

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/23/2014 11:03 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools, Inc. (U282M140017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Qual: Eligible Applicant	50	49
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance of Project	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	15	15
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management/Personnel Plan	20	19
<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	10
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>School Improvement</b>		
1. CPP 2	4	4
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity</b>		
1. CPP 3	5	5
<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

117

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - 84.282m - 3: 84.282M

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

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools, Inc. (U282M140017)

## 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: 49

#### 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:

Yes Prep students are required to be accepted to college as a condition of graduation. This emphasis on college results in students, who are largely economically disadvantaged, graduating from college at five times the rate of their peers in Houston and quadruple of that of their peers nationally (page 6).

Three years of data for economically disadvantaged students in grades 6, 7 and 8 and end of course exam data for economically disadvantaged students for two years are provided on pages 17, 18 and 20 and in the appendix (which includes data for students with disabilities and LEP students). Student attainment (graduation rate) data is provided for three years on page 21, and compares Yes Prep to Houston ISD.

The applicant provides extensive and convincing evidence of student academic achievement and attainment for the past three years.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

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

#### Sub Question

**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:**

Three years of Grades 6, 7 & 8 Reading and Math scores (pages 17-18) show that economically disadvantaged students at YES Prep are exceeding the state and Houston ISD averages. 2013 and 2014 End of Course exam data for economically disadvantaged students prove that YES Prep is exceeding the State and district average on this measure. AP/IB tested rates for African American and Hispanic students are provided for 2010, 2011 and 2012, and evidence that YES Prep exceeds state and district averages on this measure. SAT Average scores for all YES Prep students, for economically disadvantaged YES Prep students, and for African American and Hispanic students are compared to the SAT Average scores of students in the district for 2012, 2013 and 2014 (Other attachments, pages 16 and 17). The applicant provides comparative disaggregated assessment data for all middle schools for 2012, 2013 and 2014 and for end of course exams for high schools in the attachment. Data show that YES Prep exceeds state averages in the vast majority of areas, including with disaggregated groupings.

#### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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 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 provides evidence of three years of performance on statewide tests, attendance and retention rates, and high school graduation rates for disadvantaged students that are significantly above the academic achievement results for students in the State. Data for students with disabilities and ELL students is presented as well.

#### **Weaknesses:**

Three year rates on high school graduation, college attendance and college persistence were not clearly presented for subgroups.

**Reader's Score: 14**

#### **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 schools proposed by the applicant will be located in high need, economically disadvantaged areas. The applicant describes the location of the proposed schools, and the percentages of ELL, students with disabilities, and race/ethnicity subgroups of students located in the districts of the proposed schools. The applicant provides substantial evidence on prior success in educating educationally disadvantaged students (STAAR data and end of course data in the attachment and tables in the application).

The applicant describes their prior success with students with disabilities and english language learners, and how they will assure that these students will be well served in the new schools (pages 27-28 and page 25).

**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: 15**

**Sub Question**

- 1. 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 provides specific objectives, measures, targets and baselines, which all appear attainable. Objectives include 1) more students will have access to a high quality education, 2) achievement results and college attainment rates of educationally disadvantaged students will increase, 3) teachers will be highly trained and effective and 4) the community will be engaged. The applicant plans to open 8 more schools in Houston (YES Prep' s current 13 schools are all in Houston and serve primarily Hispanic and African American students) and 6 schools in Memphis, in cooperation with the Achievement School District. 97% of students are African American in the Memphis neighborhoods where the new schools are planned. This population is similar to the population currently served.

A Logic Model is included on page 41. The model describes the purpose, inputs, outputs (activities and

**Sub Question**

participation) and outcomes (short-term, intermediate and long-term). Process measures and outcome measures are provided on page 42.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

**Strengths:**

The evidence of promise requirement is clearly met. Yes Prep has been evaluated by Caroline Hoxby and Sarah Turner. There is statistical evidence of the positive impacts of YES Prep programming, specifically the college initiatives resulting in increased college attainment and the educational program resulting in increased achievement results (page 35). Hoxby & Turner's results meet the What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards (with reservations). The YES Prep Pillars are very similar to the KIPP model, which has been validated by Mathematica.

**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: 19**

**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:**

YES PREP is a highly respected CMO that has successfully replicated its model. The management plan provides for clearly defined responsibilities for accomplishing the project tasks on time and within budget. Project Timelines and Milestones for school years 2014-15 through 2018-19 are provided on page 48. The plan includes one year of planning time (Year Zero) for each site, teacher preparation, on boarding time for students, and a gradual expansion of grades served at sites. An annual process and outcomes evaluation is noted for each year. Responsibilities of staff are defined on page 47. This attention to careful growth and reflection evidences that the applicant is experienced and concerned with assuring quality.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The timelines and milestones were not fully detailed and too broad (pages 48-49).

**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:**

The application provides a credible Business Plan on pages 50-51. The plan evidences a clear understanding of financial and operating expenses and revenues. The applicant describes how they will sustain high quality facilities, financial management, central office functions, student academic achievement, governance, oversight and human resources beyond the initial period of federal funding. The applicant addresses the infrastructure needed for each element. Bellweather Partners has been hired to assist with strategic planning, and this work has resulted in specific objectives to guide the work of the organization. The applicant describes the site expansion screening process.

**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 multi-year financial and operating model for the organization is provided on pages 51-21. There are demonstrated financial commitments from current and future partners. Partnerships are established with successful educational entities - including Teach for America, Relay Graduate School, and other successful CMOs. Broad support from stakeholders, including nearby school districts, is noted, and letters of support are provided.

**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).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes a credible plan for closing charter schools that are not meeting high quality standards (pages 53-54). Multiple methods for evaluation are described - including findings from an independent evaluator, performance on goals, and the Campus Report Card. The Campus Report Card includes assessment of adherence to YES Prep standards on student achievement, student persistence, campus health, talent pipeline, budget, and other measures. A needs assessment and comprehensive improvement plan will be created for schools not performing up to standards, and ongoing supports will be provided. School leadership and instructional staff will be changed if needed.

**Sub Question**

**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 applicant provides clear and convincing information that the skills and qualifications of national and regional leaders are appropriate for the size and scope of this project. The qualifications of the Project Director (16 years experience in education and past Regional Director of New Leaders, Executive Director of the New York City Department of Education's Charter School Office, and past leadership roles in public school districts) and Key Leadership (Regional Superintendents of Houston and Memphis campuses both have classroom and school development and leadership experience) align with the experience and skills needed for this project. Yes Prep CEO [REDACTED] has been with the organization since 1997, and succeeded Chris Barbic as president in 2011. All project staff are experienced with school replication.

**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 and evaluation plan that includes both process and outcomes evaluation. The evaluation plan is clearly related to the intended outcomes of this project. Data will be evaluation using statistical analyses with SPSS. Quantitative and qualitative data will be used formatively and summatively.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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:**

87% of children in the YES Prep district are from low-income families. The applicant provides data from individual schools and from public districts in the surrounding areas. YES Prep serves a higher percentage of low-income students than the nearby districts. New schools will also exceed the 60% requirement.

**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:**

YES Prep plans to open six schools in the Achievement School District (Tennessee). The schools will replace persistently low-performing district schools (schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, closure or restructuring). The Achievement School District is a partnership between local and governmental agencies. 6,000 students, who were previously enrolled in persistently low performing schools, will be affected.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 4**

### 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 CMO states that they are committed to serving students that are representative of the neighborhood where the schools are located. The methods YES Prep uses to promote diversity in the schools they currently operate include purposely drawing boundary areas or attendance zones to assure that seats are more apt to be taken by neighborhood residents rather than by non-minority students living outside the resident school district (which has happened in the past), and by having a race and special education neutral lottery. YES Prep schools currently serve a higher percentage of ELL students (22% at Yes Prep schools verses 17% at Houston ISD) and a comparable percentage of students with disabilities than the districts where they are located. The demographic data for planned schools is provided, and this data indicates that the new YES Prep schools will continue to serve comparable percentages of ELL students and students with disabilities (for example, the planned school in Memphis will open in a neighborhood where 24% of students receive special education). Other activities that promote diversity are enrichment activities, including service learning and out-of-state travel to visit colleges throughout the country. These practices will continue in the planned schools. The applicant sets specific enrollment targets for African American and Hispanic, LEP and Special Education students and assures that recruitment efforts reach students that are representative of these groups (page 42).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 5

### 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:**

YES Prep is a proven CMO with 15 years experience. Their model promotes college acceptance, attendance and completion for historically underserved students, and they have the results that show that the model is working. YES Prep was found to have the highest overall performance of the top twenty CMOs by an independent panel of education experts. The organization has won the prestigious and highly competitive Broad Prize. The organization takes strong approaches to developing and sustaining teachers and leaders. This application will allow YES Prep to expand from 16 highly successful schools in Houston to 24, and to work in partnership with Tennessee Achievement District to improve 6 persistently low performing schools in Memphis. The applicant describes a careful, planned approach to replication that involves the community, families and instructional staff to assure readiness and long term sustainability of academic results and financial stability.

**Reader's Score: 0**

---

**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 08/23/2014 11:03 AM

Status: Draft

Last Updated: 08/18/2014 12:18 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools, Inc. (U282M140017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Qual: Eligible Applicant	50	44
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance of Project	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	15	15
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management/Personnel Plan	20	19
<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	10
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>School Improvement</b>		
1. CPP 2	4	4
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity</b>		
1. CPP 3	5	5
<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

112

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - 84.282m - 3: 84.282M

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

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools, Inc. (U282M140017)

## 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: 44

#### 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:

YES Prep students in grades 6-8 have outperformed their peers in the Houston ISD and at the state level in almost every grade level for the past three years.

YES Prep students are required to take at a least one AP course in high school. Since 2009-10, overall scores, AP Calculus scores, and AP English Lit scores have all increased.

Since Texas adopted the STARR assessment in Spring 2012, the gap between YES Prep student performance verses the performance of their peers at both the state and district levels has decreased.

#### Weaknesses:

The data provided for high school achievement is limited. YES Prep only included 2012-13 STARR assessment results for economically disadvantaged students and 2013-14 results for English II only. YES Prep students exceeded peers at in all comparisons reported.

High school achievement data is limited and seemingly random.

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

**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:**

Eighth grade YES Prep African-American and Latino student, respectively, outperformed their peers at the district and state level on the STAAR assessment in 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14.

The high school data was mostly buried in the attachments section of this submission, but it shows that YES Prep student subgroups (AA, latino, and economically disadvantaged) regularly outperform peer at the state and district level.

**Weaknesses:**

The application does not include a comparison of YES Prep African American and Latino students to their white or socio-economically advantaged counterparts. The only comparisons available are to the same subgroup or neighboring high schools. The high school information on the whole was buried and difficult to easily decipher.

**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:**

YES Prep reported comparisons of state assessments for all available comparisons. YES Prep students at both the eighth grade and high school levels consistently outperformed students on the STAAR and high school subject assessments.

YES Prep high school students (overall and in each subgroup) exceeded the state average on the 2012-13 SAT (only exam results reported in main appellation) (p.22).

YES Prep has strong college acceptance and matriculation results. 100% acceptance for graduating senior. 97% matriculation within one year of high school graduation. 72% of alumni are currently enrolled or have a degree.

YES Prep attendance for the past three years is 97% compared to the state and Houston ISD average of 96% (p. 13).

**Weaknesses:**

Attrition/Mobility and Retention rates are higher at most YES Prep schools in the years comparison data is available (p.16).

**Reader's Score: 14**

**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:

YES Prep currently operates 13 schools serving 9,000 students in grades 6-12. 87% of student are economically disadvantaged (abstract). The proposed project will open 14 new schools in Houston and Memphis, adding 13,600 new high-quality seats. At scale, YES Prep will serve 23,600 students. YES Prep projects that their new schools will serve an equal or higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students (p.2).

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses reported

**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:** 15

#### 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:

YES Prep provides a high level overview of their proposed growth in both Houston and Memphis. In addition to sharing seat projections, the application discusses plans for Professional Development and Curriculum Development, as well as Oversight, Management, and Evaluation. Page 41 includes a logic model which describes high level Inputs, Outputs, and Outcomes, and pages 42-43 list performance measures, targets, and baseline data.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**Reader's Score: 5**

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

**Strengths:**

YES Prep has undergone two major expansions in its history. In 2003, with only one school in operations, YES Prep opened four additional sites. Again in 2009, with five schools in operation, YES Prep opened eight more schools and became a school district.

Hoxby and Turner's study of YES Prep's college initiatives showed that YES Prep's interventions resulted in increased applications to selective institutions, increased rates of acceptance to selective institutions, and increased rates of matriculation to selective universities.

A Mathematica study of KIPP, who operates a similar educational program to YES Prep (table provided on p.37), shows that KIPP students performed significantly better on state assessments in reading and math. YES Prep acknowledges that there are some small differences in the two networks' programs, but they are for the most part very similar.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**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: 19**

**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 project timeline and milestones (p.48-49) appear manageable and realistic for the resources of the YES Prep network.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The responsibilities of each component of the timeline do not have defined staff members linked to them. The timeline is general and would benefit fro

**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:**

YES Prep partnered with Bellweather Education Partners to develop a long-term strategic plan that identifies six strategic priorities with corresponding metrics, thresholds, and benchmark data for all new schools (p.50).

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness identified.

**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:**

YES Prep projects that it will need \$78.4 million in capital and operating expenses in the next seven years. They have all but \$17.7 million committed. Their philanthropic base is wide ranging from the largest donor, Charter School Growth Fund, at \$24 million, to individual donors totaling \$5.5 million. Their donors and partners include national education funders, other high performing networks, and strategic growth experts.

**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:**

All schools will be evaluated on according to standard objectives and performance measures, findings by an independent evaluator, and the Campus Report Card. For underperforming schools, YES Prep will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and create a school improvement plan (p.54). If a school fails to make progress, leadership and instructional staffing will be changed.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted

**Reader's Score: 4**

## Sub Question

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 national and regional staff are experienced educators and charter school operators. Though the President & CEO has not lead an expansion before, he was a co-founder and co-director of a YES Prep school before and knows the network well.

YES Prep clearly delineates role and responsibilities of national, regional, and school-based staff. Collectively, the staffing model sets the network up for successful expansion without diluting the network.

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

YES Prep has designed a comprehensive evaluation plan with Waits Consulting Group (p.55-58). The plan includes a process and outcomes evaluation starting with the planning and implementation stage, monitoring the first few years of schools, and including a comparison of an experimental and control group. YES Prep plans to disseminate the findings of their evaluation at national conferences and in publications.

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified

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:**

Districtwide, 87% of YES Prep students are from low-income families. In Houston, YES Prep serves the highest percentage of low-income students among the five districts to which YES Prep students are zoned (p.1). New schools will also exceed the 60% requirement.

**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:**

YES Prep will open six schools in partnership with the Achievement School District (ASD) in Memphis, TN. ASD was created to catapult the bottom 5% of schools in TN to the top 25% in the state. At scale, YES Prep will serve 6,000 students or 25-30% of students in grades 6-12 in ASD (p.2).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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:**

YES Prep is committed to building neighborhood schools; therefore, they prioritize students who live within boundaries drawn around school sites (p.3). In Houston, 90% of low-income students are African American or Latino. 100% of YES Prep students are African American or Latino. YES Prep is committed to increasing diversity by providing transportation for students who live two miles or more from a school site.

YES Prep serves a higher percentage of ELLs than schools in the surrounding area.

**Weaknesses:**

YES Prep is committed to building neighborhood schools; therefore, they prioritize students who live within boundaries drawn around school sites. Typically, their schools are in low-income neighborhoods, limiting their student population to African-American and Latino students which makeup the neighborhoods in which their schools are built.

YES Prep serves fewer students with disabilities than their peer public schools in the surrounding area (p.13).

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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:**

Not applicable

**Weaknesses:**

Not applicable

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Overall Comments - Overall Comments**

**1. Overall/additional comments**

**General:**

**Reader's Score:**

---

**Status:** Draft  
**Last Updated:** 08/18/2014 12:18 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/22/2014 11:37 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools, Inc. (U282M140017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Eligible Applicant</b>		
1. Qual: Eligible Applicant	50	48
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance of Project	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Design	15	14
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management/Personnel Plan	20	18
<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	10
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>School Improvement</b>		
1. CPP 2	4	4
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
<b>Promoting Diversity</b>		
1. CPP 3	5	5
<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

114

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - 84.282m - 3: 84.282M

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

Applicant: YES Prep Public Schools, Inc. (U282M140017)

## 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: 48

#### 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 extensive evidence of YES Prep's demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement. For example, in the table on page 14, the attendance rate is provided for the past three years that show improvement or at least maintenance of very high attendance rates across schools. In addition, in the table on graphs on pages 17-18, the proposal shows that the reading and math performance of 6th and 7th graders have improved or stayed consistently at a high level over a three-year span.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses.

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).

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The proposal provides substantial evidence that YES Prep has been making significant gains with their subgroups. For example, YES prep has had their ELL students score higher on math and reading standardized assessments than the state as well as the neighboring school districts. Moreover, the on page 17 the proposal does shows success over time for economically disadvantaged students.

### Weaknesses:

The proposal does not make clear with data the extent to which the achievement gap has been minimized or grown over the past three years. For example, the data for the achievement gap is not provided with a comparison of sub-groups, such as African-American student performance with White student performance.

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:

The overall data presented in the proposal demonstrates that YES Prep has achieved high results for its population over time. For instance, graphs on page 20 make evident that fact that YES Prep is outperforming its comparable schools. This success is also true for the graduation data found on page 21, which is higher than the state average as well as the school district average. The proposal also conveys the accomplishments of the school's students through their success demonstrated in high school graduation and AP exam success is provided on page 21.

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

## 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 shows in tables on pages 24 and 25 that the demographic makeup of the newly forming schools is relatively similar to YES Prep's current schools. In addition, the proposal states how effective the schools have been in

outperforming nearby school districts and the state with respect to ELL student performance and Special Education students' performance. The table on page 28 shows that students identified into special education programs at YES Prep have outperformed the state and nearby school districts with a similar population of 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: 14**

**Sub Question**

- 1. 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 contains many elements of a high-quality project design. For example, the table on pages 42-43 provide objectives to guide the work. For instance, one of the objectives is: Increase parent and community engagement. In addition, each of these objectives are accompanied by performance measures, performance targets and baseline data to signal if a change is actually occurring with respect to the project.

**Weaknesses:**

It is not clear from the project design what all of the data sources will be to provide evidence for the performance targets being achieved. For example, one performance measure is that the majority of students will persist from fall to fall, but it does not make clear how it will define persisting or where that data will come from.

**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 proposal provides a logic model that shows what the different activities in the project will be and the intended short-term, mid-term and long-term goals. In addition, the proposal uses the Mathematica evaluation of YES Prep as evidence that the YES Prep program is effective and research-based. This comparison is justified by a comparison made in the table on pages 37-38 that shows the similarities of the two models.

Sub Question

**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: 18**

Sub Question

- 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 many elements of a high quality management plan. For example, the proposal describes the roles of the national and regional teams of YES Prep. (p. 45). In addition, a timeline for the project is provided on pages 48-49 along with milestones to be accomplished.

**Weaknesses:**

The timeline on pages 48-49 provides segments of time (school years) that are too general to suggest when a milestone should be completed or if the project is appropriately on schedule. In addition, it is not apparent who will be responsible for each of the milestones in the timeline.

**Reader's Score: 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 states that YES Prep developed a business plan with the assistance of Bellwether, a national consultancy group (p. 50). Through this work, they identified risk factors that could inhibit the replication and growth in the proposed project. A board sub-committee helped the organization assess the five finalist sites. Through this planning process, YES Prep identified six national strategic priorities that are each supported by metrics, thresholds, and benchmark data. (p. 50). The proposal also states that through the development of the business plan, YES Prep has invested extensively in building scalable district infrastructure. (p. 51).

Sub Question

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**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:**

The proposal includes a financial and operating model in the appendix. According to this model, YES Prep will achieve sustainability in 2019-20. To achieve this growth goal, they have a seven-year philanthropic need totaling \$78.4 million (capital and operating). After committed and likely fundraising, however, they have a remaining philanthropic gap of \$17.7 million. The proposal includes a listing of philanthropic commitments (p. 51) as well as mentioning some of the partnerships that are integral to their current success, such as their partnerships with KIPP Houston and Spring Branch and Aldine School Districts. (p. 53).

**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 provides a plan for addressing one of their low performing schools. For example, the proposal states that if a school is not performing up to standards, YES Prep will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and create a school improvement plan. The school director and his/her staff will receive extensive, ongoing support. If a school fails to make sufficient improvement, the school leadership and instructional staff will be changed. (p. 54).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**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 qualifications of the key staff are provided in the proposal. For example, brief bios are included on pages 45-46. Moreover, the CVs of key personnel are provided in the appendix. These serve as evidence that their experience and training are aligned with the expectations and the scope of the work. The proposal also adds that all new teachers and most leaders will be trained and coached internally through the Teaching Excellence and Leading Excellence programs. (p. 47). This provides additional evidence that the staff will be adequately prepared to carry out the work of the grant.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Sub Question

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 proposal provides evidence of a high quality evaluation plan. For example, the plan consists of a process evaluation and an outcomes-based evaluation (p. 54-55). The process evaluation will document and report on the planning and implementation process quarterly. This will involve the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, which is evidence that the evaluation information may be robust. The proposal mentions that the evaluation team will use project goals and objectives, performance measures and targets, and baseline data, in assessing the project's outcomes (described on Page 42). (p. 56). This will utilize comparison groups and multi-variate analysis will be employed in order to control for extraneous influences on the outcomes. (p. 57).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

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:**

The proposal provides evidence of a high quality evaluation plan. For example, the plan consists of a process evaluation and an outcomes-based evaluation (p. 54-55). The process evaluation will document and report on the planning and implementation process quarterly. This will involve the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, which is evidence that the evaluation information may be robust. The proposal mentions that the evaluation team will use project goals and objectives, performance measures and targets, and baseline data, in assessing the project's outcomes (described on Page 42). (p. 56). This will utilize comparison groups and multi-variate analysis will be employed in order to control for extraneous influences on the outcomes. (p. 57).

**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:**

The proposal provides extensive evidence for this competitive preference priority. For example, the proposal states that the proposed schools will open in Tennessee in the newly formed Achievement School District (ASD) (p. 2). This school district is composed of the lowest quartile of performing schools, removing them from their home district and placing them in ASD. ASD is working to authorize the best charter school providers to address student needs. Therefore, YES Prep is an important partner in the implementation of the Achievement School District (p. 2).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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 proposal provides extensive evidence to address this competitive preference priority. For example, the proposal provides a percentage breakdown for the 13 schools currently served by YES Prep of African American and Latino students (p. 13). In addition, the proposal provides projected demographic data for the schools that will be opened based on the neighborhood demographics where the schools will be located (p. 24-25). The racial or ethnic composition of the YES Prep schools is primarily a function of the neighborhood in which the school is found. The proposal states that YES Prep will give preferential enrollment to students within the immediate area because of their belief in neighborhood schooling (p. 3). The proposal shows that the percentage of students identified for special education is slightly lower than the neighboring school districts. However, the percentage of students identified for special education in the neighborhoods of the proposed schools is approximately 4 times higher than they are currently serving. (p. 5). However, the percentage of students identified as English Language Learners at YES Prep schools is higher than the neighboring school districts. (p. 15). To address racial isolation, the proposal states that annual spring trips give most students their first opportunity to travel out-of-state and visit colleges around the country. By graduation, YES Prep students have visited numerous colleges and universities. Students also have opportunities to give back to their communities through service learning. (p. 8).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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:**

The applicant did not address this competitive preference priority.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address this competitive preference priority.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Overall Comments - Overall Comments**

**1. Overall/additional comments**

**General:**

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

---

**Status:**           Submitted  
**Last Updated:**   08/22/2014 11:37 AM