verses a state average population that is 35% FARM, Go-NWK's scores on the NJASK came within 5 points of the state average.

**Weaknesses:**

This specific section of the application does not address the proposed locations of the schools to be created/expanded or the populations to be served. This information is, however, discussed in other parts of the application.

The application discusses that GO-NYC's students with IEPs outperformed the network in every math standard and all but two ELA standards on the ANet assessments, but it does not address ELL performance at either campus.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**1. Quality of the Project Design (15 points)**

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

**(Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.)**

**Reader's Score: 13**

**Sub Question**

- 1) 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 (5 points).**

**Strengths:**

Great Oaks Charter Schools' goal is for all students to be college ready and eventually graduate from college. Objectives include getting students on grade level by 8th grade and college ready by high school graduation. They believe they will achieve these goals through an unrelenting focus on college readiness, individualized instruction, data-driven instruction, more time on task, character development, and relationships. To hold themselves accountable, Great Oaks set six student performance targets (listed on page e34).

Great Oaks includes several research citations to support their program design, especially the emphasis on high dosage tutoring.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The section of the application lacks clear goals, objectives, and outcomes.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**2. 2) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by evidence of promise (as defined in this notice) (10 points).**

**Strengths:**

The applications cites several research articles/studies that support evidence of promise. A Harvard economist cites five educational practices that are proving most successful in charter education, all of which are utilized by Great Oaks. A US Dept of Education study as well as a University of Chicago students support high-dosage tutoring akin to the Great Oaks Tutoring Corps. Great Oaks' model is closely aligned to MATCH charter school in Boston whose positive student achievement results are also outlined in additional evidence.

**Weaknesses:**

The application includes as strong selection of relevant research based article/studies. The only potential weakness is the lack of longitudinal data for Great Oaks existing campuses.

**Reader's Score: 9**

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

**Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (20 points)**

**The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate and substantially expand high-quality charter schools (as defined in this notice). In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:**

**(Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.)**

**Reader's Score: 16**

**Sub Question**

**1. 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 (4 points).**

**Strengths:**

Much of the start-up and expansion responsibility will fall to the Great Oaks Foundation staff which includes a President, Superintendent, Director of Finance, Director of Recruitment & Talent, Director of External Affairs, and Master Teacher. The Foundation has also already identified Executive Directors for all four campuses and either a Launch Director or Director of Operations for new campuses.

The timeline on page e38 includes well-defined milestones and parties responsible for the completing major tasks in the areas of facilities, security, furniture, technology, and student recruitment.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The application timeline is limited to facilities, security, furniture, technology, and student recruitment and does not include additional areas such as human resources, finance, curriculum, and assessment design.

**Reader's Score: 3**

- 2. 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 (4 points).**

**Strengths:**

Each school campus will be supported by a Foundation staff member who will work in conjunction with campus leadership to ensure school quality and performance. The Director of Finance will provide fiscal management oversight; the President manages facilities; the Director of Talent and Recruitment supports recruiting of staff and faculty; and the Superintendent provides academic leadership.

As for fiscal sustainability, grant funding will only be used to support the start up of new campuses. At capacity, all Great Oaks Charter Schools will run strictly on the public revenue they receive.

**Weaknesses:**

Much of the business plan focuses on the expansion of the school and does not address sustainability (not including fiscal sustainability).

**Reader's Score: 3**

- 3. 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 projects long-term success (4 points).**

**Strengths:**

The Great Oaks Foundation has a successful track record of raising funds and has already raised enough funds to end the first year of its expansion with a projected surplus. The Foundation already secured six grants to support expansion ranging from \$60,000 to \$500,000, in addition to \$200,000 in individual donations.

**Weaknesses:**

The application does not include a plan for continuing to raise funds past FY15.

**Reader's Score: 4**

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

**Strengths:**

The application mostly addresses the Foundation's financial planning policies for a potential school closure. The Foundation will require each school to set aside contingency funds to ensure that all employees are paid according to contractual agreements with the school in the event of a school closure.

**Weaknesses:**

The application states that the Foundation would work closely with the authorizer to ensure a smooth transition but does not provide any details of what that would entail.

**Sub Question**

**Reader's Score: 2**

- 5. 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 (4 points).**

**Strengths:**

The Great Oaks Foundation staff all have previous experience working for high-quality charter school networks and bring the right skills and experience to lead the expansion of Great Oaks Charter Schools. At the secondary level, each of the designated site leaders also have relevant training and experience as well as knowledge of the specific neighborhood in which the school is situated.

**Weaknesses:**

This reviewer did not identify any weaknesses.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

**1. Quality of the Evaluation Plan (5 points)**

**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:**

Great Oaks Charter Schools intends to conduct an annual strategic review at the conclusion of each school year. The review will analyze the following qualitative and quantitative data: achievement data, attendance and student retention rates, student demographic data, results on the ELA exam and LAS Links, student and family surveys, staff, surveys, and fiscal indicators.

**Weaknesses:**

The evaluation presented in well thought out and comprehensive. The only possible critique could be that evaluation should be done on a ongoing basis and not just annually.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Priority 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 (as defined in this notice).**

**Note 1: The Secretary encourages an applicant responding to this priority to describe the extent to which the charter schools it currently operates or manages serve individuals from low-income families at rates that are at least comparable to the rates at which these individuals are served by public schools in the surrounding area.**

**Note 2: For charter schools that serve students younger than 5 or older than 17 in accordance with their State s definition of " elementary education" or " secondary education," at least 60 percent of all**

**students in the schools who are between the ages of 5 and 17 must be individuals from low-income families to meet this priority.**

**Strengths:**

Over 80% of the students at each of the four campuses discussed in the application will qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch; at the two schools in operation now--- GO-NWK and GO-NYC--- 80% of students are low-income. This percentage exceeds the 60% preference for this priority.

**Weaknesses:**

There is no information regarding how the percentage of students from low-income families at Great Oaks Foundation schools compares to similar student populations at public schools in the surrounding area.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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 (as defined in this notice) 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).**

**Note: Applicants in States operating under ESEA Flexibility that have opted to waive the requirement in ESEA section 1116(b) for LEAs to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, their Title I schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two or more consecutive years may partner with LEAs to serve students attending priority or focus schools (see the June 7, 2012, " ESEA Flexibility" guidance at [www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility](http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility)). The Secretary encourages such applicants to describe how their proposed projects complement the efforts to serve students attending priority or focus schools described in States ' approved requests for waivers under ESEA Flexibility.**

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**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 1: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Diversity, is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project would 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, or to avoid racial isolation.**

**Note 2: For information on permissible ways to meet this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice entitled, " Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools" at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf>.**

**Strengths:**

The student bodies at each of the Great Oaks Charter Schools' campuses are representative of the communities in which the schools operate. All four campuses serve diverse student populations, though GO-NEWARK is the least diverse (82% African-American and 18% Latino).

Go-NYC and GO-BPT both offer lottery preferences for ELLs and recruit in both English and the predominant language of the neighborhoods. Once students are enrolled, the school reduces racial, ethnic, and economic isolation through culturally sensitive materials, staffing, and programming.

**Weaknesses:**

The application does not discuss the percentage of students with disabilities served at any of the campuses.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Promise Zones**

- 1. This priority is for projects that are designed to serve and coordinate with a federally designated Promise Zone.**

**Note: Applicants should submit a letter from the lead entity of a designated Promise Zone attesting to the contribution that the proposed activities would make, and supporting the application. A list of designated Promise Zones and lead organizations can be found at [www.hud.gov/promisezones](http://www.hud.gov/promisezones).**

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Overall Comments - Overall Comments**

- 1. Overall/additional comments**

**General:**

**Reader's Score:**

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**Status:** Draft  
**Last Updated:** 08/11/2014 08:36 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/22/2014 01:27 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Great Oaks Foundation, Inc. (U282M140026)

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

|  | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Questions</b>                         |                 |               |
| <b>Selection Criteria</b>                |                 |               |
| <b>Eligible Applicant</b>                |                 |               |
| 1. Qual: Eligible Applicant              | 50              | 26            |
| <b>Significance</b>                      |                 |               |
| 1. Significance of Project               | 10              | 10            |
| <b>Quality of Project Design</b>         |                 |               |
| 1. Project Design                        | 15              | 13            |
| <b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>    |                 |               |
| 1. Management/Personnel Plan             | 20              | 14            |
| <b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b> |                 |               |
| 1. Evaluation Plan                       | 5               | 2             |
| <b>Priority Questions</b>                |                 |               |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Low Income Demographic</b>            |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 1                                 | 10              | 10            |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b> |                 |               |
| <b>School Improvement</b>                |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 2                                 | 4               | 0             |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Promoting Diversity</b>               |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 3                                 | 5               | 0             |
| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b> |                 |               |
| <b>Promise Zones</b>                     |                 |               |
| 1. CPP 4                                 | 2               | 0             |
| <b>Overall Comments</b>                  |                 |               |
| <b>Overall Comments</b>                  |                 |               |

1. Overall Comments

0

0

**Total**

121

75

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - 84.282m - 3: 84.282M

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

Applicant: Great Oaks Foundation, Inc. (U282M140026)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Eligible Applicant

#### 1. Quality of the Eligible Applicant (50 points)

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

(Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.)

Reader's Score: 26

#### Sub Question

- 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 proposal provides some evidence that the applicant demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement. For example, in the table on page 10 shows that students in the Newark GO school showed year by year improvement over two school years on ELA and Math state assessment performance. For example, the 7th grade improved by about 36% in math scores and about 35% in English Language Arts.

#### Weaknesses:

The proposal does not include three years of student performance data. This would suggest that there is a consistent track record of performance.

Reader's Score: 10

#### 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).

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The proposal provides some evidence that the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps. The table on page 10 shows that GO school in Newark have scored higher in some cases than the State of New Jersey and the Newark school district when it comes to African American and Latino achievement. The proposal also states that not only are there no achievement gaps between subgroups, GO-NWK's Black and Latino students are outperforming their District and State counterparts. (p. 10).

### Weaknesses:

The proposal does not include three years of student performance data. This would suggest that there is a consistent track record of performance.

**Reader's Score: 8**

- 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 proposal conveys achievement results that GO has achieved. For example, the proposal states that Of the 87 charter schools in the state of New Jersey, Great Oaks' growth percentage on Math ranked second. (p. 9). The proposal states that GO Newark percentiles for ELA were ninth in the state. (p. 9), which provides evidence of significant achievement of Great Oaks' students compared to other schools in the state.

### Weaknesses:

The proposal does not include three years of student performance data. This would suggest that there is a consistent track record of performance.

**Reader's Score: 8**

## Selection Criteria - Significance

### 1. Contribution in Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students (10 points)

**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.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages applicants to describe their prior success in improving educational achievement and outcomes for educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners. In addition, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how they will ensure that all eligible students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education and how the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners, in mastering State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.**

### Strengths:

The proposal provides extensive evidence for assisting educationally disadvantaged students. For example, the proposal states that in order to provide a high level of attention to each student's needs to support their preparation for college, the

full-time Tutor Corps, in conjunction with the teachers, provides individual attention to each student. (p. 12). In addition, the schools use achievement network assessments to identify students' learning needs and provide support for those students once those needs are identified. In addition, students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) will receive instruction in accordance with their IEP in the Least Restrictive Environment for that student. (p. 14). Plus, Great Oaks schools use an immersion model for educating ELLs, allowing them to rapidly gain language skills through peer interaction and English Language immersion while providing extra supports. Great Oaks closely tracks students' proficiency using frequent interim assessments. (p. 14). The proposal also states that despite the fact that GO-NWK serves a predominantly economically disadvantaged population (80% are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch), last year our students performed within five percentage points of the State on the state assessment (p. 11). These examples all serve as evidence that the proposed project will make a contribution in assisting educationally disadvantaged students.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**1. Quality of the Project Design (15 points)**

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

**(Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.)**

**Reader's Score: 13**

**Sub Question**

- 1) 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 (5 points).**

**Strengths:**

The proposal provides some elements of a high quality project design. The proposal notes that the overarching goal of the proposed project is to significantly expand two high-performing schools and launch two new high-performing schools. (p. 18). Students' performance targets are listed as well. (p. 18). For example, one performance target is that at least 85% of students will pass the standardized State exam (p. 18).

**Weaknesses:**

The proposal does not make clear when this project aims to achieve the performance targets. In addition, the performance targets are more relevant to high school student achievement rather than middle school students, which is the target population (p. 18).

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Sub Question**

**2. 2) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by evidence of promise (as defined in this notice) (10 points).**

**Strengths:**

The proposal provides extensive evidence that the proposed project is supported by research. The proposal identifies five educational practices that are proving most successful: (1) focusing on human capital, (2) using student data to drive instruction, (3) providing highdosage tutoring, (4) extending time on task, and (5) establishing a culture of high expectations.” (p. 19). These practices are taken from a cited research study. In addition, with the focus on tutoring, the proposal also cites a study that documents the efficacy of high-intensity tutoring on student achievement. (p. 20). This serves as evidence that the proposed project is supported by evidence of promise.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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

**Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (20 points)**

**The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and personnel to replicate and substantially expand high-quality charter schools (as defined in this notice). In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:**

**(Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.)**

**Reader's Score: 14**

**Sub Question**

**1. 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 (4 points).**

**Strengths:**

The proposal provides some elements of a comprehensive management plan. The project timeline on page 22 contains some elements of a high quality management plan. For example, the table includes tasks that will be accomplished and a time period in which those tasks will be done. In addition, the Director of Operations for each school is identified as the person responsible for the activities to be accomplished.

**Weaknesses:**

The management plan does exhibit some weaknesses. First, the management plan does not include many of the important tasks necessary for the educational model to be implemented in each school, such as the professional learning experiences necessary to begin a GO school. In addition, some of the task activities are probably too general. For example, recruiting and enrolling students include many important tasks for spreading the word about the school and engaging parents and community members that is hidden in the category of recruiting and enrolling.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 2

2. **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 (4 points).**

**Strengths:**

The proposal offers significant evidence of a high-quality business plan. On pages 25-27, the proposal provides systems that have been put in place through the business planning process to support various aspects of the school network. For example, these systems will support financial oversight (p. 25), facilities management (p. 26), and recruitment / human resources (p. 26-27).

**Weaknesses:**

The business plan does not make apparent the ways in which the school will explicitly improve and ensure quality, especially as it relates to the instructional work of the school.

Reader's Score: 3

3. **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 projects long-term success (4 points).**

**Strengths:**

The proposal provides extensive evidence of a high-quality financial and operating model. While the schools will sustain overhead once they scale, Great Oaks requires grant funding to cover start-up expenses. The Great Oaks Foundation has had substantial success raising start-up funds to support its schools. A financial model is included on page 28. This model includes an annual surplus with which to carry over to the next year. The proposal includes a financial commitment from some philanthropic organizations to support the work. (p. 29).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

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

**Strengths:**

The proposal includes a plan for closing low performing charters. For example, it states that to prepare for a possible closure or dissolution of any of the Great Oaks Charter Schools, all schools set aside adequate contingency funds to ensure that all employees are paid according to their contractual agreements with the school; to pay any staff who would be required for close-out activities; and, to pay any vendors such as auditors, movers, liquidators, etc. that would be needed. All cash and cash equivalents will be distributed first to satisfy outstanding payroll obligations for employees of the school, then to the remaining creditors of the school. (p. 29).

#### Sub Question

##### **Weaknesses:**

The proposal does not include information related to the plan for closing other than the financial arrangements.

**Reader's Score:** 3

- 5. 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 (4 points).**

##### **Strengths:**

The proposal provides background and description of some of the key staff personnel. For example, on pages 30-35, the bios of key staff are provided. These offer evidence that the staff has adequate training and experience to carry out the proposed work of the project. In addition, on pages e77 to e99, the CVs of key staff are provided. These provide greater detail to their experience in education and management and provide additional evidence that they have the right experience and skills to carry out this work effectively.

##### **Weaknesses:**

The proposal only lists one of the Director of Operations (p. 30-35). This was such a significant role in the management plan that it is not clear if they have additional Directors identified or if there is a clear job description to communicate the expectations of that position.

**Reader's Score:** 2

#### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

##### 1. Quality of the Evaluation Plan (5 points)

**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 proposal describes many elements of a high quality evaluation plan. For example, the proposal states that the schools will undergo rigorous self-evaluation every year to highlight areas for improvement. (p. 37). On pages 36-38, various data sources are listed as being sources of discussion annually between the Executive Director and the board of directors. These data are both quantitative and qualitative, which suggests that the information from the evaluation will be potentially robust.

##### **Weaknesses:**

It is not clear what questions are guiding the evaluation. It is also not clear who will actually be doing all of the evaluation work, such as data collection, data cleaning, data analysis before it gets to the reporting portion of the work.

**Reader's Score:** 2

#### Priority 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 (as defined**

in this notice).

**Note 1:** The Secretary encourages an applicant responding to this priority to describe the extent to which the charter schools it currently operates or manages serve individuals from low-income families at rates that are at least comparable to the rates at which these individuals are served by public schools in the surrounding area.

**Note 2:** For charter schools that serve students younger than 5 or older than 17 in accordance with their State's definition of "elementary education" or "secondary education," at least 60 percent of all students in the schools who are between the ages of 5 and 17 must be individuals from low-income families to meet this priority.

**Strengths:**

The proposal provides evidence to address this competitive preference priority. For example, the proposal states that in SY14-15, Great Oaks Charter School - Newark (GO-NWK) will serve approximately 350 students in Grades 6-10. At GO-NWK, 80% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. In addition, other charter schools in the project will serve populations where 80% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. (p. 11).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses 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 (as defined in this notice) 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).

**Note:** Applicants in States operating under ESEA Flexibility that have opted to waive the requirement in ESEA section 1116(b) for LEAs to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, their Title I schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two or more consecutive years may partner with LEAs to serve students attending priority or focus schools (see the June 7, 2012, "ESEA Flexibility" guidance at [www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility](http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility)). The Secretary encourages such applicants to describe how their proposed projects complement the efforts to serve students attending priority or focus schools described in States' approved requests for waivers under ESEA Flexibility.

**Strengths:**

This criterion was not addressed by the applicant.

**Weaknesses:**

This criterion was not addressed by the applicant.

**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 1: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Diversity, is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project would 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, or to avoid racial isolation.**

**Note 2: For information on permissible ways to meet this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice entitled, " Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools" at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf>.**

**Strengths:**

No strengths noted.

**Weaknesses:**

Although the proposal addresses some of the elements of this competitive preference priority such as the fact that the schools' demographics are a reflection of their neighborhoods. At GO-NYC and GO-BPT, the schools offered a lottery preference for ELLs. GO-BPT held its lottery in June and of the 100 students who will enroll, 59% self-identified as ELLs. (p. 6). To reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation, the proposal puts forth several strategies, such as exposing children to a wide range of culturally sensitive, non-biased materials and Field trips – primarily to colleges and universities – outside of their city to broaden students' experiential base (p. 6-7).

However, in addressing this priority, there were two points that were unclear. First, it was unclear in the proposal if the schools would be serving ELLs at least at a rate that is comparable to a nearby school district. Second, it was not clear in the proposal if the schools would be serving students with disabilities at a rate at least comparable to a local school district or even what percentage of students with disabilities the school would be addressing.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Promise Zones**

1. This priority is for projects that are designed to serve and coordinate with a federally designated Promise Zone.

**Note: Applicants should submit a letter from the lead entity of a designated Promise Zone attesting to the contribution that the proposed activities would make, and supporting the application. A list of designated Promise Zones and lead organizations can be found at [www.hud.gov/promisezones](http://www.hud.gov/promisezones).**

**Strengths:**

This criterion was not addressed by the applicant.

**Weaknesses:**

This criterion was not addressed by the applicant.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Overall Comments - Overall Comments**

**1. Overall/additional comments**

**General:**

No additional comments.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 08/22/2014 01:27 PM