# U.S. Department of Education

**Washington, D.C. 20202-5335**

# APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE

**CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM STATE EDUCATION AGENCY**
**CFDA # 84.282A**
**PR/Award # U282A090013**
**Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT10180002**

Closing Date: FEB 25, 2009

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OMB Number: 4040-0004
Expiration Date: 01/31/2009

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424** Version 02

* 1. Type of Submission:
- [ ] Preapplication
- [x] Application
- [ ] Changed/Corrected Application

* 2. Type of Application:
- [x] New
- [ ] Continuation
- [ ] Revision

* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):

* Other (Specify)

* 3. Date Received: 02/23/2009

4. Applicant Identifier:

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:

* 5b. Federal Award Identifier:

**State Use Only:**

6. Date Received by State:

7. State Application Identifier:

**8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

* a. Legal Name: State of Tennessee Doing Business as Department of Education

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): 626001445

* c. Organizational DUNS: 879016251

**d. Address:**

* Street1: 5th Floor Andrew Johnson Tower
Street2: 710 James Robertson Parkway
* City: Nashville
County: Davidson
* State: TN: Tennessee
Province:
* Country: USA: UNITED STATES
* Zip / Postal Code: 37243

**e. Organizational Unit:**

Department Name: Education

Division Name: Teaching and Learning

**f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:**

Prefix: Dr.
* First Name: Eric
Middle Name:
* Last Name: Hilgendorf
Suffix:

Title: Director of Charter Schools and Choice

Organizational Affiliation:

* Telephone Number: 615-741-8486
Fax Number: 615-253-5706

* Email: Eric.Hilgendorf@state.tn.us

OMB Number: 4040-0004
Expiration Date: 01/31/2009

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424** Version 02

**9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

*** 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

U.S. Department of Education

**11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:**

84.282

CFDA Title:

Charter Schools

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-021809-001

* Title:

Charter School Programs CFDA 84.282A

**13. Competition Identification Number:**

84-282A2009-1

Title:

**14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):**

*** 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

Tennessee Charter Schools Program

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments Delete Attachments View Attachments

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OMB Number: 4040-0004
Expiration Date: 01/31/2009

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424** Version 02

**16. Congressional Districts Of:**

* a. Applicant: TN-All
* b. Program/Project: TN-All

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment | Delete Attachment | View Attachment

**17. Proposed Project:**

* a. Start Date: 07/01/2009
* b. End Date: 06/30/2014

**18. Estimated Funding ($):**

| | |
|---|---|
| * a. Federal | 22,153,684.00 |
| * b. Applicant | 0.00 |
| * c. State | 0.00 |
| * d. Local | 0.00 |
| * e. Other | 0.00 |
| * f. Program Income | 0.00 |
| * g. TOTAL | 22,153,684.00 |

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

☐ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on .

☐ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.

☒ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes", provide explanation.)**

☐ Yes ☒ No Explanation

**21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications** and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

☒ ** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

**Authorized Representative:**

Prefix: Dr.
* First Name: Timothy
Middle Name: K.
* Last Name: Webb
Suffix:

* Title: Commissioner of Education

* Telephone Number: 615-741-5158
Fax Number:

* Email: Tim.Webb@state.tn.us

* Signature of Authorized Representative: Eric Hilgendorf
* Date Signed: 02/23/2009

Authorized for Local Reproduction

Standard Form 424 (Revised 10/2005)
Prescribed by OMB Circular A-102

OMB Number: 4040-0004
Expiration Date: 01/31/2009

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424** Version 02

*** Applicant Federal Debt Delinquency Explanation**

The following field should contain an explanation if the Applicant organization is delinquent on any Federal Debt. Maximum number of characters that can be entered is 4,000. Try and avoid extra spaces and carriage returns to maximize the availability of space.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**BUDGET INFORMATION**

**NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Control Number: 1890-0004

Expiration Date: 06/30/2005

Name of Institution/Organization:
State of Tennessee Doing Busines...

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

## SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

| Budget Categories | Project Year 1(a) | Project Year 2 (b) | Project Year 3 (c) | Project Year 4 (d) | Project Year 5 (e) | Total (f) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Personnel | $ 70,000 | $ 72,100 | $ 74,263 | $ 76,491 | $ 78,786 | $ 371,640 |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | $ 28,834 | $ 29,268 | $ 29,715 | $ 30,176 | $ 30,650 | $ 148,643 |
| 3. Travel | $ 9,000 | $ 9,000 | $ 9,000 | $ 9,000 | $ 9,000 | $ 45,000 |
| 4. Equipment | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 5. Supplies | $ 4,500 | $ 4,000 | $ 4,000 | $ 3,500 | $ 3,500 | $ 19,500 |
| 6. Contractual | $ 2,796,000 | $ 4,850,000 | $ 4,050,000 | $ 4,550,000 | $ 4,800,000 | $ 21,046,000 |
| 7. Construction | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 8. Other | $ 95,000 | $ 94,000 | $ 92,000 | $ 89,000 | $ 86,441 | $ 456,441 |
| 9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8) | $ 3,003,334 | $ 5,058,368 | $ 4,258,978 | $ 4,758,167 | $ 5,008,377 | $ 22,087,224 |
| 10. Indirect Costs* | $ 13,292 | $ 13,292 | $ 13,292 | $ 13,292 | $ 13,292 | $ 66,460 |
| 11. Training Stipends | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 12. Total Costs (lines 9-11) | $ 3,016,626 | $ 5,071,660 | $ 4,272,270 | $ 4,771,459 | $ 5,021,669 | $ 22,153,684 |

***Indirect Cost Information *(To Be Completed by Your Business Office)*:**

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

(1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? [X] Yes [ ] No
(2) If yes, please provide the following information:
Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: 7/1/2008 To: 6/30/2009 (mm/dd/yyyy)
Approving Federal agency: [X] ED [ ] Other (please specify): _____
(3) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:
[X] Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? or, [ ] Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)?

ED Form No. 524

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**BUDGET INFORMATION**

**NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Control Number: 1890-0004

Expiration Date: 06/30/2005

Name of Institution/Organization:
State of Tennessee Doing Busines...

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

## SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY

## NON-FEDERAL FUNDS

| Budget Categories | Project Year 1(a) | Project Year 2 (b) | Project Year 3 (c) | Project Year 4 (d) | Project Year 5 (e) | Total (f) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Personnel | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 3. Travel | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 4. Equipment | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 5. Supplies | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 6. Contractual | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 7. Construction | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 8. Other | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8) | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 10. Indirect Costs | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 11. Training Stipends | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |
| 12. Total Costs (lines 9-11) | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 | $ 0 |

OMB Approval No.: 4040-0007
Expiration Date: 07/30/2010

# ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington, DC 20503.

**PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.**

**NOTE:** Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.

2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States and, if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.

3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.

4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.

5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).

6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C.§§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U. S.C. §§6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§290 dd-3 and 290 ee- 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and, (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.

7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally-assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.

8. Will comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally-assisted construction subagreements.

10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is $10,000 or more.

11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and, (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).

12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.

13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).

14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.

15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.

16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.

17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."

18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.

| * SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL | * TITLE |
|---|---|
| Eric Hilgendorf | Commissioner of Education |
| * APPLICANT ORGANIZATION | * DATE SUBMITTED |
| State of Tennessee Doing Business as Department of Education | 02/23/2009 |

**Standard Form 424B (Rev. 7-97) Back**

# DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

**Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C.1352**

**Approved by OMB**
0348-0046

**1. * Type of Federal Action:**
- [ ] a. contract
- [x] b. grant
- [ ] c. cooperative agreement
- [ ] d. loan
- [ ] e. loan guarantee
- [ ] f. loan insurance

**2. * Status of Federal Action:**
- [ ] a. bid/offer/application
- [x] b. initial award
- [ ] c. post-award

**3. * Report Type:**
- [x] a. initial filing
- [ ] b. material change

**4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity:**

[x] Prime [ ] SubAwardee

** Name* Tennessee Department of Education

** Street 1* 6th Floor Andrew Johnson Tower *Street 2* 710 James Robertson Parkway

** City* Nashville *State* TN: Tennessee *Zip* 37243

Congressional District, if known:

**5. If Reporting Entity in No.4 is Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime:**

**6. * Federal Department/Agency:**
U.S. Department of Education

**7. * Federal Program Name/Description:**
Charter Schools

CFDA Number, *if applicable:* 84.282

**8. Federal Action Number,** *if known:*

**9. Award Amount,** *if known:*
$

**10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant:**

*Prefix* ** First Name* NA *Middle Name*

** Last Name* NA *Suffix*

** Street 1* *Street 2*

** City* *State* *Zip*

**b. Individual Performing Services** (including address if different from No. 10a)

*Prefix* ** First Name* NA *Middle Name*

** Last Name* NA *Suffix*

** Street 1* *Street 2*

** City* *State* *Zip*

**11.** Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when the transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

*** Signature:** Eric Hilgendorf

***Name:** *Prefix* Dr. ** First Name* Timothy *Middle Name*

** Last Name* Webb *Suffix*

**Title:** Commissioner of Education **Telephone No.:** 615-417-5158 **Date:** 02/23/2009

**Federal Use Only:**

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**Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)**

Close Form



## NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

### To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

### What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

### What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

### Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **1894-0005**. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to**: U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

## Optional - You may attach 1 file to this page.

TN Section 427 of GEPA.doc | Add Attachment | Delete Attachment | View Attachment

**GEPA (General Education Provisions Act), Section 427**

Tennessee commits to the following activities to ensure that programs and activities funded under the Charter Schools Program Grant meet the requirements of GEPA, Section 427. GEPA, Section 427 requires applicants to take steps that will ensure access to education and promote educational excellence by:

> "(1) ensuring equal opportunities to participate for all eligible students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries in any project or activity carried out under an applicable program; and
>
> (2) promoting the ability of students, teachers, and beneficiaries to meet high standards."

Therefore, the State of Tennessee will ensure equitable participation in all state-level programs funded under the Charter Schools Program Grant for students, teachers, and other beneficiaries with special needs through the following activities:

- Using technology to communicate with key stakeholders about the Charter Schools Program;
- Ensuring diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, and disability status on task forces or committees;
- Including written statements in public communications that provide potential participants with the options of special needs accommodations;

- Providing professional development, conferences, and other activities only in facilities that have met accessibility guidelines; and,
- Providing information in other languages than English when necessary.

Furthermore, the State will require that subgrantees address their compliance with Section 427 of GEPA as well.

## CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,00 0 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subjec t to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

* APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION

State of Tennessee Doing Business as Department of Education

* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Prefix: Dr. * First Name: Timothy Middle Name: K.

* Last Name: Webb Suffix:

* Title: Commissioner of Education

* SIGNATURE: Eric Hilgendorf * DATE: 02/23/2009

Close Form

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**
**REQUIRED FOR**
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GRANTS**

**1. Project Director:**

| Prefix: | * First Name: | Middle Name: | * Last Name: | Suffix: |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dr. | Eric | | Hilgendorf | |

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**2. Applicant Experience:**

Novice Applicant ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable to this program

**3. Human Subjects Research**

Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed project Period?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Are ALL the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

☐ Yes Provide Exemption(s) #:

☐ No Provide Assurance #, if available:

**Please attach an explanation Narrative:**

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# Project Narrative

## Abstract Narrative

Attachment 1:
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**ED Grant Abstract**

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The Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002 resulted in the authorization of four (4) charter schools that opened in 2003-04. Since that time, Tennessee has continued to authorize and grow the number of high-quality charter schools that improve learning; provide alternative educational options for parents; encourage innovative educational strategies; measure performance of students, faculty and schools; create new professional development; and allow parents an option for meaningful participation in the education of their children. The charter movement that began as four schools, in 2003, will encompass twenty-two (22) schools, in 2009. As the number of high-quality charter schools grows in Tennessee, it will continue to allow school districts and local boards of education the opportunity to provide a broader portfolio of schools to their public school students, and continue to realize a positive influence on the statewide performance of Tennessee schools.

The purpose of this grant is multifaceted and relates to the sustained effort that Tennessee places in the development of and support for the implementation of high quality schools. The project objectives of this grant are:

1) To expand the number (overall, demographic and geographic) of high-quality charter schools. At present all of the charter schools are nested within three school districts, with the largest district encompassing fifteen schools of the state total of twenty-two. Through this project, Tennessee will be able to increase the total number of schools and promote a variety of charter schools in new districts to meet changing student needs.
2) To support the success (academic, organizational and fiscal) of Tennessee charter schools through state and local involvement. This project is critical to the fiscal and organizational challenges that new charter schools face. Through state and local involvement this project will ensure a high level of financial and organizational accountability and resulting student success.
3) To encourage dissemination of best practices within charter schools to the broader public. In the past, Tennessee has concentrated upon the implementation of new and successful charter schools. This project will also focus on a broader set of methods to highlight and demonstrate the success of the Tennessee charter schools.
4) To improve academic achievement of charter school students. While Tennessee charter schools continue to reflect increased student achievement, objectives one through three highlight and support the critical importance of sustaining and supporting a constant focus on continued improvement of student achievement in charter schools.

The objectives will increase the capacity of charter schools in achieving their mission of providing a robust program that has a positive and sustainable impact upon student achievement.

# Project Narrative

## Project Narrative

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# Part III. Project Narrative

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## 1. Competitive Preference Priorities

### 1.1. Emphasis on Secondary School Charter Schools

Tennessee effectively meets the requirements of Competitive Preference Priority 1.1 "emphasis on secondary school charter schools." As detailed in the Tennessee Department of Education Report Card for the 2007-08 school year, Tennessee had a total of 91 schools that were identified as High Priority (HP) due to not having made Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). Of that number, 39 of those schools were high schools (43% of the total number of HP schools). In 2008-09, Tennessee experienced a reduction in both the total number of HP schools (77 schools) and the number of HP high schools identified (36 high schools). However, despite these reductions, the percentage of HP high schools rose from 43% in 2007-08 to 47% in 2008-09. The following Table 1.1 provides 2005-09 district-level percentages of HP high schools. Although each district has specific instances in which districts have successfully reduced the percentage of HP high schools, the current year (2008-09) demonstrates percentages that are markedly above their status in 2005-06. Additionally, seven of the ten high school charter schools authorized have been in the last two years.

The Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002 originally defined eligible enrollment into a charter school to be at-risk students who were zoned to a school that was failing. However, in 2005 subsequent amendments to the law included additional individual student descriptors: "…(3) students who in the previous school year failed to test proficient in the subjects of language arts/reading or mathematics in grades three through eight on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)examinations or, (4) students who in the previous

school year, failed to test proficient on the secondary level Gateway examinations in language arts/reading or mathematics.

Tennessee High School Progress

As the table below also suggests, through their capacity as charter school authorizers, LEAs have endorsed the growth of charter high schools in an effort to meet the needs of their at-risk secondary student populations. Over the past three years, the Director of the Office of Charter Schools and Choice has made dedicated efforts in cultivating and assisting in the promotion of high school charter schools. Due to this and a significant commitment at the local level, the majority of charter high schools have been recently authorized, suggesting a dedication and receptivity at the Local Education Agency (LEA) level to move in this direction. Although Hamilton County has only recently begun to authorize charter schools (2008), both of their approved charter schools are for new high schools with innovative and relevant designs. Ivy Academy will open in Fall 2009 and will be the first "green" charter high school, serving 320 students in grades 9-12. The Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy will also commence operations in Fall of 2009 and will offer a STEM model (science, technology, engineering and math) charter school for grades 6-12 and will serve 320 young women. Similarly, of the four (4) new charter schools that Memphis City Schools authorized in 2007, two (2) were for high schools: The Memphis Business Academy High School, for 300 grades 9-12, will incorporate an emphasis on secondary education that is designed to lead students to post-secondary education in business-related fields and; the Memphis Academy of Health Sciences High School, for 400 students grades 9-12, is designed to encourage its graduates into post-secondary study in the

burgeoning health-science related industries that are central to the Memphis business environment.

Table 1.1 Need for High School Charter Schools

| LEA | Percentage of HP high schools 2005-06 | Percentage of HP high schools 2006-07 | Percentage of HP high schools 2007-08 | Percentage of HP high schools 2008-09 | Number of Charter Schools Authorized | Number of High School Charter Schools Authorized | Number of High School Charter Schools Authorized since 2007 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hamilton County Schools | 38.1% | 25.0% | 33.3% | 66.7% | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Knox County Schools | 30.0% | 42.9% | 70.0% | 61.5% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools | 25.0% | 33.3% | 32.4% | 31.0% | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Memphis City Schools | 33.3% | 48.6% | 46.3% | 51.7% | 15 | 7 | 4 |

Additionally, this trend of poorly performing high schools has been recently publicly addressed through the October 2008 statewide "High School Redesign" conference, at which, the Director of Charter Schools was invited to present upon the efficacy of utilizing charter high schools as a method of meaningfully engaging the community in a high quality secondary school. Since that time, at least one large urban district has made public a planning document that includes start-up and conversion charter high schools as a central component of district reform. Due to both the need for charter high schools, and the increasing receptivity for them as a model of effective reform, the Director of Charter Schools plans to continue to cultivate them as detailed in the performance objectives of this grant application in Selection Criteria (i). This effectively demonstrates support and encouragement of charter high schools, as defined by this competitive priority.

**1.2. Periodic Review and Evaluation of Charter Schools**

State Level Reporting

Tennessee has comprehensive legislative and operational components that address competitive priority, 1.2 "periodic review and evaluation of charter schools." At the state level, the Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) 49-13-120 entitled, "Reporting Requirements" details that "the governing body of the public charter school shall make at least an annual progress report to the sponsor of the school, the chartering authority, and the commissioner of education." This information is then harvested and presented in a report that is submitted annually to the Tennessee Legislature as per T.C.A. 49-13-120 (3), "based upon the information provided to the commissioner of education under the provisions of this section, the commissioner shall prepare and submit an annual report on charter school to the joint oversight committee on education." The Executive Summary of the 2008 report to the general assembly has been included in Appendix A.

Additionally, the Office of Research and Educational Accountability, in the Office of the Comptroller has reporting requirements with relation to charter schools, as per T.C.A. 49-13-128, (b) "the office of education accountability in the office of the comptroller shall construct a comprehensive study of the charter schools across Tennessee…by February 1, 2006…and February 1 2008." The 2006 report, "A Look at Tennessee's Charter Schools" and the 2008 report, "Charter Schools in Tennessee: Issues of Innovation and Sustainability" utilized primary data from charter schools, authorizers, advocacy groups and the Department of Education. Copies of these reports may be found at: http://www.comptroller1.state.tn.us/RA_RE/OEreports.asp. In May 2008, the reporting portion of the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act was amended to include the appointment of a

charter school task force that will be composed of charter advocacy groups, authorizers, charter school parent representatives, community representatives from each of the grand divisions, the State Board of Education, the Department of Education and the Office of the Comptroller. This task force is designed to collect evidence from charter schools and "address issues including but not limited to, statutory inconsistencies and technical issues, fiscal issues, administrative compliance, identification and communication of charter schools' best practices, facility needs, transportation, food services, communication between LEAs and charter schools' boards, principals and administrative staff and employee benefits, and charter school board's accountability." After collection of data from charter schools and analysis, this task force will compile and present a report to the General Assembly by February 2010.

Fiscal evaluation of charter schools is completed on an annual basis through an audit as per T.C.A. 49-13-127. Audits are scheduled to be completed as soon as practical after June 30 of each school year. Audits may be prepared by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) or via the department of audit and are to be provided to the LEA that authorized the charter school, the joint oversight committee on education, the commissioner of education and the comptroller of the treasury.

Regarding reporting requirements for charter school renewals, as per T.C.A. 49-12-121(a), "New public charter schools, conversion schools and all renewals of charter agreement shall be for five-year periods." In order for a charter school to be renewed, it must enter into the renewal process, which includes, "1) a report on the progress of the school in achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards, and other terms of the approved charter agreement; and 2) a financial statement that discloses the costs of administration, instruction, and other spending categories for the school."

External Evaluation and Reporting

In addition to these state-level reports, the Department of Education has contracted with the Center for Research in Education Policy (CREP), at the University of Memphis, as an external evaluator for two annual charter school assessments at the school and student level of analysis. These reports have been conducted since Tennessee opened its first charter school, in 2003. The first evaluation is at the school level and is designed to study the progress made in program implementation, school climate, and student achievement by the charter schools. This analysis uses a "mixed-method" design, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative primary data. The instruments used in this data collection involve: 1) School Observation Measure (SOM©); 2) Rubric for Student-Centered Activities (RCSA©); 3) School Climate Inventory (SCI©); 4) Principal Interview; 5) Teacher Focus Group; 6) Student Focus Group; 7) Charter School Teacher Questionnaire; and 8) Charter School Parent Questionnaire. Primary data are collected via an assigned site researcher, whose duties involve major data collection responsibility for each charter school. These individuals and additional research staff make multiple visits to the charter school to conduct observation, administer the questionnaire and conduct the interview and focus groups.

The second evaluation involves separate student-level achievement data based on Tennessee comprehensive examinations per grade level. This analysis utilizes a matched program-control design. Each charter school student is paired with a comparable "control" student who attended the same or a similar district school in the year prior to the former's charter school enrollment. This type of study does not control for student choice, family involvement or other constraints; and due to some small sample sizes, there can be sampling error; however, it does provide

insight as to the difference that charter school students are making compared to their non-charter school counterparts at the individual student level.

LEA Level Reporting

At the local level, there is considerable monitoring and reporting. Memphis City Schools, which holds the majority of Tennessee charter schools (currently 13 out of a total of 16 operational charter schools) conducts an annual monitoring report of charter schools with an additional interim report due for charter schools that are in their first year of operation. While designed to be constructive in nature and of assistance for new charter schools, these matrices include reporting on how each charter school has met, exceeded or not met their school-wide goals. Common goals pertain to curriculum content, performance standards, organizational structures, parental and community engagement, value-added, student re-enrollment, student, parent, faculty and staff assessment of school climate, safety and student stability rate. Copies of these matrices for elementary, middle school and high school charter schools have been included in Appendix A for review.

**1.3. Number of High-Quality Charter Schools**

Through statute; operational management; and the charter approval, renewal and revocation process, Tennessee charter schools are held to a high caliber of becoming and remaining a high quality charter school. Since the inception of Tennessee charter schools, the state, LEAs and charter operators have placed a premium on high-quality charter schools. The purpose of charter schools as defined by T.C.A. 49-12-102 is: 1) to improve learning for all students and close the achievement gap between high and low students; 2) provide options for parents to meet

educational needs of their children; 3) encourage different and innovative methods of teaching…4) measure pupil and faculty performance…ensure that students meet proficiency standards; 5) create new professional development opportunities for teachers and; 6) afford parents substantial meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children. In order to accomplish the above purpose, it is of vital interest to authorize high quality charter schools that can meet this measure. As indicated in Table 1.2 below, in the Fall of 2009, Tennessee will begin its seventh cohort of charter schools with a total of 22 operational schools. Although there was only one school that was authorized in cohorts four and five, this was largely the result of transitional leadership personnel at both the Tennessee charter association level and the state department of education level. Since that time, the State Education Agency (SEA) and the Tennessee charter association have designed and implemented individual charter school action plans of charter awareness, technical assistance, professional development and event activities. This, in addition to a more favorable charter position at the LEA level, has resulted in ten (10) newly authorized charter schools in the past two years, with the last cohort of six (6) being the largest authorized in a single year.

Table 1.2 Cohort History of Tennessee Charter School Authorizations

| **Cohort 1 - Schools Authorized to Open Fall 2003** | |
|---|---|
| Circles of Success Learning Academy | Memphis City Schools |
| Memphis Academy of Health Sciences | Memphis City Schools |
| Memphis Academy of Science and Engineering | Memphis City Schools |
| Smithson Craighead Academy | Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools |
| **State Total** | **4** |
| **Cohort 2 - Schools Authorized to Open Fall 2004** | |
| City University School of Liberal Arts | Memphis City Schools |
| STAR Academy | Memphis City Schools |
| Yo! Academy (closed Fall 2007) | Memphis City Schools |
| **State Total** | **7** |
| **Cohort 3 - Schools Authorized to Open Fall 2005** | |
| Promise Academy | Memphis City Schools |
| Memphis Business Academy | Memphis City Schools |
| Southern Avenue Charter School | Memphis City Schools |
| Soulsville Charter School (formerly STAX) | Memphis City Schools |
| KIPP Academy | Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools |
| **State Total** | **12** |

| **Cohort 4 - Schools Authorized to Open Fall 2006** | |
|---|---|
| **State Total** | **12** |
| **Cohort 5 - Schools Authorized to Open Fall 2007** | |
| LEAD Academy | Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools |
| **State Total** | **12** |
| **Cohort 6 - Schools Authorized to Open Fall 2008** | |
| Power Center Academy | Memphis City Schools |
| KIPP Diamond Academy | Memphis City Schools |
| Memphis Academy of Health Sciences-High School | Memphis City Schools |
| Memphis Business Academy-High School | Memphis City Schools |
| **State Total** | **16** |
| **Cohort 7 - Schools Authorized to Open Fall 2009** | |
| Ivy Academy | Hamilton County Schools |
| Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy | Hamilton County Schools |
| City University School-Boys Preparatory | Memphis City Schools |
| Freedom Preparatory Academy | Memphis City Schools |
| Nashville Global Academy | Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools |
| Smithson Craighead Academy-Middle School | Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools |
| **State Total** | **22** |

**Note- All schools successfully opened upon authorization.*
***Note-State total in 2007 remains constant as LEAD Academy opened and Yo! Academy was closed.*

Charter School Application Process

The process of charter application in Tennessee provides a strong indication of whether or not a charter has the capacity to become successful upon authorization. The application process begins at the LEA level, however, if the application is denied at the LEA level, the charter applicant has the ability to appeal to the State Board of Education, which has the power to remand the denial (the appeal process is covered in more detail in the following section 1.4). If all authorizing entities utilize the maximum amount of time indicated by law (T.C.A. 49-13-108), the process can last up to 160 days. While lengthy and rigorous, this process does provide for the highest caliber of application and charter school design to be authorized. This process has resulted in the authorization of twenty-three charter schools, with only one instance of charter revocation, that of Yo! Academy, which closed in the Fall of 2007 as the result of failure to make AYP for two consecutive years. However, it should be noted that Yo! Academy was the only high school that chose to open with a full cohort of students in all four grades 9-12, rather

than to start with lesser number of grades and build toward the maximum grade structure. Tennessee schools that have chosen to build grades in consecutive years seem to realize a stronger school culture, less student and faculty transition, and a higher proficiency level of academic readiness.

Charter School Renewal and Revocation Process

The renewal process is described in T.C.A. 49-13-121. In order for a charter school to be renewed following a five-year period, the school has to reapply as a charter school and demonstrate its level of success. This process includes a separate application that is as comprehensive as the initial application that granted charter status. In addition, success is also measured through LEA monitoring and the annual performance reports (previously referred to in competitive preference 1.2). According to T.C.A. 49-13-121(c), "a public charter school renewal application shall contain 1) a report on the progress of the school in achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards, and other terms of the approved charter agreement; and 2) a financial statement that discloses the costs of administration, instruction, and other spending categories for the school." The renewal process is designed to ensure that the school is both educationally and fiscally sound in order to be authorized for an additional five-year period.

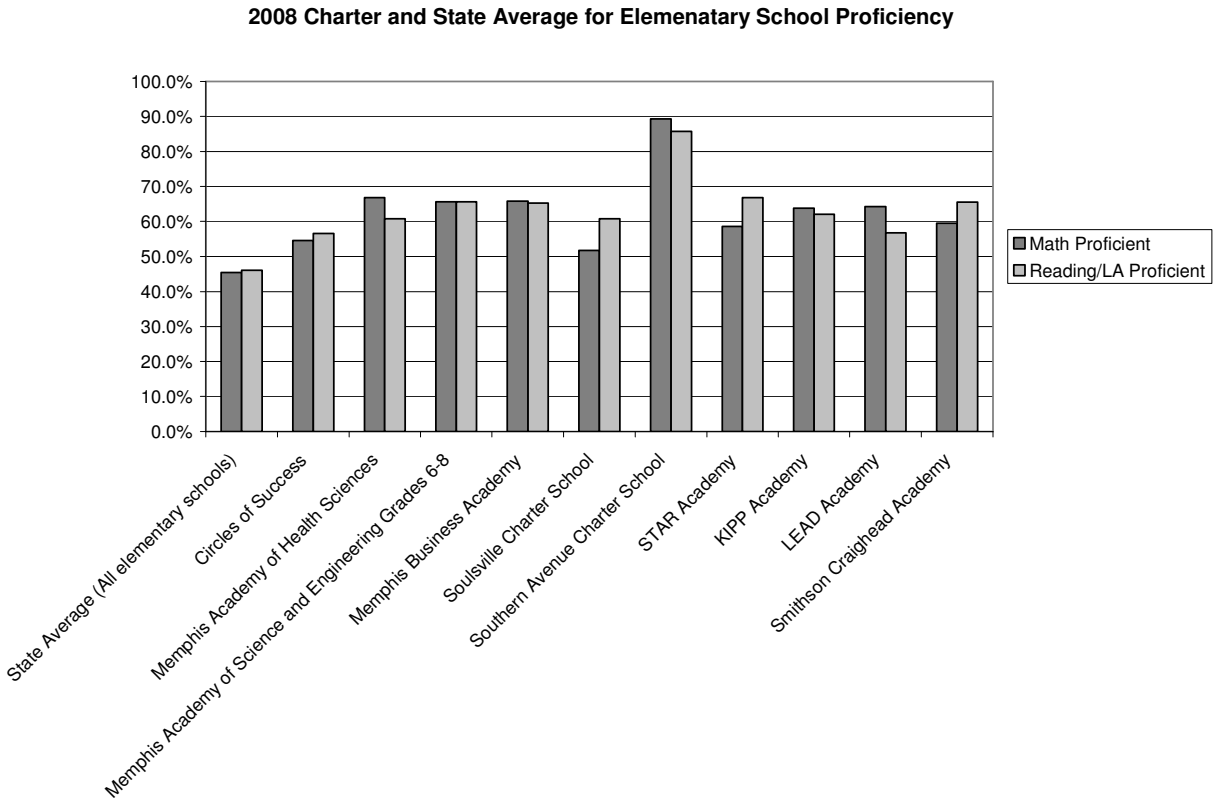
The revocation process is covered in T.C.A. 49-13-122 and underscores the balance that Tennessee charter schools must maintain between maximum flexibility and accountability. Tennessee charter schools may be revoked or denied renewal if any of the following have been committed: a material violation of the conditions, standards, or procedures in the original charter; failure to meet AYP or; failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.

Furthermore, the accountability behind a revocation is high-stakes as an LEA may opt to revoke a charter after two years of failure to meet AYP without the ability for the charter school to appeal.

Number and Success of Charter Schools

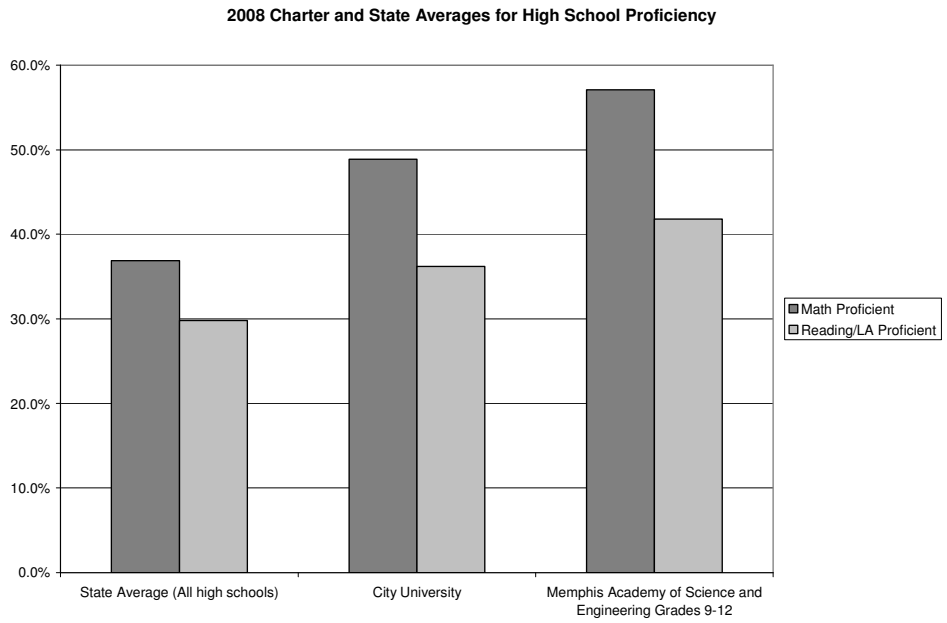
Aside from legislative and statutory issues, the Office of Charter Schools at the Tennessee Department of Education and the charter schools effectively demonstrate that both the number of charter is on the rise, as is their educational success. As the Figures 1.1 and 1.2 demonstrate, Tennessee elementary and high school charter schools outperform the state threshold in proficiency levels of math and reading/language arts (it should be noted that the state average is derived from all of the public schools, including magnet and high-performing schools). Figure 1.1 demonstrates that all of the elementary schools outperform the state average in both math and reading/language arts. Although there were some narrow margins, the Soulsville Charter School still outperformed the state average in math by 6.3% and Circles of Success Charter School outperformed the state average in reading/language arts by 10.5%.

Figure 1.1 Charter Elementary School Proficiency




With regard to the high school charters, as reflected in the following graph, both City University and Memphis Academy of Science and Engineering outperformed the state averages, with City University having the narrowest margin of a higher contrast comparison with a 12% performance over the state average in math and a 6.4% performance over the state average in reading/language arts. This is especially noteworthy due to the fact that Tennessee charter law allows only students zoned to failing schools or who are failing themselves. The levels of remediation necessary for high school students and the reality of an authorizer revoking a charter school for failure to meet AYP have kept the high school charter school population at low levels. However, as indicated earlier, with maturing charter school operators and the need for high school options there has been more interest in and authorization of high school charter schools.

Figure 1.2 Charter High School Proficiency




Charter School Enrollment

What certainly needs to be stated at this point in the narrative is that Tennessee charter law has very strict requirements for eligible students. As per T.C.A. 49-13-106(a), "1) Students who were previously enrolled in a charter school; 2) Students who are assigned to, or were previously enrolled in, a school failing to make adequate yearly progress, as defined by the state's accountability system, giving priority to at-risk students; 3) Students who, in the previous school year, failed to test proficient in the subjects of language arts/reading or mathematics in grades three through eight (3-8) on the Tennessee comprehensive assessment program examinations; 4) Students who, in the previous school year, failed to test proficient on the Gateway examinations in language arts/reading or mathematics; 5) Students in grades kindergarten through three (K-3) who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch." As can be inferred from the above, the Tennessee charter schools are required to teach some of the most at-

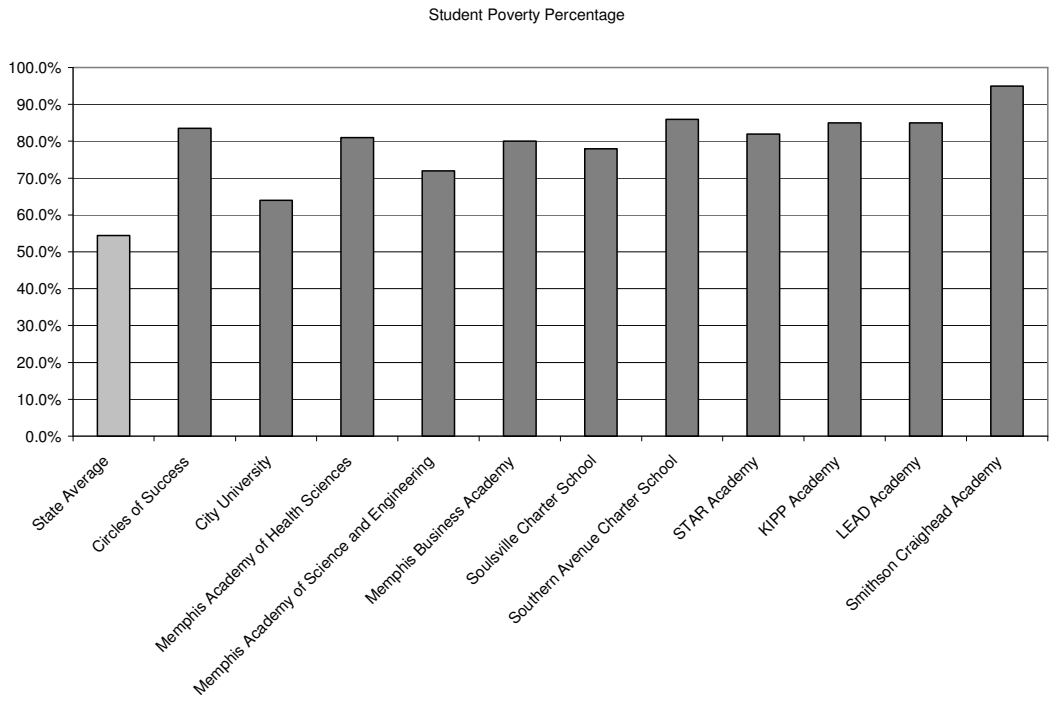
risk of failure students. Additionally, as can be seen in the following Figure 1.3, all of the charter schools have student poverty enrollments that exceed the state average.

One objective of the Office of Charter Schools at the Department of Education has been to encourage expansion of the Tennessee charter movement into rural areas of Tennessee. To this end, the Director of the Office of Charter Schools has had in-depth discussions with three rural districts in central (Hamilton and Rutherford) and western Tennessee (Shelby). Although most non-urban districts have not yet been exposed to charters or the charter concept; and therefore are skeptical of its merit and application, there has been gradual building of awareness and acceptance. Most recently, in the 2008 application window, through combined efforts at the state and local level, Hamilton County Public Schools entered the charter school movement and authorized two charter high schools. As such, the Director of the Office of Charter Schools will continue to provide awareness and informational events. One such event has already been scheduled for March 2009 and involves a charter presentation at each of the regional 21st Century Community Learning Center (21stCCLC, a federal program) workshops. This manner of exposure is ideal in that many of the 21st CCLC applicants and grantees are vested within their communities and provide educational services to similar at-risk of failure populations.

In summary, Tennessee charter schools continue to outperform the state average in addition to working with a consistently high percentage of economically disadvantaged children. In light of the fact that only one of Tennessee's charter schools has been revoked since the inception of the charter law, it should also be noted that in 2007-08, STAR Academy Charter school was nominated for and received one of the two Tennessee Title I Distinguished School Awards. Recently, Circles of Success Charter School was nominated to receive the 2008-09 Title I Distinguished School Award. Although the Tennessee charter movement is still relatively

young, there continues to be evidence of successful building and consistent progress toward increasing the number of high-quality charter schools.

Figure 1.3 Charter School Poverty and State Average




## 1.4. One Authorized Public Chartering Agency other than a Local Educational Agency, or an Appeals Process

Tennessee charter law provide sole charter school authorizing to the LEA, as per T.C.A. 49-13-108, the LEA "shall have the authority to approve applications to establish public charter schools and renew charter agreements. However, at end of this same section it states, "a denial by the local board of education of an application to establish a public charter school may be appealed by the sponsor…to the state board of education." The appeals process is inclusive of 1) a review of the amended application by the state board of education using the sample scoring criteria provided by the commissioner of education to local boards of education, 2) holding a public hearing attended by the state board or its designated representative in the school district in

which the proposed charter school has applied for a charter, and 3) a decision rendered by the state board of education. If the state board finds that the local board's decision was contrary to the best interests of the student, school district or community, the state board shall remand such decision to the local board of education with written instructions for the approval of the charter. The decision of the state board is final and not subject to appeal, and the LEA becomes the chartering authority for the newly authorized school.

The appeals process continues to be utilized on a yearly basis. In the following Table 1.3, it is evident that since the Tennessee charter school law was enacted, 17 charter school sponsors have utilized the appeal process. Of those 14 have been resulted in an affirmation of the LEA denial and three decisions have been remanded back to the LEA. It is interesting to note that, to date, Memphis City Schools (the district with the majority of Tennessee charter schools and has processed the most amount of charter applications) has never had a charter school denial decision remanded back to them. This speaks to both the efficient process that Memphis City Schools utilizes in authorizing charter schools as well as to the efficacy and impartiality of the State Board of Education appeals process. If the appeals process were less than meritocratic, one might assume that the largest district in the state with the largest number of charter schools, would have at least one denial decision that had been remanded to the district.

Table 1.3 State Board of Education Appeals History

| Year | LEA Authorizer | Charter School | Result of Appeal | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | LEA Affirmed | LEA Denied |
| 2003 | Metropolitan Nashville | BFC Missions Inc. | ● | |
| | Memphis City Schools | C.H. Mason Middle Academy | ● | |
| | Fayette County Schools | Crossroads Charter Schools of TN. | ● | |
| 2004 | Metropolitan Nashville | BFC Missions Inc. | ● | |
| | Memphis City | C.H. Mason Middle | ● | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Schools | Academy | | |
| | Memphis City Schools | Cultural Connection Children's Academy | ● | |
| | Memphis City Schools | Heritage International Business School | ● | |
| | Memphis City Schools | James & Margueritte Rodgers Academy | ● | |
| | Metropolitan Nashville | KIPP Academy Nashville | | ● |
| | Metropolitan Nashville | Nashville Academy of Science & Engineering | ● | |
| | Memphis City Schools | Pinnacle Charter School | ● | |
| 2005 | Memphis City Schools | Creative Life Academy | ● | |
| | Metropolitan Nashville | Nashville Academy of Science & Engineering (2nd Application) | | ● |
| 2006 | Memphis City Schools | Hattie Bradley Charter School | ● | |
| 2007 | Metropolitan Nashville | Nashville Charter Middle School | ● | |
| 2008 | Hamilton County | Ivy Academy | ● | |
| | Hamilton County | Ivy Academy (2nd Application) | | ● |
| | | **Totals** | **14** | **3** |

### 1.5. High Degree of Autonomy for Charter Schools

As previously mentioned, the purpose and intent of the Tennessee charter school law as per T.C.A. 49-13-102 (b) is, "to provide an alternative means within the public school system for ensuring accomplishment of the necessary outcome of education by allowing the establishment and maintenance of public charter schools that operate within a school district structure but are allowed maximum flexibility to achieve their goals." This statutory emphasis is followed up with several specific indicators that further delineate and define "maximum flexibility" for charter schools, including waivers, fiscal independence, audits and charter school powers.

Waivers for Charter Schools

T.C.A. 49-13-105 (a) provides latitude to charters for waivers, allowing them to, "apply to either the LEA or to the commissioner of education for a waiver of any state board rule or statute that inhibits or hinders the proposed charter school's ability to meet its goals or comply with its mission statement." However, there is a listing that prohibits waivers in necessary and responsible areas, including, civil rights; health and safety; public records; immunizations; possession of weapons; background and fingerprinting checks; special education; student due process; parental rights; student assessment and accountability; open meetings and; equivalent time of instruction as required in non-charter public schools. Most of the waivers that have been solicited and granted have been with respect to personnel matters. Many of the charter schools have employed principals that have the necessary expertise to run a specific charter school with a specific focus and demographic, yet are not certified principals. This has allowed charter schools to be expansive in thought in their consideration of what leadership qualities best address their particular charter school. Many of the charter schools offer an incentive or performance pay option to their teaching faculty. While these initiatives have been discussed at length for implementation in non-charter schools, there has been resistance at associational levels. This is not the case with charter schools, reflecting yet an additional innovative practice of the charter system and an indicator of school autonomy.

Fiscal Independence

Regarding fiscal independence, T.C.A. 49-13-112 (a) states that "the local board of education shall allocate one-hundred percent (100%) of the state and local education funds to the school on the per pupil expenditure of the LEA." These funds are to be spent according to the

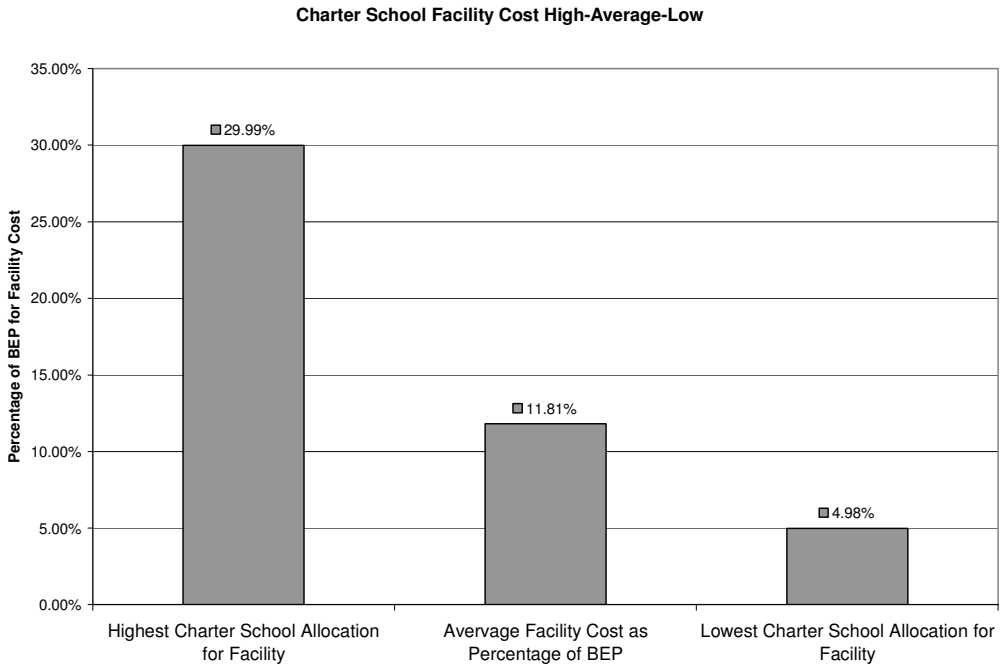
budget that was submitted by the charter school in its approved application or as otherwise revised by the governing body of the charter school, subject to any relevant state and federal requirements. This can be seen in the following Figure 1.4, on facility costs. As the graph illustrates, there is wide discretion, as to the amount that charters must or choose to allocate to facility costs as a percentage of their Basic Education Pay (BEP) funding. As previously mentioned in 1.3 "Number of High Quality Charter Schools," all of the Tennessee charter schools are above the state average of proficiency, yet the extensive range budget allocation for facility cost indicates that there is great control that is being exercised by the governing bodies of the charter schools as to the flexibility with which they prioritize their budgets. Additionally, the same statute also allows the charter school to choose whether or not it desires the authorizing LEA to be the fiscal agent for the school. Similarly, with the charter school annual audit, as per T.C.A. 49-13-127 (b)(1), the governing body of the charter school has the ability to choose a certified public accountant or by the department of audit.

Organizational and Instructional Flexibility

Perhaps one of the most central and most directly relevant components of the delivery of educational services is through management of the organization itself. T.C.A. 49-13-124 further enumerates powers that a charter schools has. Specifically, the charter school can sue or be sued; conduct activities necessary and appropriate to carry out its responsibilities including, 1) contract for services; 2) buy, sell or lease property; 3) borrow funds as needed and; 4) pledge its assets as security. Although the word, "autonomy" is not found in the Tennessee Charter Law, there is consummate evidence that Tennessee charter schools have the ability to operate with a high degree of autonomy. T.C.A. 49-13-104 empowers the governing body of a charter school with

decisions, "including, but not limited to, budgeting, curriculum and other operating procedures …and by overseeing management and administration." T.C.A. 49-13-111 further delineates governing body powers by vesting the control of instruction within the extent of the governing body. Additionally, should the governing board and the charter school encounter unforeseen obstacles that impede their growth or the success of their school, T.C.A. 49-13-110 provides the ability for the governing board to modify the original charter agreement through petition to the authorizing agency. This translates into a high level of control of instruction, curriculum, and overall supervision and management of the school in order to comply with the unique attributes found in its original charter.

Figure 1.4 Charter School Facility Costs



**2. Application Requirements (may choose to respond to the application requirements in the context of its responses to the Selection Criteria)**

**(i) Describe the objectives of the SEA's charter school grant program and describe how these objectives will be fulfilled, including the steps taken by the SEA to inform teachers, parents, and communities of the SEA's charter school grant program.**

Response to this application requirement can be comprehensively found in the response to Section (3) Selection Criteria (i).

**(ii) Describe how the SEA will inform each charter school in the state about federal funds the charter school is elegible to receive and federal programs in which the charter school may participate.**

Response to this application requirement can be comprehensively found in the response to Section (3) Selection Criteria (iii).

**(iii) Describe how the SEA will ensure that each charter school in the state receives the school's commensurate share of federal education funds that are allocated by formula each year, including during the first year of operation of the school and a year in which the school's enrollment expands significantly.**

Response to this application requirement can be comprehensively found in the response to Section (3) Selection Criteria (iii).

**(iv) Describe how the SEA will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the state.**

Response to this application requirement can be comprehensively found in the response to Section (3) Selection Criteria (i).

**(v) If an SEA elects to reserve part of its grant funds for the establishment of a revolving loan fund, describe how the revolving loan fund would operate.**

This section is not applicable for Tennessee charter schools.

**(vi) If an SEA desires the Secretary to consider waivers under the authority of the CSP, include a request and justification for any waiver of staturory or regulatory provisions that the SEA believes is necessary for the successful operation of charter schools in the state.**

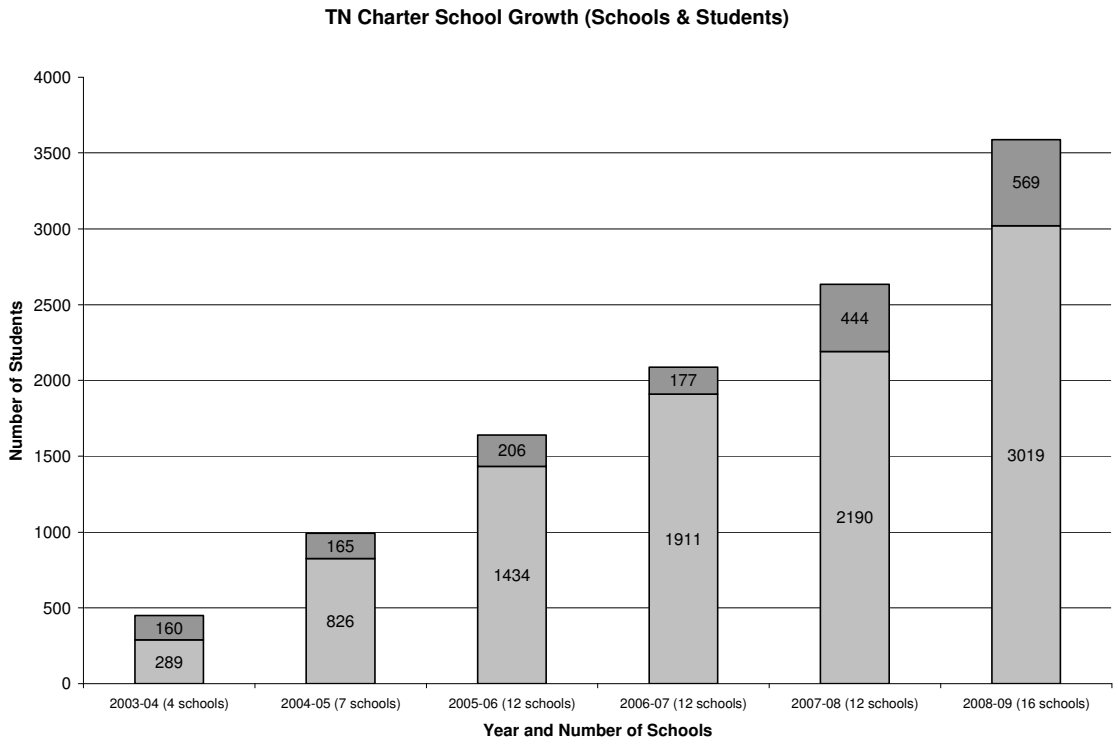
Due to reasons involving historical precedent, an increasing enrollment, the implementation of the Tennessee Charter Action Plan, and a more charter-friendly climate in three of the largest districts, Tennessee requests a waiver that would allow this current grant to extend over a five-year (5-year) sixty-month (60-month) period rather than the customary three-year (3-year) thirty-six-month (36-month) period for reasons that follow.

<u>Recent Charter School Momentum</u>

As Figure 1.5 evinces, the 2008-09 school year demonstrates several key benchmarks that are important to consider. Specifically, the current year illustrates several "firsts" for Tennessee, namely, Tennessee charter schools have enrolled more than 3,500 students, Hamilton County Public Schools has joined the ranks of authorizing LEAs, the state authorized the most charter

schools in one year (6). At present, most of the students are within the MCS system (represented by the light gray portion of the column) with the balance of charter school students enrolled in MNPS charter population (represented by the dark gray portion of the column), due to the fact that MCS has thirteen of the current sixteen operational charter schools in Tennessee. In the forthcoming 2009-10 school year, there will be a total of twenty-two (22) operational charter schools, which will add a predicted minimum of 800 incoming charter school students in addition to the existing schools that continue to expand through annual additions to their grade cohort.

Figure 1.5 MCS and MNPS Charter Growth




No Cost Extension History and Rationale

Historically, with regard to the 2002 and 2006 CSP grants that Tennessee previously received, the State Department of Education has requested no-cost extensions for both of those grants in order to fulfill the overall design of the grants (with regard to the 2002 grant award,

Tennessee requested two one-year no cost extensions, consecutively). Much of this was due to previously cited reasons of low charter school authorization years due to a less-than-charter-friendly climate in several districts and changing personnel in leadership positions at the state and associational levels. However, most recently two of Tennessee's larger districts have also incurred changes at the senior leadership level, which has resulted in an enhanced interest in the utilization of charter schools as a means of effective district educational reform. This has been demonstrated through requests of the Director of Charter Schools to provide guidance and direction for charter working groups, planning documents and an overall more thorough understanding of the nature and possibility of using charter schools as a key factor in education reform. Additionally, the Director of Charter Schools has also been contacted by several institution of higher education that are interested in exploring the idea of sponsoring a charter school to meet a neglected population and allow first-hand experience with at-risk student populations for their students within their college of education.

Many of these most recent changes that now allow for a more charter-friendly environment are the result of several years of attention and work at the legislative, departmental, LEA and associational level. Due to the lengthy nature that this entails, should Tennessee be allowed the waiver for a five-year, sixty-month as requested, it would allow the state to fully implement a more robust charter school development plan that would be able to demonstrate evidence of success within the granting period, rather than to demonstrate a moderated success that would only be achieved in a three-year, thirty-six month grant.

With the intent that this waiver will be granted, this grant application has provided a budget and budget narrative for a five-year grant period, to begin August 1, 2009 and conclude July 31, 2014. Note: This waiver only applies to the SEA CSP grant period. As such, if this

waiver is granted, it will not change the maximum allowable three-year, thirty-six-month grant period of the subgrantees as indicated in ESEA 5201(c)(2).

**(vii) Describe how charter schools that are considered to be LEAs under state law and LEAs in which charter schools are located will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.**

With regard to 613(a)(5) of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), Tennessee charter schools do not directly receive state and federal special education funds. While TCA 49-13-111(a)(4) specifies that charter schools shall, "provide special education services for students as provided in chapter 10 of this title", per Section 613 of the IDEA, the LEAs retain responsibility for the provision of appropriate special education and related services in each authorized charter school. This is further detailed in Tennessee state law on special education, TCA 49-10-101(a)(1) which states, "It is the policy of this state to provide, and to require school districts to provide, as an integral part of free public education, special education services sufficient to meet the needs and maximize the capabilities of children with disabilities." As such, the state ensure that each LEA makes appropriate provisions to serve children with disabilities who are attending charter schools in the same manner and to the same level as the LEA serves those children in non-charter schools. As Tennessee charter schools are operated within their authorizing LEA, they are subject to the same compliance monitoring for special education programming and services as non-charter schools in the district. As indicated in Section (iv) of the Selection Criteria, in addition to the state resources that charter schools may access, the State provides dedicated personnel at the SEA and LEA level (see "Staff and Associated Personnel-Division of Resources and Support Services" in Section (iv) of the

Selection Criteria) who provide technical assistance through workshops, online resources and hands-on training which complements the oversight and guidance by the LEA in ensuring special education services are delivered with equanimity to non-charter schools. Finally, workshops conducted by the State Department for Special Education and the Office of Charter Schools are provided on an annual and as-requested basis (see "Staff and Associated Personnel-Division of Resources and Support Services" in Section (iv) of the Selection Criteria)

## 3. Selection Criteria

**(i) The contribution the charter schools grant program will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.**

CSP Grant Objectives

By law, as per student eligibility, Tennessee charter schools are required to teach at-risk of failure students (those zoned to failing schools or failing themselves). Additionally, as can be seen in the Figure 1.3, all of the charter schools have student poverty enrollments that exceed the state average. The comprehensive objectives of the Tennessee Charter School Program reflect this legislative mandate to work with disadvantaged students and can be categorized under the four broad headings of the following: 1) To expand the number (overall, demographic and geographic) of high-quality charter schools; 2) To support the success (academic, organizational and fiscal) of Tennessee charter schools through state and local involvement; 3) To encourage dissemination of best practices within charter schools to the broader public and; 4) To improve academic achievement of charter school students. Methods and means of effectively measuring

these objectives are found in the following performance measurements listed under each of the categories.

*1) To expand the number (overall, demographic and geographic) of high-quality charter schools.*

As has been previously discussed in Competitive Preference Priority Section 1.3 "The Number of High-Quality Charter Schools", Tennessee has made great strides in cultivating charter schools that are high-quality with regard to student proficiency, organizational structure and fiscal management. This objective defines a high-quality charter schools as one in which, students perform at a high level of academia that is higher than their peers in the non-charter schools as demonstrated through the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP), Gateway examinations and other common data points of the Tennessee School Report Card. As previously mentioned, Tennessee charter have succeeded in this measure to the point at which only one charter school
(Yo! Academy) has been closed by their authorizing LEA. As was previously mentioned, Yo! Academy began with a full cohort of students in grades 9-12 and experienced difficulty in creating a student and faculty culture that evinced sustainable high standards of academic achievement.

<u>Need for Variety of Charter Schools</u>

However, although there is ample charter school success, most of the charter schools are concentrated in urban centers of Memphis and Nashville. There is a need to both expand the number of charter schools in more of a variety of urban centers and into the rural communities. With regard to demographics, while the Tennessee charter law controls charter student

enrollment strictly to at-risk students, there needs to be emphasis placed on providing charter schools that provide relevant services within a specified demographic.

Through the Office of Charter Schools, the Tennessee Charter School Association and local involvement, there has been considerable movement on this front as the 2008 application window held authorizations for a girl's academy and a boy's academy. However, there were significant discussions with several interested groups in creating charter schools that have appeal to other disadvantaged demographic groups that currently are not encouraged to attend a charter school (due to proximity, curriculum, awareness or community exposure). Additionally, there have been sustained meetings with several institutions of higher education that are interested in sponsoring charter schools for these neglected demographics in order to provide a high quality education for these students and better prepare their teachers for working with these populations.

The inputs for this objective will be cross-collaboration among a variety of levels: among related federal offices at the SEA, SEA-LEA, LEA-charter school, SEA and local government and community organizations. As such, performance measures of this objective relate to an increase in the overall number of high-quality applications for charter schools that involve ancillary organizations and institutions of higher education. This then will result in the establishment of high-quality schools that are well designed to appeal to a currently neglected population; and are aptly positioned to collaborate with other related agencies and programs to realize a broader vision than can be contained within the school. That is, to foster the creation of charter schools that not only meet the needs of their student populations but are well-suited to advance educational opportunities to populations outside of their student body, through existing related federal programs (i.e. inclusive of but not limited to 21st CCLC and SES). The following performance measurements apply:

1.1. At least 6 new charter schools will open by Fall 2009, an additional 6 by Fall 2010, an additional 8 by 2011, an additional 8 by 2012 and a final 8 by 2013.

1.2. Receive new charter applications from at least 2 current or previous 21st CCLC grantees. This number will recur for subsequent years.

1.3. Receive new charter application from at least 1 institution of higher education. This number will recur for subsequent years.

1.4. Receive 2 new charter applications for neglected demographic. Number to recur for following year and increase to 3 for subsequent years.

1.5. In the second year of the grant, receive 1 new charter application from an LEA that currently does not have a charter school. Number to remain constant for remainder of grant period.

1.6. In the third year of the grant, receive an additional 2 charter applications from the newly authorizing LEA in Performance Measure 1.5.

1.7. Provide charter school presentations at all regional 21st Century Community Learning Center (21stCCLC) application workshops and 21st CCLC presentations at annual charter school summit throughout grant period.

1.8. Provide charter school presentations at all regional Supplemental Education Services (SES) application workshops and SES presentations at annual charter school summit throughout grant period.

1.9. Receive three new charter school applications per year for 21st CCLC grants.

1.10. Receive three new charter school applications per year to become SES providers.

2) *To support the success (academic, organizational and fiscal) of Tennessee charter schools through state and local involvement.*

While the balance of Tennessee charter schools are academically, organizationally and fiscally sound, this objective will specifically address these important objectives through the provision of professional development and technical assistance events and workshops before, during and after the charter application window and the Tennessee CSP application window. At present, the charter application window closes on October 1, for charter schools wishing to begin the following academic year. There are several proposed legislative bills that seek to move the October deadline back three months to a July deadline. Such a change would be beneficial to the pending charter schools as it would allow them more time to prepare all of the financial, organizational and administrative concerns that relate to the opening of a school. Additionally, it would allow the schools more of the federally allotted 18-month window to utilize their planning grant, should this bill move forward. However, in the event that it does not, the Office of Charter Schools will augment its current technical assistance workshops and events with a multiple-day charter school institute that will address in greater detail federal, state and local concerns important to a high quality charter school. Topics of discussion will include: overview of NCLB programs; federal resources that they are eligible to receive; overview of state and federal legal requirements; introduction to USDOE guidance for charter schools; introduction of special education and IDEA concerns; budget preparation and reporting and; award reconciliation and allowable spending parameters.

Input variables for this program objective include the utilization of fiscal personnel in the Office of Fiscal Resources and Support, the Tennessee Charter School Association, the Office of Charter Schools, other SEA models (e.g. the Minnesota model) and an institution of higher education (preliminary discussions have already occurred and an institution has already been identified). In order to achieve this objective, there will be an emphasis on focused professional

development, technical assistance and events that are detailed in the following performance measurements:

2.1. Achieve 100% charter school participation in annual site visitation and external data collection on an annual basis.

2.2. 100% of charter school leaders and CFOs will attend the Fiscal Review Workshop for years one and two of their grant period.

2.3. 100% of charter schools will provide evidence of at least two professional development opportunities provided for their faculty on an annual basis (not inclusive of the TDE events).

2.4. 100% of charter school will provide timely and accurate financial data reports to their LEA each year of their grant period.

2.5. 100% of charter schools will provide representation of at least 3 individuals from their governing body to be in attendance for the charter school institute in Year 1 of their grant period.

3) *To encourage dissemination of best practices within charter schools to the broader public.*

Due to the fact that Tennessee is still relatively new to the national charter movement and the transition of leadership personnel at both the Office of Charter Schools and the Tennessee Charter School Association, the first priority of the Office of Charter Schools has been to continue to build high-quality charters. Without this emphasis, legislators may have been inclined to interpret that the Tennessee charter school movement is less than robust and its schools are ineffective, less than adequate and inconsequential as an educational alternative; which may have diminished or severely limited future charter expansion. As is the case,

Tennessee has highly effective charter schools that have provided a robust foundation for future charter schools. However, due to this necessitated emphasis on building, there has not been effective dissemination of the success that the Tennessee charter schools have encountered. This fact was formally acknowledged in a 2008 publication by the Office of Research and Educational Accountability, entitled "Charter Schools in Tennessee: Issues of Innovation and Sustainability." However, with the building interest in Tennessee charter schools, the formation of a legally mandated advisory group and its report (referred to in Competitive Preference Priority Section 1.2 second paragraph) dissemination of Tennessee charter schools will be a specific focus in this grant period. In order to successfully achieve this, several levels of state government will be utilized, institutions of higher education, related offices within the SEA and the local community. As such, the following performance measures regarding methods of information dissemination will be implemented for this grant.

3.1. On an annual basis, 100% of charter schools will submit their best practices to the SEA for inclusion to a catalogue of innovative methods.

3.2. In first year of grant, the Tennessee Charter School Task Force will be convened and will conduct biannual meetings; and publish annual reports for the duration of the grant.

3.3. Dissemination of data collection through at least two additional venues/partner organizations per year for the duration of the grant period.

3.4. In the first year of the grant, to provide a collaborative Tennessee Charter School Shared Vision document that effectively details 100% of the Tennessee charter school commitment to student growth levels. To revise this document annually with input from and in agreement with new and existing charter schools.

4) *To improve academic achievement of charter school students.*

Similar with the purpose of the Tennessee Charter School Law, this project objective will continuously provide documentation that the new, emerging and mature charter schools are providing a high-quality and salient educational alternative to charter school students. As such, the performance objectives of this grant are as follows:

4.1. At least 65% of new charter school (one year of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in math.

4.2. At least 65% of new charter school (one year of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in reading/language arts.

4.3. At least 75% of emerging charter school (two years of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in math.

4.4. At least 75% of emerging charter school (two years of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in reading/language arts.

4.5. At least 85% of mature charter school (three years of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in math.

4.6. At least 85% of mature charter school (three years of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in reading/language arts.

**(ii) The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to charter schools under the State's charter school law.**

As previously mentioned in Competitive Preference Priority 1.5, and at the beginning of this section, the purpose and intent of the Tennessee charter school law as per T.C.A. 49-13-102 (b) is, "to provide an alternative means within the public school system for ensuring accomplishment

of the necessary outcome of education by allowing the establishment and maintenance of public charter schools that operate within a school district structure but are allowed maximum flexibility to achieve their goals." This statutory emphasis is followed up with several specific indicators that further delineate and define "maximum flexibility" for charter schools, including waivers, fiscal independence, audits and charter school powers.

Waivers for Charter Schools

T.C.A. 49-13-105 (a) provides latitude to charters for waivers, allowing them to, "apply to either the LEA or to the commissioner of education for a waiver of any state board rule or statute that inhibits or hinders the proposed charter school's ability to meet its goals or comply with its mission statement." However, there is a listing that prohibits waivers in necessary and responsible areas, including, civil rights; health and safety; public records; immunizations; possession of weapons; background and fingerprinting checks; special education; student due process; parental rights; student assessment and accountability; open meetings and; equivalent time of instruction as required in non-charter public schools. Most of the waivers that have been solicited and granted have been with respect to personnel matters. Many of the charter schools have employed principals that have the necessary expertise to run a specific charter school with a specific focus and demographic, yet are not certified principals. This has allowed charter schools to be expansive in thought in their consideration of what leadership qualities best address their particular charter school. Many of the charter schools offer an incentive or performance pay option to their teaching faculty. While these initiatives have been discussed at length for implementation in non-charter schools, there has been resistance at associational levels. This is not the case with charter schools, reflecting yet an additional innovative practice of the charter system and an indicator of school autonomy.

Fiscal Independence

Regarding fiscal independence, T.C.A. 49-13-112 (a) states that "the local board of education shall allocate one-hundred percent (100%) of the state and local education funds to the school on the per pupil expenditure of the LEA." These funds are to be spent according to the budget that was submitted by the charter school in its approved application or as otherwise revised by the governing body of the charter school, subject to any relevant state and federal requirements. This can be seen in the previous Figure 1.4 on facility costs. As the graph illustrates, there is wide discretion, as to the amount that charters must or choose to allocate to facility costs as a percentage of their Basic Education Pay (BEP) funding. As previously mentioned in Competitive Preference Priority Section 1.3 "Number of High Quality Charter Schools," all of the Tennessee charter schools are above the state average of proficiency, yet the extensive range budget allocation for facility cost indicates that there is great control that is being exercised by the governing bodies of the charter schools as to the flexibility with which they prioritize their budgets. Additionally, the same statute also allows the charter school to choose whether or not it desires the authorizing LEA to be the fiscal agent for the school. Similarly, with the charter school annual audit, as per T.C.A. 49-13-127 (b)(1), the governing body of the charter school has the ability to choose a certified public accountant or by the department of audit.

Organizational and Instructional Flexibility

Perhaps one of the most central and most directly relevant to the delivery of educational services is through management of the organization itself. T.C.A. 49-13-124 further enumerates

powers that a charter schools has. Specifically, the charter school can sue or be sued; conduct activities necessary and appropriate to carry out its responsibilities including, 1) contract for services; 2) buy, sell or lease property; 3) borrow funds as needed and; 4) pledge its assets as security. Although the word, "autonomy" is not found in the Tennessee Charter Law, there is consummate evidence that Tennessee charter schools have the ability to operate with a high degree of autonomy. T.C.A. 49-13-104 empowers the governing body of a charter school with decisions, "including, but not limited to, budgeting, curriculum and other operating procedures …and by overseeing management and administration." T.C.A. 49-13-111 further delineates governing body powers by vesting the control of instruction within the extent of the governing body. Additionally, should the governing board and the charter school encounter unforeseen obstacles that impede their growth or the success of their school, T.C.A. 49-13-110 provides the ability for the governing board to modify the original charter agreement through petition to the authorizing agency. This translates into a high level of control of instruction, curriculum, and overall supervision and management of the school in order to comply with the unique attributes found in its original charter.

**(iii) The number of high-quality charter schools to be created in the State.**

As the narrative "Cohort History" table in Competitive Preference Priority Section 1.3 attest, in the Fall of 2009, Tennessee will have 22 operation charter schools, with half of those being opened in the last three years. As with any young program, it is difficult to accurately calculate what charter openings may or may not materialize in forthcoming years due to unforeseen obstacles and constraints or opportunities and freedoms. However, in the 2006 application period, there were only five (5) charter school applications, with one being

authorized. In 2007 the applications jumped to fourteen, with four (4) new charters authorized. In the 2008 application period, the same number of applications was received, yet six (6) new schools were authorized. This suggests at least two issues: 1) that there is a building and sustainable number of applications and 2) the caliber of application reflects a more rigorous and defined approach to the design of a charter school. In the most recent CSP grant applications, Tennessee has been conservative with its estimate of how many new charter schools will open annually. Even with this conservative estimate, in 2006 and 2007, only one new charter school, rather than the eight that were predicted over the same time period, was able to open.

As previously noted, the reason for this may have been due to shifting leadership positions at the state and charter association level, less than ideal venues of exposure, or a connotative assumptions regarding the difficulty of the authorization process and operational climate toward charter schools. Still, there has been a positive shift within several relevant state and local component areas. With regard to the local level, at least one additional LEA has begun to authorize charter schools (Hamilton County).

While the difficulties that these new charter schools encounter with their opening and operation may be a discouraging factor with proposed schools, the new charter schools have already begun to expose the district to the capacity and positive nature that charter schools can provide in education reform. There have already been additional inquiries from Hamilton County as to the method and possibility of more charter schools. Furthermore, at the LEA level there has been sustained discussion as to how to begin to address historically failing schools. One line of thought has been to discuss how community groups might make application to convert these schools into a charter school, with an independent governing body and a vision that can engage the student body. Also of importance at the LEA level, in at least one urban district,

new leadership has been put into place that is consistently choosing to view charter schools as a viable avenue of reform, rather than previous leadership attitudes that relegated charters to the outside of most policy and practice discussions. This LEA has already created a charter school office with a dedicated director to oversee charter schools (prior to this, LEA charter responsibilities were included in existing personnel duties). This same LEA has already assembled a Charter Working Group and has convened a series of meetings with advocacy groups, the local school board, the Office of Charter Schools at the SEA, the State Board of Education, several operational charter schools, charter officers in other LEAs, and out of state charter school visits and informational tours.

At the state level, there have also been several leadership position changes that have allowed for a "less than distant" understanding of and appeal toward charter schools. Most recently, the Director of Charter Schools was asked to present on charters schools as a means of effective high school reform, at the "High School Redesign Conference" in October 2008, which was delivered to all of the districts that have failing high schools. In light of this, and to provide a realistic approximation of pending charter schools, this grant will seek to request a waiver in Section (vi) of the Application Requirements for a five-year CSP grant period rather than the customary 36-month grant period. It is intended that the five-year period would provide Tennessee with enhanced charter school growth and long-term objectives.

Through this grant and the more favorable charter climate, Tennessee would have the ability to add six (6) charter schools per year for the first two years of the grant and eight (8) charter schools per year for the last three years of the grant, resulting in an additional thirty-six (36) charter schools over a five-year period. While this does seem like an aggressive number, historically on average Tennessee has opened approximately four (4) charter schools per year,

with the most recent application window evincing a record six (6). As is also discussed in Application Requirement Section (vi), there are ample indicators that reflect positive forward movement and an enhanced ability for Tennessee to increase its cohort number of high-quality charter schools within a five-year period.

Awareness of Federal Funding Eligibility

The Office of Charter Schools is embedded within the larger Office of Federal Programs, ad the Tennessee Department of Education. As such, charter schools are kept abreast of eligibility for federal funding through regular and scheduled information dissemination via Dr. Julie McCargar, who is the Executive Director of this office. In this capacity, Dr. McCargar coordinates the majority of federal formula and competitive grants at the state level and remains well-informed of LEA federal funding budgeting and disbursements. Through her leadership and the Director of Charter Schools, the state will continue to utilize several methods in order to ensure that charter schools are aware of and receive the federal funds for which they are eligible.

Upon authorization, all charter schools are required to attend a workshop that focuses upon several issues of importance, including description of the various Titles in *NCLB*, their intent and eligibility requirements. This workshop is similar to the charter school institute that will address concerns relevant to the opening of a charter school, however, it will not delve deeply into student data and data management as will the institute. Workshop topics include: overview of *NCLB* programs; federal resources and eligibility factors; state and federal legal issues; introduction to USDOE guidance for charter schools; introduction of special education and IDEA concerns; budget preparation and reporting and; award reconciliation, spending parameters and effective internal control. Resources such as the "Title V, Part B Non-

Regulatory Guidance" and USDOE monitoring indicators will also be presented. Additional information regarding discretionary grants to LEAs and other programs as well as grants that charter schools may individually or collectively apply for will also be presented. An introduction to the grants.gov site will be conducted in order to assist in forecasting and applying for upcoming competitions. Representatives from authorizing LEAs are invited to attend as much of the content has a managerial application aspect to it from the LEA. As in the past, the Director of Charter Schools and any of the related personnel at the Department will provide individual technical assistance on an as-needed basis.

The Office of charter Schools coordinates an annual Charter School Summit that also provides similar information on federal programs and related information for charter schools. Notice of this summit is widely distributed and involves general sessions on charter schools and related federal and state resources for educator and administrators; non-profit organizations; LEA and university personnel as well as potential charter operators and the related community. The summit also provides specific information to chart school operators and their boards regarding eligibility of federal funds. The agenda for the 2008 summit may be accessed at: http://www.state.tn.us/education/fedprog/fppresentations.shtml . The planned Charter School Institute will build upon the annual Charter School Summit. A major objective of the institute will be to encourage the comprehensive intent of empowering individual and consortiums of charter schools to apply for additional federal grants for funding, research, conference presentation and overall dissemination.

Finally, ad hot technical assistance is complemented via emails and notices by the Office of Innovation and Improvement and the Office of Federal Programs which apprise the Director of Charter Schools of any modifications or new notices of federal and state funding. The

Director distributes this information to the charter schools and follows up during scheduled events, workshops and monitorings.

**(iv) The quality of management plan for the proposed project.**

Continuity of Program Management

Ensuring continuity of progress, documentation of success and continuous improvement is necessary for optimal program management. It will be important to continue to provide relevant annual analysis as to the quality and performance levels of the operational side of the project as well as the programmatic side in order to achieve the highest outcomes of this project. On the operational side, there will be annual measurement as to how the process of project implementation is performing, including assessment of means and ways of delivering professional development and technical assistance to the subgrantees before, during and after their awards; cultivation of new cadres of charter school applicants and dissemination strategies; and management of relevant partnerships and agency relations. On the programmatic side, there will be annual measurement as to yearly performance levels with subgrantees in order to ensure that they are maximizing their awards in the most efficient and expedient manner while staying true to their school charter and mission; meeting compliance and performance levels of academic achievement; and refining their methods in order to realize and articulate charter school best practices. While ongoing analysis will lead to a further refinement on both the operational and programmatic sides, the following procedures for subgrant awards; the staff and personnel to be utilized; and the timeline provide guidelines that will be implemented for effective management of the grant throughout the grant period.

Process for Subgrantee Awards

In previous years, the Office of Charter Schools only requested charter schools to complete their planning and implementation grant applications after they had been authorized. However, because of the nature of Tennessee's charter application period, if all authorizing parties utilize the maximum time allowable to them under law, the process can take up to 160 days from the October 1 application date. This means that it can be mid-March before a potential charter successfully navigates the process and is authorized. This also means that a recently authorized charter school may only have from mid-March to July to prepare before they must open their school. If there were any delays in the grant application process, the contracts system or the system of processing the award, it would considerably decrease the charter school's ability to access and provide responsible allocation of the CSP funds. In light of this, shortly after the charter submits its application to the LEA, the SEA provides the grant application for CSP funding to the charter school. The grant applications are read and scored by a grant-reader pool that consists of charter school principals and executive directors; representatives of the Tennessee Charter School Association, grant readers from other federal title programs and other knowledgeable personnel at the SEA; university personnel; exemplary educators; charter school foundations and philanthropic organizations that have charter schools in their mandate or portfolio; and members of the education committees at the local business level. All active readers will take part in a training session that outlines the scope of the CSP program, programmatic guidelines, a common understanding of the scoring rubric and the generally held common attributes and expectations of the grant review process.

All CSP grant applications will be independently reviewed by three readers and their scores will be compiled. A minimum aggregated average of eighty percent (80%) is necessary

for a charter school to receive funding. The scoring rubric contains components related to technical requirements; background information; educational vision, business and organizational management capacity of the school; collaboration and networking partnerships; continued operations; contractual relationship with LEA; student information and recruitment; grant budget and detail forms; budget narratives and timelines. Applications will be prioritized according to those applicants that received the highest reviews. If there arises a situation in which two or more applications receive identical scores and there is not sufficient funding to award both applications at their anticipated amount, a fourth reader will be utilized to evaluate both proposals and provide a determining percentage. Additionally, the Office of Charter Schools may consider a separate interview process for both applicants to determine both need and merit.

As detailed in the Budget Narrative, the Office of Charter Schools currently has existing CSP grant obligations to ten (10) subgrantees. While some of their Implementation Year 1 funds will be expended through the SEA's CSP 2006 award, the balance of obligations for Implementation Year 1 and the full balance of Implementation Year 2 will be expended in the CSP 2009 award. These obligations are in addition to the five (5) anticipated yearly cohorts of new schools. It is estimated that over the course of the five-year grant period (see Application Requirement (vi) for discussion of five-year waiver request) Tennessee will authorize twelve new charter schools in the first two years and twenty-four new charter schools in the remaining three years of the grant. The Office of Charter Schools intends upon administering the first cohort application in Fall 2009. Successful applicants will be eligible for a maximum of $225,000 for planning grants in the first year. Successful applicants will also be eligible for implementation Year 1 and Year 2 funding, with a maximum of $250,000 and $125,000,

respectively. However, Year 1 and Year 2 funds will only be available upon successful expenditure and reconciliation of previous year awards; and if performance metrics are met.

Staff and Associated Personnel

The Office of Charter Schools and Choice has oversight and programmatic responsibility for charter schools, Supplemental Education Services (SES) and Public School Choice (PSC) and is a part of the larger Office of Federal Programs, led by the Executive Director, Dr. Julie McCargar. Dr. McCargar is the Executive Director of Federal Programs, Title I and Systemic Reform. She has been involved with implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in Tennessee and was responsible for the state's Consolidated Application for programs funded under NCLB. She is currently responsible for providing leadership and supervision of many of the programs in NCLB, including Title I, English as a Second Language, charter schools, migrant education, homeless education and others. The Office of Federal Programs is responsible for the administration of most of the federal grant programs for Tennessee, which is responsible for allocating nearly $400 million throughout the state. Dr. McCargar brings a wealth of knowledge to the various federal grant programs as she has over seventeen years of managing and implementing federal grants and initiatives. For the past two years she has been in a leadership role with the National Association of State Title I Directors (NASTID) and is very committed to effective management of federal funds, especially those targeted for the most at risk of failure student populations.

Oversight, management, design, implementation and evaluation of the Office of Charter Schools is the responsibility of the Director of Charter Schools and Choice, Dr. Eric Hilgendorf, who has been with the department since 2006. Prior to his current post, Dr. Hilgendorf was one

of the research assistants at the National Center for School Choice, at Peabody College, at Vanderbilt University. In this capacity, he was fortunate to work with Dr. Kenneth Wong on several multi-state charter and choice-related studies. In his current position, Dr. Hilgendorf has continued to increase the professional development and overall preparation of the later cohorts of charter schools through his design and assistance in creating "The Charter School Academy", one of the Peabody Professional Institutes, the "Tennessee Charter School Summit", at University of Memphis and the forthcoming "Charter School Institute", at Vanderbilt University. In his capacity, he has also spearheaded several charter school initiatives, that have opened charter discussions at the local business level; local government; related non-profits; 21st CCLC and SES events; and LEAs that have not authorized charter schools. However, this application would be remiss if it did not recognize the effective efforts of the predecessor of Dr. Hilgendorf, Ms. Sandra Gray. Ms. Gray was the director of this office for three years and was instrumental in building most of the infrastructure that led to the success of the early cohorts of charter schools. Through the previous efforts of Ms. Gray and the current and future contributions of Dr. Hilgendorf, Tennessee charter schools will be able to operate in a continuously improving charter climate.

The Office of Charter Schools also benefits from the assistance of one part-time consultant, one part-time accountant, one part-time budget/contracts manager, two fiscal consultants, and one part-time administrative assistant. The CSP grant project plans to utilize the services of these individuals in the following manner as provided below:

*Division of Teaching and Learning-Office of Federal Programs*

Dr. Julie McCargar, Executive Director of Office of Federal Programs-10% time to provide overall administrative support and guidance for the charter schools program. Position is funded through NCLB Consolidated Administration Funds.

The Executive Director will:

- Oversee and supervise the Charter Schools Program Project Director.
- Report to the senior leadership at the Department of Education and to the State Board of Education on the status of the Tennessee Charter Schools Program.
- Coordinate will division in the department to ensure that charter schools have maximum flexibility to which they are entitled through the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002.
- Ensure processes with the department ensure the healthy development of newly establish charter schools.
- Ensure that charter schools receive commensurate share of ancillary federal programs to which they are entitled.

Dr. Eric Hilgendorf, Director of Charter Schools and Choice – 80% of time allocated to manage, implement, evaluate and oversee all aspects of the Office of Charter Schools, which is also the hosting office for the CSP Program funding. As such, the Charter School Program Project Director will be responsible for the following:

- Completing all required reports relating to charter schools to the U.S.D.O.E.
- Ensuring that the objectives of the CSP grant application, as found in Selection Criteria (i), through timely implementation and monitoring of related performance measures.
- All information regarding information, implementation and coordination of the grant.

- Monitoring and evaluation of charter schools with regard to CSP compliance and charter school accountability.
- Designing, providing, facilitating and assessing professional development initiatives and technical assistance in order for charter schools to operate at high levels of success.
- Ensuring that grant timelines (e.g. sub-awards, performance levels, and assessments) are completed accurately and in a timely fashion.
- Ensuring continuous improvement in the manner in which charter school information is disseminated to related agencies, organizations and the larger public.
- Facilitating consistent levels of discussion and cooperation among the various charter school entities (e.g. LEAs, State Board of Education, Office of Research and Educational Accountability, ancillary federal programs, local government, non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, foundations, business leaders and charter school operators.)
- Continually emphasizing building a sense of collectivity among charter school operators.
- Sustain effort in providing program awards, events and workshops in a more efficient and effective manner.
- Inform each charter school in the state about eligibility of federal funds for the charter school; federal programs in which the charter school may participate; implementing process and procedure to ensure that each charter school receives its commensurate share of federal education funds that are allocated by formula each year, including the first year of operation of the charter school.
- Provide information and technical assistance to charter applicants, sponsors and charter schools on an as-needed basis.
- Development of enhanced Annual Performance Report.

Rita Fentress, Consultant, Charter Schools and Choice – 20% time funded to assist the Director of Charter Schools and Choice with the Charter Schools Program. Position is funded through NCLB Consolidated Administration. Ms. Fentress has over 25 years of experience in public school education with the last four in the Office of Federal Programs, where she coordinates the Supplemental Education Services and Public School Choice programs. Under the leadership of the Director of Charter Schools and Choice, Ms. Fentress will be responsible for:

- Assistance with monitoring and evaluation of charter schools compliance and accountability.
- Coordination of logistics entailed in providing technical assistance, workshops, events, and professional development.
- Assistance with CSP grant application training, reading, and interviewing.
- Developmental assistance with enhanced Annual Performance Report.
- Provision of technical assistance to charter schools on an as-needed basis.

Eve Carney, Budget and Contracts Consultant-15% of time in assistance of oversight of CSP budget and contracts for CSP subgrantees. Also to assist in grant application reading with specific focus on financial stability of charter school, CSP funds requested by charter school and budget concerns with planning and implementation funds.

Debbie Brown and Chris Satterfield, NCLB Regional Support Consultants-10% of time as additional assistance in provision of scheduled monitoring, technical assistance or professional development for charter schools. Positions are funded through NCLB Consolidated Administration Funds and involves:

- Provide on-site, as-needed assistance through request of district, school, Executive Director, Director or Consultant of Charter Schools and Choice.
- Provide assistance with charter schools in assessing annual yearly progress reporting (via CREP Annual Report or Tennessee Report Card) and preparing school improvement plans for submission to the district.
- Assistance with monitoring and evaluation of charter schools as per request of the Director or the Consultant of Charter Schools and Choice.
- Collaborate with LEA with regard to eligibility of federal funding for charter schools.
- Provide technical assistance to LEAs regarding their roles and responsibilities as authorizers.
- Developmental assistance with enhanced Annual Performance Report.

Debbie Williams, Administrative Secretary-15% time on project to provide administrative support to the Director and Consultant of Charter Schools and Choice. Position is 100% funded by NCLB Consolidated Administration Funds.

*Division of Resources and Support Services*

Karen Weidemann, Account Technician-30% of time to review grant budgets and budget amendments, invoices, expenditure reports, assist with grant reconciliation, and review and assist with state charter school financials report. Position is funded by state funds.

Ron Adelman and Brad Davis-5% of time to assist charter schools with budgets, annual financial report, LEA financial reporting and technical assistance to charter schools regarding budgetary and financial issues. Consultations and direct technical assistance as requested by charter schools in respective regions. Positions are funded by state funds.

Calvin Burden, Special Education State Director for Private and Charter Schools and Juvenile Centers and Davis Hines, Special Education Regional Director for Private and Charter Schools and Juvenile Centers (West TN) -10% of time to serve as a liaison between charter schools and the Division of Special Education and to assist in providing charter schools with professional development and technical assistance related to special education technical assistance. Position is funded by state and/or IDEA funds.

Chris Steppe, Director of Internal Audit-5% of time to assist with charter school audit, fiscal monitoring, reconciliation and fiscal compliance issues. Position is funded by state funds.

**Timeline for Project Objectives**

The timeline for project implementation may be found in the following pages. The timeline incorporates the performance measures into the four (4) project objectives of:

1) To expand the number (overall, demographic and geographic) of high-quality charter schools.
2) To support the success (academic, organizational and fiscal) of Tennessee charter schools through state and local involvement.
3) To encourage dissemination of best practices within charter schools to the broader public.
4) To improve academic achievement of charter school students.

The timeline provides the performance measurement, the performance outcome and the personnel responsible for ensuring that the necessary inputs are in place and that the performance measurements are accomplished in accordance with the submitted USDOE CSP Annual Perform Report.

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## Tennessee Project Implementation Timeline

*Project Objective 1) To expand the number (overall, demographic and geographic) of high-quality charter schools.*

| **Performance Measurement (inclusive of quantified target and progress dates)** | **Inputs and Activities** | **Responsible Personnel, Organizations and Partnerships** |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1. At least 6 new charter schools will open by Fall 2009, an additional 6 by Fall 2010, an additional 8 by 2011, an additional 8 by 2012 and a final 8 by 2013. | Charter School Fiscal Workshop<br>Charter School Institute (Vanderbilt University)<br>Board of Directors Professional Development<br>Charter School Workshop<br>Charter School Pre/Post Grant Workshop | Office of Charter Schools<br>Tennessee Charter School Association |
| 1.2. Receive new charter applications from at least 2 current or previous 21st CCLC grantees. This number will recur for subsequent years. | Charter school presentation at all 21st CCLC regional workshops and technical assistance events, reciprocal SES presentation at annual charter school summit. | Office of Charter Schools<br>21st CCLC Program Director |
| 1.3. Receive new charter application from at least 1 institution of higher education. This number will recur for subsequent years. | Charter school presentation at three institutions of higher education.<br>Annual assessment of target number of H.E. institutions for charter schools. | Office of Charter Schools |
| 1.4. Receive 2 new charter applications for neglected demographic. Number to recur for following year and increase to 3 for subsequent years. | Charter school presentation at eight non-profit organizations per year. | Office of Charter Schools<br>LEA<br>Local non-profits |
| 1.5. In the second year of the grant, receive 1 new charter application from an LEA that currently does not have a charter school. Number to remain constant for remainder of grant period. | Charter school presentations for five LEAs that currently are not charter school authorizers. | Office of Charter Schools<br>LEA |
| 1.6. In the third year of the grant, receive an additional 2 charter applications from the newly authorizing LEA in Performance Measure 1.5. | Charter school presentation at eight non-profit organizations per year. | Office of Charter Schools<br>LEA |
| 1.7. Provide charter school presentations at all regional 21st Century Community Learning Center (21stCCLC) application workshops and 21st CCLC presentations at annual charter school summit throughout grant period. | Addition of past and current 21st CCLC grantees to listserve. Provide charter school informational packet and link to TN DOE charter school webpage.<br>Invitation to all charter school professional and TA events. | Office of Charter Schools<br>21st CCLC Program Director |



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|---|---|---|
| 1.8. Provide charter school presentations at all regional Supplemental Education Services (SES) application workshops and SES presentations at annual charter school summit throughout grant period. | Addition of past and current SES providers to listserve. Provide charter school informational packet and link to TN DOE charter school webpage. Invitation to all charter school professional and technical assistance events. | Office of Charter Schools<br>SES Program Director |
| 1.9. Receive three new charter school applications per year for 21st CCLC grants. | Internal tracking and follow-up. | Office of Charter Schools<br>21st CCLC Program Director |
| 1.10. Receive three new charter school applications per year to become SES providers. | Internal tracking and follow-up. | Office of Charter Schools<br>SES Program Director |

*Project Objective* 2) *To support the success (academic, organizational and fiscal) of Tennessee charter schools through state and local involvement.*

| **Performance Measurement (inclusive of quantified target and progress dates)** | **Inputs and Activities** | **Responsible Personnel, Organizations and Partnerships** |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1. Achieve 100% charter school participation in annual site visitation and external data collection on an annual basis. | Monitoring document revisited to comply with USDOE monitoring objectives and indicators.<br>Monitoring schedule established by Office of Charter Schools in coordination with LEA and CREP monitoring. | Office of Charter Schools<br>LEA<br>Charter Schools |
| 2.2. 100% of charter school leaders and CFOs will attend a Fiscal Review Workshop for years one and two of their grant period. | Revisitation of Fiscal Review Workshop with partners.<br>Sessions scheduled pre and post application period. | Office of Charter Schools<br>Division of Resource and Support Services at TN DOE<br>Tennessee Charter School Association<br>Vanderbilt University<br>Charter Schools<br>LEA |
| 2.3. 100% of charter schools will provide evidence of at least two professional development opportunities provided for their faculty on an annual basis (not inclusive of the TDE events). | Tracking of status of charter schools for compliance with this performance measure. | Office of Charter Schools<br>LEA<br>Charter Schools |

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|---|---|---|
| 2.4. 100% of charter school will provide timely and accurate financial data reports to their LEA each year of their grant period. | Tracking of status of charter schools for compliance with this performance measure.<br>Follow-up with LEA business office and State Division of Audit for timeliness and accuracy. | Office of Charter Schools<br>Division of Resource and Support Services at TN DOE<br>LEA<br>Division of Audit |
| 2.5. 100% of charter schools will provide representation of at least 3 individuals from their governing body to be in attendance for the charter school institute in Year 1 of their grant period. | Invitation and request for representative team.<br>Delivery of charter school institute.<br>Tracking of attending members.<br>Follow-up with recommendations and school-determined objectives to address. | Office of Charter Schools<br>Tennessee Charter School Association<br>Vanderbilt University<br>Charter Schools<br>LEA |

*Project Objective* 3) *To encourage dissemination of best practices within charter schools to the broader public.*

| **Performance Measurement (inclusive of quantified target and progress dates)** | **Inputs and Activities** | **Responsible Personnel, Organizations and Partnerships** |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1. On an annual basis, 100% of charter schools will submit their best practices to the SEA for inclusion to a catalogue of innovative methods. | Outline of project; method and evidence needed for determination of innovative methods and best practices; nature and timeline for submission delivered to charter schools. | Office of Charter Schools<br>LEA<br>Office of Research in Educational Accountability<br>State Board of Education |
| 3.2. In first year of grant, the Tennessee Charter School Task Force will be convened and will conduct biannual meetings for the duration of the grant. | Method of identifying membership, topics, concept and schedule of task force decided.<br>Membership invited.<br>Two annual meetings held.<br>Preliminary report delivered. | Office of Charter Schools<br>LEA<br>Office of Research in Educational Accountability<br>State Board of Education<br>Tennessee Charter School Association<br>Charter Schools |
| 3.3. Dissemination of data collection through at least two additional venues/partner organizations per year for the duration of the grant period. | Identification of alternative venues.<br>Creation of consumer-friendly publications appropriate for venue.<br>Distribution of publications. | Office of Charter Schools<br>Office of Communication at TN DOE |
| 3.4. In the first year of the grant, to provide a collaborative Tennessee Charter School Shared Vision document that effectively details 100% of the Tennessee charter school commitment to student growth levels. To revise this document annually with input from and in agreement with new and existing charter schools. | Invitation to attend TN Round Table on charter schools.<br>Creation of shared vision.<br>Incorporation of vision into relevant TN DOE, LEA, and resource documents. | Office of Charter Schools<br>Charter Schools<br>Tennessee Charter School Association<br>Vanderbilt University |

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*Project Objective* 4) *To improve academic achievement of charter school students.*

| **Performance Measurement (inclusive of quantified target and progress dates)** | **Inputs and Activities** | **Responsible Personnel, Organizations and Partnerships** |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1. At least 65% of new charter school (one year of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in math. | Office of Charter Schools and CREP to annually monitor and track proficiency performance of all TN charter schools with comparison to state averages. | Office of Charter Schools<br>CREP |
| 4.2. At least 65% of new charter school (one year of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in reading/language arts. | Office of Charter Schools and CREP to annually monitor and track proficiency performance of all TN charter schools with comparison to state averages and TN School Report Card data. | Office of Charter Schools<br>CREP |
| 4.3. At least 75% of emerging charter school (two years of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in math. | Office of Charter Schools and CREP to annually monitor and track proficiency performance of all TN charter schools with comparison to state averages and TN School Report Card data. | Office of Charter Schools<br>CREP |
| 4.4. At least 75% of emerging charter school (two years of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in reading/language arts. | Office of Charter Schools and CREP to annually monitor and track proficiency performance of all TN charter schools with comparison to state averages and TN School Report Card data. | Office of Charter Schools<br>CREP |
| 4.5. At least 85% of mature charter school (three years of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in math. | Office of Charter Schools and CREP to annually monitor and track proficiency performance of all TN charter schools with comparison to state averages and TN School Report Card data. | Office of Charter Schools<br>CREP |
| 4.6. At least 85% of mature charter school (three years of operation) students will be proficient on TCAP and Gateway exams in reading/language arts. | Office of Charter Schools and CREP to annually monitor and track proficiency performance of all TN charter schools with comparison to state averages and TN School Report Card data. | Office of Charter Schools<br>CREP |

**(v) In the case of SEAs that propose to use grant funds to support dissemination activities under section 5204(f)(6) of the ESEA, the quality of the dissemination activities.**

Tennessee has chosen not to apply for dissemination activities for this grant period.

**(vi) The Quality of the Evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.**

As has been previously discussed in Competitive Preference Priorities Section 1.2 "Periodic Review and Evaluation of Charter Schools," Tennessee has multiple levels of data collection, evaluation and reporting that is specifically directed to understanding charter schools. With regard to this specific criterion, Tennessee historically has partnership agreements with the Center for Research in Education Policy, at the University of Memphis, which is one center of excellence within the cadre of Tennessee public higher education institutions.

In order to capture both the educational environment of charter schools and the effect they have on student achievement, CREP provides two levels of data analysis: one at the school level and a separate analysis at student achievement levels. These reports have been conducted since Tennessee opened its first charter school, in 2003.

The school level analysis is designed to provide a thorough understanding of the charter schools as individual and aggregate entities as to how they realize their charter mandates. As such, there is a focus on assessment and instruction; school climate; teacher perceptions; parental perceptions; and recommendations. This analysis uses a "mixed-method" design, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative primary data. The instruments used in this data collection involve: 1) School Observation Measure (SOM©); 2) Rubric for Student-Centered Activities (RCSA©); 3) School Climate Inventory (SCI©); 4) Principal Interview; 5) Teacher Focus Group; 6) Student Focus Group; 7) Charter School Teacher Questionnaire; and 8) Charter School

Parent Questionnaire. Primary data is collected via an assigned site researcher, whose duties involve major data collection responsibility for each charter school. These individuals and additional research staff make multiple visits to the charter school to conduct observation, administer the questionnaire and conduct the interview and focus groups. At the close of the year, site researchers will provide individualized school assessment feedback directly to each of the school leaders regarding the level of achievement for each of their established benchmarks. Additionally, in order for the school to best utilize and put into practice these findings, CREP provides an individualized summative school report that assists the schools in understanding how best they might be able to modify their approach in the forthcoming year. Similar reports as well as a statewide report of this nature are presented to the Office of Charter Schools as well. All of the schools have conveyed to the Office of Charter Schools that these annual individualized reports have been of great assistance, especially in the initial years as all of the board, faculty and personnel are deeply vested in concentrating upon building and sustaining the charter rather than viewing it from an objective perspective.

The second evaluation involves separate student-level achievement data based on Tennessee comprehensive examinations per grade level. This analysis utilizes a matched program-control design. Each charter school student is paired with a comparable "control" student who attended the same or a similar district school in the year prior to the former's charter school enrollment. This type of study does not control for student choice, family involvement or other constraints; and due to some small sample sizes, there can be sampling error; however, it does provide insight as to the difference that charter school students are making compared to their non-charter school counterparts at the individual student level.

In addition to the CREP data collection and analysis, the Office of Charter Schools is planning to harvest primary data regarding the leadership of Tennessee charter schools. Similar to many other states, Tennessee charter school leaders face significant professional, organizational and fiscal challenges that non-charter school leaders in similar positions may not have to face. As has been previously noted, eligible student enrollment for Tennessee charter schools is constrained to access to students who are zoned to schools that have failed, or students who are individually failing. As referred to in the graph in Competitive Preference Priority Section 1.3, this population has historically led to charter schools that have a higher than state average high-poverty student body. Naturally, this incurs an additional hardship for leaders to sustain charter enrollments, in addition to remediating and re-culturing those students for academic success. As per charter law, charter schools must make AYP in order to avoid closure by their LEA and; they must do so with limited funds. As the proficiency charts, also in Section 1.3 indicate, all of the operating charters schools outperform their non-charter school peers in state average proficiency ratings. Finally, although charter schools are legislatively mandated to receive one-hundred percent (100%) of their per pupil allocation, all of the charter schools must pay for facility costs. As the graph in Section 1.5 illustrates, charter schools have to pay facility costs (an indirect taxation of their per pupil allocation budget) that can range between approximately 5%-30% of their total operation budget.

In light of this, the Office of Charter Schools is interested in the qualities of leadership that exist in order to achieve such high student outcomes in the face of less-than-optimal limited funding. In the Spring of 2009, the Office of Charter Schools plans to initiate a study of charter school leadership that is broadly reflective of the 2008 National Charter School Research Project entitled, "Working Without a Safety Net: How Charter School Leaders Can Best Survive on the

High Wire." In an effort to understand several expansive component areas of leadership including: the creation and support of a school wide educational vision; effective methods and means of attracting, developing, supporting and harnessing human resources; implementing distributed leadership and; effective and efficient usage of resources. Through this study, charter school leaders will participate in surveys, focus groups, and interviews. This qualitative data will be contrasted with quantitative data regarding student achievement; budget and expenditure allocation; Tennessee School Report Card data and; student and faculty levels of transition. It is the intention of this study to be broadly publicized on the local, regional and national levels in order to better understand how Tennessee charter leaders compare to other state and national benchmarks.

As Section 1.2 also attests, the State Department of Education is required to publish an annual report on the progress of charter schools within the state. Information included in this report relies upon both primary and secondary data, as well as objective and self-reported data. This information is then harvested and presented in a report that is annually submitted to the Tennessee Legislature as per T.C.A. 49-13-120 (3) by the Commissioner to the Joint Oversight Committee on Education.

Tennessee also plans to incorporate several additional reporting indicators as detailed at the 2008 CSP Project Directors Conference in order to ensure compliance on a yearly basis as well as to document the success of the CSP program.

These annual reports: the CREP analyses, the legislative report, the charter school task force report and the forthcoming charter school leadership study will have a positive effect on the state's ability to demonstrably evince through descriptive and quantitative methods, how successful and necessary to Tennessee charter school growth the CSP program funding continues

to provide as the charter movement continues to realize sustained growth and forward advancement.

# Project Narrative

## Other Narrative

Attachment 1:
Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1237-Appendix C-Resume CV of Project Director resub.doc**

Attachment 2:
Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1238-Appendix A Exec summaries and matrices resub.doc**

Attachment 3:
Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1239-Appendix B-Letters of recommendation resub.doc**

# Appendix C

- **CV of Project Director**

**2008 Exec summary of TCA report**

Tennessee public charter schools continue to provide necessary and relevant school choice options for parents and students. Although there remain significant obstacles for the Tennessee charter school movement in becoming the robust reform tool outlined in its legislation, this past year has demonstrated several instances in which charter schools and their LEAs worked collaboratively toward common understandings and relation-building. While there is definitely room to grow in this aspect, there is also positive movement toward a broader understanding of the original purpose of the Tennessee charter law:

- Improve learning for all students
- Providing options for parents
- Encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods
- Measure performance of pupils and faculty
- Creating new professional opportunities for teachers
- Allow parents to participate in education process

Utilizing the continued growth of these successful Charter-LEA relationships, can provide Tennessee with an opportunity to continuously broaden its portfolio of schools, address demographic pockets with tailored educational programs, reduce the number of students who are below proficient and ultimately reduce the number of failing schools. Through these proactive and positive methods, Tennessee will be more favorably positioned to provide an education system that does "improve learning for all students."

This report is intended to provide documentation on the current state of the charter school movement in Tennessee. Several of the most poignant issues have been summarized below:

- The enrollment qualifier, as per T.C.A. 49-13-106 has been recently amended in order to allow a more consistent eligible student population for the public charter schools. (students who fail proficiency in grades 3-8) removes a large potentially eligible pool of students for charter schools during their formative K-2 school years.

- Small numbers of authorized charter schools in the past two years has resulted in USDOE reduction of non-obligated charter school federal funds.

- Charter schools must dedicate an average of 12% of their total BEP for facility costs. However, in order to serve their demographic, some charter school must pay up to 29% of there total BEP for facility costs.

- There were fourteen (14) charter school applications in October 2008 application window The applications include new territory for Tennessee charter school movement including:
    1. Applications from charter sponsors in LEAs that do not have charter schools
    2. Single-gender charter school
    3. LEA conversion charter school
    4. First "green" charter school

**CREP Executive Summary of "Fifth Year Evaluation of Tennessee Charter Schools 2007-08"**

## Executive Summary

The purpose of the present evaluation study was to examine the progress made in program implementation, school climate, and student achievement by the 12 Tennessee charter schools operating during the academic year 2007-2008. Five evaluation questions guided the study:

1. To what extent has the school managed to implement an effective, standards-based approach to student achievement?

2. To what extent have the charter schools adopted effective, research-based instructional strategies?

3. What is the school climate at the charter schools and how does the climate compare to national norms?

4. What are teacher reactions to and experiences in the charter school? What are the adequacy and quality of professional development and resources?

5. What are parent (caregiver) reactions to and experiences with the charter schools?

## Research Method

A mixed methods design, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative data, was employed. The instruments used in the data collection were: (1) School Observation Measure (SOM©); (2) Rubric for Student Centered Activities (RSCA©); (3) School Climate Inventory (SCI©); (4) Principal Interview; (5) Teacher Focus Group; (6) Student Focus Group; (7) Charter School Teacher Questionnaire; and (8) Charter School Parent Questionnaire.

A Site Researcher from CREP was assigned major data collection responsibility for each charter school. These individuals and support research staff visited their assigned schools several times during the year to conduct the observation visits, administer the questionnaires, and conduct the interview and focus groups. Data from all instruments were then used to prepare individual school-level Formative Evaluation Reports as well as this report.

## Recommendations

- Recommendation #1: Adopt a set of more challenging "stretch goals" for student achievement in all core subject areas.

While all of the Tennessee charter schools pride themselves on having high expectations for student learning, their formal, public targets for improvement in academic achievement do not reflect these expectations. With few exceptions, and in keeping with federal targets for "Adequate Yearly Progress," the authors of school improvement plans for the charter schools (as do their colleagues in regular public schools) tend to set goals in terms of the percentage of students that achieve a level of *proficient* or higher on the TCAP assessments of Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics (goals for scores on the Social Studies, Science, and Writing subtests are often not mentioned). Further, annual targets tend to call for only incremental improvements—for example, if 84% of students are scoring "proficient" or better on the Mathematics section of the TCAP, then the target for the school will be set at 86% for the following year.

- Recommendation #2: Adopt research-based instructional practices that help students acquire higher-level thinking skills and conceptual understanding.

As the State of Tennessee puts more rigorous assessments in place in the coming years, it will no longer be sufficient for students to simply select correct answers on a multiple-choice test. Rather, students will be required to explain their answers, in writing, in a way that reflects their conceptual understanding. Sufficiently preparing students to take these tests (and, more importantly, preparing them for future academic and career pursuits) will require that the charter schools adopt instructional approaches that help students engage in the subject matter at a higher (deeper) cognitive level, and also that they learn to express their understanding of the subject matter in writing. The emphasis needs to be not just on giving answers, but on explaining them. This means an increased focus on higher-level questioning, problem-solving, individual inquiry, and student discussion. It could also mean an increased focus on sustained reading and writing, and the use of performance assessments (involving extended writing tasks) that give truer measures of student understanding than short-answer quizzes and multiple-choice tests.

- Recommendation #3: Adopt school-wide, data-driven, differentiated approaches to address the needs of all students—including struggling students and special needs students—that extend throughout the school day, and in all classrooms.

All of the charter schools in the State of Tennessee provide some level of extra assistance for students who have been identified as needing it. For example, identified students may receive a certain number of hours each week of tutoring outside the regular classroom, especially in the weeks leading up to the TCAP assessments in April.

- Recommendation #4: Significantly strengthen opportunities for continuous professional learning, with a special focus on conceptual learning and differentiated instruction.

Higher-level, student-centered teaching that engages the entire class while at the same time addressing the needs of the individual learner requires a tremendous amount of energy and intellectual effort from teachers. While the requisite knowledge, skills and classroom management techniques may come naturally to some teachers, most will benefit from, if not need, the ongoing support of instructional leaders and colleagues.

- Recommendation #5: Continue strengthening partnerships with families and other community members.

While parent engagement appears to be stronger in the charter schools compared to national norms, the staff at most of the schools and the parents themselves believe that there is substantial room for improvement. An approach that some of the schools have taken, and that others may want to emulate, is to *require* that parents or other adult family members volunteer a certain number of hours of their time each marking period. (One school even grades parents on their involvement.) However, to be effective, it is clear that such a system must be based on reasonable expectations, and must be coupled with a wide range of *opportunities* for involvement, taking into account the schedules of adults who may work in the evenings, afternoons, or during the regular school day. Helping students with their homework, or simply monitoring homework completion, should be one way of earning involvement credits.

- Recommendation #6: Continue to monitor schoolwide policies affecting student discipline, with an emphasis on individual and group responsibility as well as positive behavior supports.

The data gathered by the CREP researchers show that school climate and student discipline is generally good. Most teachers, parents, and students feel that the schools are safer than other schools they have experienced, with less fighting and bullying. Nevertheless, many teachers and some parents continue to feel that the disruptive behavior of a few students too often interferes with teaching and learning. Middle schools and high schools are probably especially vulnerable because they must accept new students each year who will have come from low-performing schools, or who have themselves failed academically in their former schools. Many of these students have likely learned patterns of behavior that are inconsistent with the charter school's norms and expectations, and so present continuing problems.

**CREP Executive Summary of "Student-Level Analysis of Year 5 (2007-08) Achievement Outcomes for Tennessee Charter Schools"**

## Executive Summary

This report presents separate student-level achievement results for Tennessee charter schools based on the grade levels served. The first section reports results for students in elementary schools, and the second section reports on schools with middle and high school grades. The present achievement report supplements a report (Morrison, Ross, & McDonald, 2008) on the implementation progress made by the charter schools, encompassing school climate, classroom teaching methods, and perceptions by teachers, principals, parents, and students.

For the elementary level schools, two schools started in 2003-04 – Circles of Success Learning Academy and Smithson-Craighead Academy; one launched in 2004-05 – Star Academy; and two opened in 2005-06 – Promise Academy and Southern Avenue Charter School. These three cohorts were completing their fifth, fourth, and third academic years respectively at the time the achievement tests were administered in the 2007-08 school year.

For the middle and secondary level schools, two schools began operation in 2003-04 – Memphis Academy of Health Sciences (MAHS), Memphis Academy of Science and Engineering (MASE); one was established in 2004-05 – City University School of Liberal Arts (City U); three opened in 2005-06 – The Soulsville Charter School, Memphis Business Academy (MBA), and KIPP Academy Nashville; and one school opened in 2007-08 – LEAD Academy. These three cohorts were therefore completing their fifth, fourth, third, and first academic years respectively at the time the 2007-08 achievement tests were administered.

### Methodology for Elementary Charter Schools

To examine student achievement outcomes, there was no student-level matching of control students. Instead, all students from non-charter, Title I schools in Memphis City Schools (MCS) and Davidson County in 3rd through 5th grades who took both the 2006-07 and 2007-08 TCAP Achievement Test were included in the analysis as controls. The Davidson County students were utilized for the Smithson-Craighead comparison, whereas the MCS students were used as the comparison group for the Memphis-area charter schools. Student-level matching was not conducted because most students who attended these charter schools would not have attended a previous school, and would therefore have no pre-charter school test data to use for matching purposes. The primary variable of interest in the analysis is *charter school membership*, which if statistically significant, would constitute a reliable predictor of students in general performing higher or lower on the TCAP (a) based on their enrolling or not enrolling in a charter school and (b) after controlling for their prior achievement (where available), gender, and lunch status.

### Achievement Measures

The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program: Achievement Test (TCAP/AT) scale scores in Reading/Language Arts and Math were analyzed for schools that included students in grades 3 through 5 during the 2007-08 school year.

### Methodology for Middle and Secondary Charter Schools

To examine student achievement outcomes in secondary-level schools, we employed a matched program-control design at the student level at these schools. In this design, each charter school student was paired with a comparable "control" student who attended the same or a similar district school in the year prior to the former's charter school enrollment.

**Achievement Measures for Middle and Secondary Charter Schools**

The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program: Achievement Test (TCAP/AT) Reading/Language Arts (Reading/LA) and Math scale scores for schools that included students in grades 6 through 8 (which in the case of LEAD Academy also included 5th grade) during the 2007-08 school year were used to assess academic achievement. For students in grades 9 and 10 during the 2007-08 school year, the Tennessee Gateway Algebra I and English 10 exam scale scores and the English 9 End-of-Course assessment scale scores, respectively, were used as the outcome measures. According to the Tennessee High School Examinations Policy, the State Board requires that students successfully pass assessments in the following three subject areas in order to earn a regular high school diploma: Algebra I (usually completed in grade 9), English 10, and Biology (usually completed in 10th grade).

**Summary and Conclusions**

To summarize the achievement outcomes obtained in this study, a brief achievement profile of each of the schools by grade span (elementary, middle and secondary) is provided below. In general, only statistically significant differences are discussed. We encourage readers to interpret these results cautiously given that (a) due to student choice and other constraints, we were unable to conduct a randomized experimental study that eliminated family interest or involvement as an influential factor; (b) we did not have a true "pre-test" measure for the elementary students, which greatly limits our ability to make causal statements regarding differences between charter and comparison students and (c) some grade-level matched-pair sample sizes for middle and secondary schools were small and thus subject to sampling error.

**Memphis City Schools-Monitoring Matrices**

STAR Academy (Elementary School) 2007-08

| Accountability Category | Performance Indicator | Measurement |
|---|---|---|
| Educational Achievement | 1. Adequate yearly progress (AYP)[1] | Participation rate (testing at least 95% of all students) **99%** |
| | | Reading/Language Arts/Writing – 89% Proficient or Advanced **97%**<br>(Elementary and Middle)<br>3-8 grade Achievement Test plus 5th grade and 8th grade Writing Assessment |
| | | Mathematics – 86% Proficient or Advanced **97%**<br>(Elementary and Middle)<br>3-8 grade Achievement Test |
| | | Attendance – 93% or improvement from previous year **97.1%** |
| | 2. Value Added Assessment (TVAAS) | Reading/Language Arts – for diagnostic purposes only **1.6** |
| | | Mathematics – for diagnostic purposes only **-7.7** |
| | | Science – for diagnostic purposes only **6.2** |
| | | Social Science – for diagnostic purposes only **2.4** |
| | 3. School-Specific Indicators | **See attached** |

| | Performance Indicator | Measurement | High | Middle | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organizational Viability | 4. Fiscal Audit | Delivery of a clear audit by an independent auditing firm on or before the due date<br>**Audit is not due until December 31, 2008.** | Exemplary audit with commendation | Clear audit with no recommend-ations | Audit has problems; not delivered in a timely fashion |
| | 5. Balanced Budget | Submission of budget plan that details a balanced fiscal outline of the revenues and expenditures of the current operating period (year, month, etc.) | Exceeds expectations of financial review staff | **Budget meets all established criteria and is delivered on time** | Budget fails to meet established criteria, not delivered in a timely fashion |
| | 6. Organizational Site Visits | Site visits by program and evaluation staff to assess program implementation<br>**Staff conducts scheduled and drop in visits each school year. One of the scheduled visits includes the opening visit at the beginning of each school year. Drop in visits may occur at anytime during the school year.** | **Exemplary Report** | Satisfactory Report | Unsatisfactory Report |
| | 7. Student Reenrollment | Percent of current students eligible for re-enrollment who re-enroll for the next school year | **More than 75%**<br>**91.7%** | 75% | Less than 75% |
| | 8. Discipline Issues | Audit of student expulsions<br>**1 expulsion** | **Exemplary audit with commendation** | Clear audit with no recommend-ations | Audit contains recommend-ations |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 9. Parent Assessment of Climate | Survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument<br>**Top 3rd**<br>Overall Principal Performance<br>Home-School Relations and Outreach<br>Child Safety<br>**Middle 3rd**<br>Overall Teacher Performance<br>Participation in School<br>Personal Barriers to Involvement<br>Parent Involvement at Home | School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | 10. Student Assessment of Climate | Survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument | **School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors** | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |

| | **Performance Indicator** | **Measurement** | **High** | **Middle** | **Low** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organizational Viability (Continued) | 11. Teacher and Staff Assessment of Climate | Survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument<br>**Survey responses were not received.** | School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | 12. Safety | Parent survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument | **School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors** | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | | Student survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument | **School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors** | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 13. Student Stability Rate | Percent of students who remain enrolled in school during school year | **School ranks in top 3rd of District 92%** | School ranks in middle 3rd of District | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District |

| | Performance Indicator | Measurement | High | Middle | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Compliance with rules and regulations | 14. Board of Directors | Compliance with Charter Schools Act | | **Meets the requirements of the law** | Fails to meet the requirements |
| | 15. Staff Qualifications | NCLB standards for "highly qualified" teachers **Information on staff is not due until October 2008.** | Exceeds NCLB standards for the cohort | Meets NCLB standards for the cohort | Fails to meet NCLB standards for the cohort |
| | | NCLB standards for "highly qualified" Paraprofessionals | Exceeds NCLB standards for the cohort | Meets NCLB standards for the cohort | Fails to meet NCLB standards for the cohort |
| | 16. Special Education | Compliance with state and federal law | **Exemplary audit with commendation** | Clear audit with no recommend-ations | Audit contains recommend-ations |
| | 17. Student Information | Timely submission of required information | Exceeds requirements | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 18. Staff Certification Documentation | Timely submission of required information<br><br>**Information on staff is not due until October 2008.** | Exceeds requirements | Meets requirements | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |
| | Performance Indicator | **Measurement** | **High** | **Middle** | **Low** |
| | 19. Retirement Information | **Timely submission of required information** | | **Meets requirements** | **Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders** |
| | 20. Health Insurance Information | **Timely submission of required information** | | **Meets requirements** | **Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders** |
| | 21. Payroll Taxes | **Timely submission of required information** | | **Meets requirements** | **Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders** |
| | 22. Health Services | **Provides health services as required by state and federal law.** | | **Meets requirements** | **Fails to meet requirements** |
| | 23. Safety Plan | **Implement the school safety plan to ensure the physical safety of students and school staff** | | **Plan implemented** | **Plan not implemented** |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 24. Safe School Status | **Reports security information as required by the State to determine "persistently dangerous" schools** | | **Designated as a safe school** | **Designated as a persistently dangerous school** |
| | 25. Surety Bond | **Obtained for everyone as prescribed by law** | | **Meets requirements** | **Fails to meet requirements** |
| | 26. Contracts | **Bids contracts more than $5,000** | | **Meets requirements** | **Fails to meet requirements** |

**Memphis City Schools-Monitoring Matrices**

Memphis Business Academy (Middle School) 2007-08

| Accountability Category | Performance Indicator | Measurement |
|---|---|---|
| Educational Achievement | 1. Adequate yearly progress (AYP)[2] | Participation rate (testing at least 95% of all students) **99%** |
| | | Reading/Language Arts/Writing – 89% Proficient or Advanced **97%**<br>(Elementary and Middle)<br>3-8 grade Achievement Test plus 5th grade and 8th grade Writing Assessment |
| | | Mathematics – 86% Proficient or Advanced **95%**<br>(Elementary and Middle)<br>3-8 grade Achievement Test |
| | | Attendance – 93% or improvement from previous year **97.1%** |
| | 2. Value Added Assessment (TVAAS) | Reading/Language Arts – for diagnostic purposes only **4.0** |
| | | Mathematics – for diagnostic purposes only **2.8** |
| | | Science – for diagnostic purposes only **2.2** |
| | | Social Science – for diagnostic purposes only **1.1** |
| | 3. School-Specific Indicators | **See attached** |

| | Performance Indicator | Measurement | High | Middle | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organizational Viability | 4. Fiscal Audit | Delivery of a clear audit by an independent auditing firm on or before the due date<br>**Audit is not due until October 2008.** | Exemplary audit with commendation | Clear audit with no recommend-ations | Audit has problems; not delivered in a timely fashion |
| | 5. Balanced Budget | Submission of budget plan that details a balanced fiscal outline of the revenues and expenditures of the current operating period (year, month, etc.) | Exceeds expectations of financial review staff | **Budget meets all established criteria and is delivered on time** | Budget fails to meet established criteria, not delivered in a timely fashion |
| | 6. Organizational Site Visits | Site visits by program and evaluation staff to assess program implementation<br>**Staff conducts scheduled and drop in visits each school year. One of the scheduled visits includes the opening visit at the beginning of each school year. Drop in visits may occur at anytime during the school year.** | **Exemplary Report** | Satisfactory Report | Unsatisfactory Report |
| | 7. Student Reenrollment | Percent of current students eligible for re-enrollment who re-enroll for the next school year | More than 75% | 75% | **Less than 75%**<br>**72.4%** |
| | 8. Discipline Issues | Audit of student expulsions<br>**1 Expulsion** | **Exemplary audit with commendation** | Clear audit with no recommend-ations | Audit contains recommend-ations |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 9. Parent Assessment of Climate | Survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument<br>**Top 3rd**<br>Overall Principal Performance<br>Child Safety<br>Home-School Relations and Outreach<br>**Middle 3rd**<br>Overall Teacher Performance<br>Participation in School<br>Personal Barriers to Involvement<br>Parent Involvement at Home | School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | 10. Student Assessment of Climate | Survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument<br>**Middle 3rd**<br>Overall Performance of Principal<br>**Bottom 3rd**<br>Overall Performance of Teachers<br>Identification with School<br>Enthusiasm for Learning | School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |

| | Performance Indicator | Measurement | High | Middle | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organizational Viability (Continued) | 11. Teacher and Staff Assessment of Climate | Survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument<br>**Top 3rd**<br>Teachers Respected by Parents and Students<br>Efficacy of Faculty as a Whole<br>Efficacy for Student Engagement<br>Efficacy for Classroom Management<br>Efficacy for Instructional Strategies<br>**Middle 3rd**<br>Performance of Principal/Good Place to Work<br>**Bottom 3rd**<br>Performance of Teachers/Collegiality<br>Parent and Student Investment in Education | School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | 12. Safety | Parent survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument | **School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors** | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | | Student survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument | **School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors** | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | 13. Student Stability Rate | Percent of students who remain enrolled in school during school year | **School ranks in top 3rd of District**<br>**77%** | School ranks in middle 3rd of District | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District |

| | Performance Indicator | Measurement | High | Middle | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Compliance with rules and regulations | 14. Board of Directors | Compliance with Charter Schools Act | | **Meets the requirements of the law** | Fails to meet the requirements |
| | 15. Staff Qualifications | NCLB standards for "highly qualified" teachers<br>**Information on staff is not due until October 2008.** | Exceeds NCLB standards for the cohort | Meets NCLB standards for the cohort | Fails to meet NCLB standards for the cohort |
| | | NCLB standards for "highly qualified" Paraprofessionals | Exceeds NCLB standards for the cohort | Meets NCLB standards for the cohort | Fails to meet NCLB standards for the cohort |
| | 16. Special Education | Compliance with state and federal law | **Exemplary audit with commendation** | Clear audit with no recommend-ations | Audit contains recommend-ations |
| | 17. Student Information | Timely submission of required information | Exceeds requirements | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |
| | 18. Staff Certification Documentation | Timely submission of required information<br>**Information on staff is not due until October 2008.** | Exceeds requirements | Meets requirements | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |

| | Performance Indicator | Measurement | High | Middle | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Compliance with rules and regulations (Continued) | 19. Retirement Information | Timely submission of required information | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |
| | 20. Health Insurance Information | Timely submission of required information | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |
| | 21. Payroll Taxes | Timely submission of required information | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |
| | 22. Health Services | Provides health services as required by state and federal law. | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements |
| | 23. Safety Plan | Implement the school safety plan to ensure the physical safety of students and school staff | | **Plan implemented** | Plan not implemented |
| | 24. Safe School Status | Reports security information as required by the State to determine "persistently dangerous" schools | | **Designated as a safe school** | Designated as a persistently dangerous school |
| | 25. Surety Bond | Obtained for everyone as prescribed by law | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements |
| | 26. Contracts | Bids contracts more than $5,000 | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements |

**Memphis City Schools – Monitoring Matrices**
City University (High School) -2007-08

| Accountability Category | Performance Indicator | Measurement |
|---|---|---|
| | | Participation rate (testing at least 95% of all students) **100%**<br>Reading/Language Arts/Writing – 93% Proficient or Advanced **93%**<br>English II Gateway plus 11th grade Writing Assessment |
| | | Participation rate (testing at least 95% of all students) **100%**<br>Math – 83% Proficient or Advanced **78%**<br>Algebra I Gateway |
| | | Previous year graduation rate – 90% or on track for 90% by 2013-14<br>**N/A** |
| | 2. Value Added Assessment (TVAAS) | Reading/Language Arts – for diagnostic purposes only **2.8** |
| | | Mathematics – for diagnostic purposes only **-3.7** |
| | | Science – for diagnostic purposes only **9.3** |
| | | Social Science – for diagnostic purposes only **N/A** |
| | 3. School-Specific Indicators | **See attached** |

| | Performance Indicator | Measurement | High | Middle | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organizational Viability | 4. Fiscal Audit | Delivery of a clear audit by an independent auditing firm on or before the due date<br>**Audit is not due until December 31, 2008.** | Exemplary audit with commendation | Clear audit with no recommend-ations | Audit has problems; not delivered in a timely fashion |
| | 5. Balanced Budget | Submission of budget plan that details a balanced fiscal outline of the revenues and expenditures of the current operating period (year, month, etc.) | Exceeds expectations of financial review staff | **Budget meets all established criteria and is delivered on time** | Budget fails to meet established criteria, not delivered in a timely fashion |
| | 6. Organizational Site Visits | Site visits by program and evaluation staff to assess program implementation<br>**Staff conducts scheduled and drop in visits each school year. One of the scheduled visits includes the opening visit at the beginning of each school year. Drop in visits may occur at anytime during the school year.** | **Exemplary Report** | Satisfactory Report | Unsatisfactory Report |
| | 7. Student Reenrollment | Percent of current students eligible for re-enrollment who re-enroll for the next school year | **More than 75%**<br>**93.5%** | 75% | Less than 75% |
| | 8. Discipline Issues | Audit of student expulsions<br>**0 Expulsions** | **Exemplary audit with commendation** | Clear audit with no recommend-ations | Audit contains recommend-ations |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 9. Parent Assessment of Climate | Survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument<br>**Middle 3rd**<br>Child Safety<br>Personal Barriers to Involvement<br>**Bottom 3rd**<br>Overall Teacher Performance<br>Overall Principal Performance<br>Participation in School<br>Parent Involvement at Home<br>Home-School Relations and Outreach | School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | 10. Student Assessment of Climate | Survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument | School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | **School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors** |

| | **Performance Indicator** | **Measurement** | **High** | **Middle** | **Low** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organizational Viability (Continued) | 11. Teacher and Staff Assessment of Climate | Survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument<br>**Survey responses were not received.** | School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | 12. Safety | Parent survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument | School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors | **School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors** | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |
| | | Student survey scores on district-developed and administered survey instrument | **School ranks in top 3rd of District on major factors** | School ranks in middle 3rd of District on major factors | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District on major factors |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 13. Student Stability Rate | Percent of students who remain enrolled in school during school year | **School ranks in top 3rd of District 81%** | School ranks in middle 3rd of District | School ranks in bottom 3rd of District |

| | Performance Indicator | Measurement | High | Middle | Low |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Compliance with rules and regulations | 14. Board of Directors | Compliance with Charter Schools Act | | **Meets the requirements of the law** | Fails to meet the requirements |
| | 15. Staff Qualifications | NCLB standards for "highly qualified" teachers **Information on staff is not due until October 2008.** | Exceeds NCLB standards for the cohort | Meets NCLB standards for the cohort | Fails to meet NCLB standards for the cohort |
| | | NCLB standards for "highly qualified" Paraprofessionals | Exceeds NCLB standards for the cohort | Meets NCLB standards for the cohort | Fails to meet NCLB standards for the cohort |
| | 16. Special Education | Compliance with state and federal law | Exemplary audit with commendation | **Clear audit with no recommend-ations** | Audit contains recommend-ations |
| | 17. Student Information | Timely submission of required information | Exceeds requirements | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 18. Staff Certification Documentation | Timely submission of required information<br><br>**Information on staff is not due until October 2008.** | Exceeds requirements | Meets requirements | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |

| | **Performance Indicator** | **Measurement** | **High** | **Middle** | **Low** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Compliance with rules and regulations (Continued) | 19. Retirement Information | Timely submission of required information | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |
| | 20. Health Insurance Information | Timely submission of required information | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |
| | 21. Payroll Taxes | Timely submission of required information | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements or needed extensive monitoring or reminders |
| | 22. Health Services | Provides health services as required by state and federal law. | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements |
| | 23. Safety Plan | Implement the school safety plan to ensure the physical safety of students and school staff | | **Plan implemented** | Plan not implemented |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 24. Safe School Status | Reports security information as required by the State to determine "persistently dangerous" schools | | **Designated as a safe school** | Designated as a persistently dangerous school |
| | 25. Surety Bond | Obtained for everyone as prescribed by law | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements |
| | 26. Contracts | Bids contracts more than $5,000 | | **Meets requirements** | Fails to meet requirements |

# Appendix B

- **Letters of Recommendation**

Power Center Academy (page 2)
Southern Avenue Charter School (page 3-5)
Memphis Academy of Health Sciences (page 6)
LEAD Academy (page 7)
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools School Board (page 8)
City University Charter School (page 9)

To Whom It May Concern:

On August 11, 2008, Power Center Academy, a Tennessee Public Charter School, opened its doors to 6th grade students who immediately moved beyond the textbook and lecture-driven pedagogy that is characteristic of educational practices that have been implemented over a century ago. Aside from the state-of-the-art facility that students have occupied, the first thing students and parents have noticed is a classroom environment that is distinct from traditional public schools. In addition, entrepreneurship, high technology, financial literacy, community service, and problem-based learning—a mode of learning that endorses teamwork and student involvement—have been the driving forces of Power Center Academy. Moreover, Power Center Academy has established partnerships with local and regional businesses to increase its capacity to educate students.

Recently, Power Center Academy partnered with SunTrust Bank to establish the first youth-run bank in the City of Memphis, and just one of two youth-run banks in the state of Tennessee. The youth bank allows students to establish their own savings accounts at the school's branch. The addition of the Youth Bank has complemented the financial literacy curriculum that SunTrust Bank has worked closely with the academy to implement. Through partnerships like this one, students at Power Center Academy not only have the opportunity to dream of a successful business concept, they also have the potential to invest in it and launch it as well.

Power Center Academy has taken great strides by incorporating the most innovative forms of education that are being practiced today. The effects of Power Center Academy's learning model are evident in increased test scores and student motivation. The success that Power Center Academy has seen in five short months would not have been possible without the CSP funds that were received from the Tennessee Department of Education. The technology that is critical to Power Center Academy's learning model and the professional development opportunities that have supported faculty instruction are all products of CSP funds. More importantly, CSP funds gave Power Center Academy the opportunity to develop and establish school initiatives well in advance of the first day of school, which was critical to setting a strong foundation for the rest of the school year. It would be beneficial for the Tennessee Department of Education to continue supporting schools like Power Center Academy through CSP funds so that more schools can have a positive and significant impact on their students.

Respectfully,
Derwin Sisnett
Board Chairman, Power Center Academy

Dear Dr. Hilgendorf,

This letter is to thank you, the Tennessee Department of Education, and NCLB for the CSP Award that Southern Avenue Charter School (SACS) received. We also want to reiterate the importance those funds were in providing positive educational experiences for at-risk children in this community.

***Description of the School***

Southern Avenue Charter School is a K-5th Grade Elementary School located in the mid-town area of Memphis, TN. It was founded by a diverse group of grass-root stakeholders (educators, judges, lawyers, social workers, community activists, parents, etc.) who were dedicated to providing positive educational experiences for children by educating the "whole" child. SACS was approved in 2005, by the local LEA (Memphis City Schools) and the TN Department of Education to enroll children who were assigned to low-performing elementary schools. SACS is a Title I School. Seventy-two and one-half percent (72.5 %) of the students enrolled participate in the free and reduced breakfast and lunch program.

SACS's mission is to educate the whole child to experience academic and social successes through a variety of research-based, data-driven teaching methods, and cognitive developing activities. SACS seeks to lay the necessary foundation for the child to perform successfully in middle school, high school and beyond; thus enabling that child to become a productive, self-supporting citizen in a technologically advanced, culturally diverse society. SACS provides an alternative route to success for K-5th grade students who are failing to reach their full potential in traditional school settings. Emphasis is on literacy, creative arts, and parental involvement.

***Statement of Success***

SACS opened in August, 2005. This is the school's fourth year. Initially, the charter was granted to include K-3rd grades. Due to the school's success, the local LEA has granted SACS permission to include the 4th and 5th grades and to increase the enrollment from 160 to 200 students (2009-2010 school year). On the Spring 2008 TCAP, 3rd grade students scored 93% in Reading/Language Arts and 93% in Math. The attendance rate is 95%. Present enrollment is 160 with 40 on the waiting list.

Since the opening of the school, many grants have been received; partnerships have been formed; awards have been won; and supportive relationships have been developed to provide the best educational experiences possible for the at-risk students who attend SACS. Federal Express donated additional used equipment, furnishings, and supplies. In February, 2007, ***The J. R. Hyde Elementary School Library*** was dedicated and established. This is a state-of-the art elementary library of new books. The new library was made possible with a grant from the Hyde Family Foundation and other community stake holders. A grant was received from the TN State Legislature to assist in the

employment of a part-time librarian. Community stakeholders continue to give funds to buy library books for the students and teachers.

***International Paper Foundation*** has given science grants for the past three (3) years ranging from $1,500-$5,000 annually to establish a science laboratory. Students enjoy learning through experiments performed in this state-of-the-art laboratory. A retired college physicist, from the University of Memphis, assists the teachers and students in these experiments. Numerous smaller grants have been received for books, classroom supplies, and student activities from other foundations and supporters.

***Volunteer Memphis*** has sent 10-25 volunteers each year (Monday-Thursday) to tutor the students. These tutors are retired upper level educators, librarians, and counselors. A story-teller (retired librarian) tells the students stories twice a month. ***Parents or family surrogates*** are required to volunteer 10 hours per semester in order for their child(ren) to return the next year. They volunteer as tutors, classroom aids, field trip chaperones, or attend PTA meetings

Partnerships have been developed with: ***FedEx Inside Sales Department*** who sponsors a School Fun-Day for the students; ***University of Memphis School of Music*** who provides Suzuki Piano and Violin instruction; ***Playhouse on the Square Theatre*** who provides dramatic art instruction; ***Ballet on Wheels*** who provides ballet lessons; and ***ATA Academy*** who provides Taekwondo instruction. Spanish and/or Japanese and Chorus are also taught. All of these classes are offered to the at-risk students enrolled and are taught at the school.

SACS presently participates in the: ***USDA Child Care Food Program (CACF)*** that funds the after-school snack; ***Department of Human Services (DHS) After School Program Participant*** that provides certificates for a limited number of parents to pay for their children's after-school care; ***Supplemental Educational Services Provider Program (SES)*** that funds Saturday morning tutoring for students attending other high-priority schools; ***LEAPs Grant for the Afterschool Program*** to buy materials and equipment; ***Extended Contract Program*** (TCAP Tutoring) that pays for three (3) classes of SACS students to be tutored from December-April.

***Necessity of the CSP Funds for Planning and Implementation***

SACS was founded by a diverse group of grass-root stakeholders (educators, judges, lawyers, social workers, community activists, parents, etc.) who were dedicated to providing positive educational experiences for children by educating the "whole" child. This board of citizens did not have funds to start a school. They only had the desire and determination to provide positive educational experiences for children.

Without the CSP Funds there would not be a Southern Avenue Charter School of Academic Excellence and Creative Arts providing positive experiences for 160-200 at-risk students in this Memphis Community. Without the CSP Funds there would not be 3rd grade students from this impoverished community reading and computing at the 93% level on the TCAP (state exam). Without the CSP Funds there would not be 95% of the

160 students attending school everyday. Many would be hanging out on the streets; getting into trouble; developing habits of truancy; or in danger with or without supervision. We are thankful for the CSP Funds and the difference it has made in the lives of these students.

The funds awarded gave the school the necessary financial capacity to *pay the first month's rent on a facility* for the housing of the school and for *insurance*. With those funds we were able to purchase: *classroom equipment* (students' desks, chairs, tables, computers, printers, calculators, TV/VCR's, tape recorders, teachers' desks, file cabinets, card-readers/ masters with head phones, textbooks, workbooks, chalkboards, visual display screens, overhead projectors, area rugs, classroom library equipment and books, first-aid kits); *musical instruments for students* (violins, orff musical instruments, curriculum, cd's); *playground equipment; cafeteria equipment* (tables, chairs, refrigerator, hot box); library equipment (bookshelves, desks, tables, chairs, computers); *office and teachers' workroom equipment and supplies* (desks, computers, calculators, a copy machine, printers, file servers, file cabinets, public address system, digital cameras, power point presentation projector, laminating machine, Ellison Die-Cut Machine, workroom tables and chairs, pens, paper, first-aid-kits, other supplies); *maintenance and rental equipment* (computer wiring and mainframe service); and *supplies for building maintenance and service* (cleaning supplies, expendables, etc.).

The positive educational and cultural activities the SACS students are now experiencing would not be possible if it had not been for the CSP Funds. Your assistance has had a profound impact on the parents as well. Many of these impoverished, hard-working parents are getting the support they need to provide positive educational experiences for their children. Thank you for your support in helping us to succeed in our mission of providing positive educational experiences for more than 200 elementary students and their families. You have provided the means for these students to increase their learning capacity thus improving our community.

Sincerely,

Van R. Snyder, Principal

Constance W. King, Executive Administrator

Ann E. Willis, Board Chair

Elise R. Evans, Founder

January 12, 2009

Eric Hilgendorf, Ph.D.
Director of Charter Schools and Choice
Tennessee Department of Education
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243-0375

Dear Eric,

I just wanted to update you on the progress of our high school this year. Our first year has been going extremely well. It has been an exciting year for our first ninth grade class. I want to thank you so much for your support and assistance in helping us move our program forward. I'm particularly grateful for your help with the Charter School Implementation Funds. I cannot tell you how helpful those monies have been. We could not have had such a successful start without those funds. The high school will grow, of course, each of the next three years as we add a grade level per year. The implementation funds are playing a huge role in our budgeting process as we map out our expansion for the next three years.

The middle school, of course, is doing well also. I'm excited about the future for both of schools and thanks again for your help. I hope things are going well at the Department. Please drop in and see us the next time you're in Memphis.

Sincerely,

Curtis Weathers
Director, Memphis Academy of Health Sciences High School

**Board of Directors**

Craig Andreen

Chris Barbic

Leilani Boulware

Bruce Dobie

Clay Caroland

Louise Grant

Michael Jones

Rosie Trickett

**Advisory Board**

Kevin Chavous, Chair

Timothy Caboni

Vincent Durnan

James Guthrie

Michael Martin

January 27, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend the State of Tennessee's charter school grant fund application. As the Founder and School Director of a recently approved charter school in Tennessee, I can personally attest to the importance of receiving charter school grant funds to grow a high-performing school. In just a year and half, our staff and students have raised our student achievement by an average of over 1 grade level in both reading and math. Without a doubt, we could not have done this without the investment of the charter school grant funds and the foundation it has allowed us to build in such a short time. As a newly approved school, LEAD Academy needed to purchase new desks and chairs, find a building and turn it into our new home, and invest in the classroom tools and teachers necessary to reach our ambitious mission of graduating 100% of our students.

It is with great pleasure that I endorse the State of Tennessee's application this year so that Tennessee and Districts all across our great State can continue to invest in alternatives to traditional public schools.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Kane
Founder and School Director
LEAD Academy Charter School

January 27, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

I write in support of Tennessee's Charter School Program Grant Application. I serve on the School Board of Metro Davidson County, and while I do not speak as an official representative of the Board in this case, I do speak as the Board's representative to the Charter School Application Review Committee, and we proudly recommended approval of two exciting new applicants this fall.

Following this year's review process, the Board commissioned a working group which I chair. The purpose of the group is to make recommendations for advocacy by the Board in support of state law changes, for policy changes in the approval process and other district policies governing the approval and operations of charter schools, and for mission and vision of the newly established charter school and grants office within MNPS.

We need a more collaborative, cooperative, and meaningful relationship with charter schools. In Nashville we are excited to expand our vision of charter schools and how they can help us with the essential and urgent reforms that we so need in our district. I believe that we need all the tools we can have in our toolbox by which to meet the needs of our students in both the short and long terms. I know how important the grant money of the Charter School Program is to encourage and support the establishment of strong schools that will meet this urgent need, and I hope you will be able to support this application.

Sincerely,

Alan Coverstone
MNPS Davidson County School Board
District 9

January 8, 2009

Dr. Eric Hilgendorf
Tennessee Department of Education
Director of Charter Schools & Choice
5th Floor – Andrew Johnson Tower
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243-0379

Dear Dr. Hilgendorf,

One of the cornerstones of The Influence1 Foundation is Educational Management—one of three divisions within the organization. In just over a few years, this cornerstone has become an asset to the educational landscape of Memphis, Tennessee.

In 2004, after the approval of Memphis City Schools, Influence1 initiated its efforts to support public education by sponsoring City University School of Liberal Arts. Such an undertaking would not have been possible without the support of the Planning and Implementation Grant for Tennessee Public Charter Schools.

As a college preparatory high school (9-12), City University has been able to ensure that our scholars develop knowledge, skills and values to become contributing citizens within their respective communities and beyond. Evidence of the school's success is found in its first graduation class. In 2008, with 69 scholars graduating amid more than $3.5 million in scholarships and over 8,000 community service hours earned, the initial support of the Planning and Implementation Grant has gone a long way.

The Influence1 Foundation is committed to the efforts City University School of Liberal Arts and its scholars. It is our collective belief that charter schools contribute to ensuring students understand and reach their educational goals—individually and collectively. More importantly, charter schools would not have the ability to do such without the initial support that is afforded by Planning and Implementation funds. Such an opportunity allows institutions to focus on the true bottom-line, students.

On behalf of the scholars of City University, Influence1 offers you our commitment and support of your efforts to continually assist charter schools throughout Tennessee. Wishing you continued success in your pursuit of funding and resources, I am

Sincerely,

R. Lemoyne Robinson
Chief Executive Officer

# Budget Narrative

## Budget Narrative

Attachment 1:
Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1236-Budget narrative resub.doc**

**Tennessee Charter School Program Grant Application 2009**

**Budget Narrative**

The accompanying project narrative provides evidence that Tennessee charter schools face considerable obstacles in the authorization process, including a lengthy, comprehensive and rigorous application process. Similarly, once a charter school is authorized there are significant fiscal and financial hindrances that must be addressed in order to open as a new charter school. Other than the CSP federal funds, there are no common planning resources available for a charter school to implement its design, save those individually harnessed via organizational relationships and philanthropic sources. Additionally, although Tennessee charter schools are required by T.C.A. 49-13-112 to "allocate one-hundred percent (100%) of the state and local education funds to the charter school on the per pupil expenditure of the LEA," due to the Average Daily Membership process of allocating per pupil funds as defined by Basic Education Pay (BEP), this funding is customarily not available to the charter schools until after at least one month of operation. As such, not only are the Charter School Program funds necessary in the planning phase of the charter school, they are also vital in the early years of implementation, when the school is operational.

Furthermore, the per pupil amount that the charter schools receive is less than the total amount of state and local funds for the district, divided by the total number of students in the district as certain costs are not transferred directly across to the charter schools BEP calculation as the district withholds amounts including fixed costs, capital projects and transportation. Finally, as has been noted in the project narrative, all charter schools must allocate a portion of the BEP for facility costs in order to realize their charter and mission. In order to implement

their charter vision, facility costs for Tennessee charter schools range between five percent (5%) and thirty percent (30%) of their total annual BEP allocation.

Finally, according to a 2007 report from the Tennessee Office of the Comptroller, Tennessee has the third lowest per pupil funding average. At $6,564, only Utah and Idaho have lower funding levels. Additionally, Tennessee's per pupil amount is much lower than the $8,319 average from the Southern Regional Education Board as well as the national per pupil average of $9,456.

As is evident from the above, the CSP funds are vital and crucial to the successful planning for and implementation of high-quality charter schools in Tennessee. Several letters of recommendation from charter schools that attest this have been included in Appendix B.

As detailed in the Project Narrative, this application seeks a waiver to implement a five-year (sixty-month) grant period for a total award of $22,153,684. As such, the following pages provide an annual breakdown for this five-year budget narrative per category. The cornerstone funds of the grant are the contractual subgrants that are earmarked to be allocated to the subgrantee charter schools through a competitive application process. Within this category are ten (10) existing subgrantees that are within their 36-month grant window and are scheduled to receive their Implementation Year 1 funds ($275,000 each subgrantee) in 2009-10. The SEA currently has funds from their 2006 CSP award that will partially accommodate five (5) of these subgrantees, while the balance will need to be rolled into the 2009 CSP budget Year 1 allocation in addition to the Planning grants for the new cohort of schools (Cohort A). In Year 2, all ten (10) existing subgrantees will receive their Implementation Year 2 funds through the CSP 2009 grant, in addition to the Implementation Year 1 grants for Cohort A and the Planning grants for Cohort B.

Additionally, in the "Other" category, there are administrative funds that are designed to assist the charter schools in delivering an enhanced level of high caliber professional development opportunities, workshops and events. Within this category, there are significant sources for 1) external evaluation and technical assistance through the Center for Research in Educational Policy, 2) the Charter School Institute and, 3) professional development activities, workshops. These three components will: increase exposure to successful models of charter schools; assist pending and current charter school operators in operating their charter schools at higher levels of overall proficiency; continue the longitudinal study of charter schools through annual evaluation; and provide a more robust level of awareness and understanding across the state of charter school best practices and successful models of high-quality charter schools.

Administrative funds received under this grant will be included with consolidated administration grant funds as provided for in Section 9201 of *No Child Left Behind.* The allowable 5% of administrative funds has been spread across all five years of the grant.

PR/Award # U282A090013

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**Budget Narrative Year 1 (2009-10)**

| **Budget Category** | **Purpose** | **Amount** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Personnel | Salary for Director of Charter Schools and Choice who devotes 80% of time to charter schools. | $70,000 |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | Insurance, retirement and other fringe benefits for Director of Charter Schools. | $28,834 |
| 3. Travel | Travel for two (2) personnel to USDOE Charter School Program Project Directors' Meeting, National Association of Charter School Authorizers Conference and other national related charter events. | $9,000 |
| 5. Supplies | Consumable supplies, computers and software. | $4,500 |
| 6. Contractual | Current commitments to six (6) existing subgrantees that are within 36-month subgrantee window. Five (5) implementation Year 1 grants at $275,000 each plus $71,000 for one (1) implementation Year 1 grant (balance of $204,000 paid through CSP 2006 award).<br>Six (6) Planning grants for new charter schools at $225,000 each: Cohort A | $1,446,000<br>$1,350,000 |
| 8. Other | External evaluation through CREP at University of Memphis<br>Charter professional development<br>Charter events and workshops | $60,000<br>$22,000<br>$13,000 |
| 10. Indirect Costs (at 6%) | | $13,292 |
| **Total Year 1** | | **$3,016,626** |

PR/Award # U282A090013



**Budget Narrative Year 2 (2010-11)**

| **Budget Category** | **Purpose** | **Amount** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Personnel | Salary for Director of Charter Schools and Choice who devotes 80% of time to charter schools. | $72,100 |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | Insurance, retirement and other fringe benefits for Director of Charter Schools. | $29,268 |
| 3. Travel | Travel for two (2) personnel to USDOE Charter School Program Project Directors' Meeting, National Association of Charter School Authorizers Conference and other national related charter events. | $9,000 |
| 5. Supplies | Consumable supplies, computers and software. | $4,000 |
| 6. Contractual | Current commitments to ten (10) existing subgrantees that are within 36-month subgrantee window. Ten (10) implementation Year 2 grants at $200,000 each | $2,000,000 |
| | Six (6) Implementation Year 1 grants for new charter schools at $250,000 each: Cohort A | $1,500,000 |
| | Six (6) Planning grants for new charter schools at $225,000 each: Cohort B | $1,350,000 |
| 8. Other | External evaluation through CREP at University of Memphis | $60,000 |
| | Charter professional development | $19,000 |
| | Charter events and workshops | $15,000 |
| 10. Indirect Costs (at 6%) | | $13,292 |
| **Total Year 2** | | **$5,071,660** |

PR/Award # U282A090013



**Budget Narrative Year 3 (2011-12)**

| **Budget Category** | **Purpose** | **Amount** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Personnel | Salary for Director of Charter Schools and Choice who devotes 80% of time to charter schools. | $74,263 |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | Insurance, retirement and other fringe benefits for Director of Charter Schools. | $29,715 |
| 3. Travel | Travel for two (2) personnel to USDOE Charter School Program Project Directors' Meeting, National Association of Charter School Authorizers Conference and other national related charter events. | $9,000 |
| 5. Supplies | Consumable supplies, computers and software. | $4,000 |
| 6. Contractual | Six (6) Implementation Year 2 grants for new charter schools at $125,000 each: Cohort A | $750,000 |
| | Six (6) Implementation Year 1 grants for new charter schools at $250,000 each: Cohort B | $1,500,000 |
| | Eight (8) Planning grants for new charter schools at $225,000 each: Cohort C | $1,800,000 |
| 8. Other | External evaluation through CREP at University of Memphis | $60,000 |
| | Charter professional development | $16,000 |
| | Charter events and workshops | $16,000 |
| 10. Indirect Costs (at 6%) | | $13,292 |
| **Total Year 3** | | **$4,272,270** |



e5

**Budget Narrative Year 4 (2012-13)**

| **Budget Category** | **Purpose** | **Amount** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Personnel | Salary for Director of Charter Schools and Choice who devotes 80% of time to charter schools. | $76,491 |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | Insurance, retirement and other fringe benefits for Director of Charter Schools. | $30,176 |
| 3. Travel | Travel for two (2) personnel to USDOE Charter School Program Project Directors' Meeting, National Association of Charter School Authorizers Conference and other national related charter events. | $9,000 |
| 5. Supplies | Consumable supplies, computers and software. | $3,500 |
| 6. Contractual | Six (6) Implementation Year 2 grants for new charter schools at $125,000 each: Cohort B<br>Eight (8) Implementation Year 1 grants for new charter schools at $250,000 each: Cohort C<br>Eight (8) Planning grants for new charter schools at $225,000 each: Cohort D | $750,000<br>$2,000,000<br>$1,800,000 |
| 8. Other | External evaluation through CREP at University of Memphis<br>Charter professional development<br>Charter events and workshops | $60,000<br>$13,000<br>$16,000 |
| 10. Indirect Costs (at 6%) | | $13,292 |
| **Total Year 4** | | **$4,771,459** |

**Budget Narrative Year 5 (2013-14)**

| **Budget Category** | **Purpose** | **Amount** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Personnel | Salary for Director of Charter Schools and Choice who devotes 80% of time to charter schools. | $78,786 |
| 2. Fringe Benefits | Insurance, retirement and other fringe benefits for Director of Charter Schools. | $30,650 |
| 3. Travel | Travel for two (2) personnel to USDOE Charter School Program Project Directors' Meeting, National Association of Charter School Authorizers Conference and other national related charter events. | $9,000 |
| 5. Supplies | Consumable supplies, computers and software. | $3,500 |
| 6. Contractual | Eight (8) Implementation Year 2 grants for new charter schools at $125,000 each: Cohort C | $1,000,000 |
| | Eight (8) Implementation Year 1 grants for new charter schools at $250,000 each: Cohort D | $2,000,000 |
| | Eight (8) Planning grants for new charter schools at $225,000 each: Cohort E | $1,800,000 |
| 8. Other | External evaluation through CREP at University of Memphis | $60,000 |
| | Charter professional development | $12,000 |
| | Charter events and workshops | $14,441 |
| 10. Indirect Costs (at 6%) | | $13,292 |
| **Total Year 5** | | **$5,021,669** |