

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/04/2010 02:26 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	26
Sub Total	30	26
Selection criteria		
(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law		
1. Flexibility	30	26
Sub Total	30	26
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	23
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	26
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	20
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	14
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	21
Sub Total	150	104
Total	210	156

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 2010 84.282A - 1: 84.282A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Questions

Selection Criteria - (i) CSP contribution to student achievement

1. 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.

Note: The Secretary encourages applicant to provide a description of the objectives for the SEA's charter school grant program and to explain how these objectives will be fulfilled, including steps taken by the SEA to inform teachers, parents, and communities of the SEA's charter school grant program and how the SEA will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the State.

Strengths:

Strengths:

The state provides evidence of the impact of charter schools in the state. For example, the number of charter schools making AYP in 2009 exceeds non-charters (p. 7). The application plans to implement four clearly defined objectives (p. 14-18). The application includes a comprehensive list of steps the state will take to provide information about the grant (p. 14-15), including partnerships with state associations. The state provides thoughtful, if brief, descriptions of how they intend to achieve each objective. For example, under Objective 1 (increase the number of schools), the state shows commitment to ensuring quality from the early stages of the development process; they intend to offer TA to developers (p. 15). The state provides examples of unique dissemination activities, such as development of a new web-based "community of practice" (p. 18) that will post dissemination materials and provide opportunities for online discussions and seminars.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The application lacks detailed information of the current performance of charter schools and the types of educationally disadvantaged students charters currently serve.

Reader's Score: 26

Selection criteria - (ii) Flexibility afforded by State law

1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to charter schools under the State's charter school law.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a description of how the State's law establishes an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and exempts charter schools from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools.

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to include a description of the degree of autonomy charter

schools have achieved over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel in accordance with their State's law.

Strengths:

Strengths:

The application states that California grants a high degree of autonomy to charter schools and provides a funding structure (categorical block grants and a direct-funding option) that supports their operation (p. 9). Charters receive a "mega-waiver" of state law (p. 30-1), but remain subject certain requirements, such as teacher retirement plans. The application describes the authorizing flexibility built into the state's appeal process.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The application commits to only providing CSP grants to "highly autonomous charter schools" (p. 10). This implies that there is significant variation in the flexibility granted to charters in the state, but does not explain what might cause the differences.

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - (iii) Number of high-quality charters created

1. The number of high-quality charter schools to be created in the State.

Note: The Secretary considers the SEA's reasonable estimate of the number of new charter schools to be authorized and opened in the State during the three-year period of this grant.

The Secretary also considers how the SEA will inform each charter school in the State about Federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and 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 during a year in which the school's enrollment expands significantly.

Strengths:

Strengths:

The application presents the state's ambitious goal of increasing the number of charter schools by 610 in five years (p. 33-34). The state identifies a proven record of past growth, with charters schools comprising 8 percent of all schools in the state (p. 0). Charter enrollment is growing significantly, as well, with a 20% increase in the last year (p. 6). The description of the performance criteria built into the renewal process details California's commitment to charter quality (p. 4). The application adequately describes how the state ensures charter schools receive federal funds (p. 19-21).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The estimate of yearly growth does not include past annual growth trends (p. 34), making it difficult to know if the targets are realistic. In the funding response, the application describes the differences between direct-funded and locally-funded charter schools, but does not provide a breakdown of the types of schools in the state (p. 19). The application refers to the current budget situation in the state, but does not address how it might impact the ambitious charter growth targets.

Selection Criteria - (iv) Quality of the management plan

- 1. The quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

Note: In addition to describing the proposed objectives of the SEA charter school grant program and how these objectives will be fulfilled, the Secretary encourages applicants to provide descriptions of the steps to be taken by the SEA to award subgrant funds to eligible applicants desiring to receive these funds, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for assistance, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

Strengths:

The management plan is highly detailed, thorough and demonstrates extensive CSP-management experience. In addition, the state documents a willingness to improve operations based on external input and past experience (p. 37-8) and adds new CSP activities, such as charter development technical assistance (p. 38). The state provides detailed information on the state resources allocated to the program (p. 35-36). The application includes a table that effectively and clearly connects objectives to performance measures, timelines and milestones (p. 46). The application thoroughly describes the subgrant process and funding amounts, mentions a web-based application system and communicates a commitment to incentivizing charter school development in poor performing districts (p. 39).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The subgrant estimates are extremely high, especially for a state facing an extreme budget crisis (p. 46). The application lacks a justification for distributing such a high number of grants [either 580 (p. 47) or 610 (p. 33)] and does not provide information on the capacity of organizations to open charters schools at such a rapid rate.

The application includes an unusual request to only use SEA and state board of education employees as peer reviewers for subgrants (p. 25-6). If the high volume of applications require this step, perhaps the state should scale back their program.

Selection Criteria - (v) Authorizer accountability

- 1. The SEA's plan to monitor and hold accountable authorized public chartering agencies through such activities as providing technical assistance or establishing a professional development program, which may include providing authorized public chartering agency staff with training and assistance on planning and systems development, so as to improve the capacity of those agencies to authorize, monitor, and hold accountable charter schools.**

Strengths:

Strengths:

The application explains the availability of multiple authorizers through a three-tiered (district, county and SBE) appeals system, as well as SBE-authorized "statewide benefit" schools (p. 8-9). The state intends to work with NACSA to develop trainings, and to offer at least two trainings a year on a variety of topics (p. 51).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The answer lacks an explanation for how the trainings would be tailored to the three different types of authorizers. It neglects to specifically mention training and professional development opportunities to enhance SBE authorizing capacity. As the SBE authorizes schools across a very large state, the authorizing and monitoring challenges differ from those of a district authorizer. The application lacks specifics plans to hold authorizers accountable.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - (vi) Dissemination activities

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

Reader's Score: 14

Sub Question

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

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to award these funds to eligible applicants, including a description of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

Strengths:

The application indicates that grants will be given to applicants with a measured impact on increasing student achievement (p. 18).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The application structure is confusing. The dissemination plans should be clearly outlined in the response to (vi), rather than split across two previous sections. The application neglects to describe the dissemination subgrant process other than to request that state employees conduct the peer reviews. The application does not indicate the criteria used to identify "high performing charter school subgrant applications." (p. 18).

Reader's Score: 7

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

Sub Question

(b) the likelihood that those activities will improve student academic achievement.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to award these funds to eligible applicants, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

Strengths:

The application, although unclear, seems to have a unique approach to ensuring dissemination activities impact student achievement. For example, dissemination grantees will participate in the new web-based Brokers of Expertise web-based community (p. 18).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The application does not adequately explain the partnership activities mentioned (p. 18,26), or how these will positively impact student achievement.

Reader's Score: 7

Selection Criteria - (vii) Quality of the evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a strong evaluation plan in the application narrative and to use that plan, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The Secretary encourages the applicant to design the plan so that it includes (a) benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and (b) outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. In its plan, we encourage the applicant to identify the individual and/or organization that will serve as evaluator and to describe the qualifications of the evaluator. We also encourage the applicant to describe in its application, the evaluation design, indicating: (1) the types of data that will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) the methods that will be used; (4) the instruments that will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Strengths:

Strengths:

The state has not selected an evaluator, but lists the criteria they will use for the selection process (p. 52-3). The application identifies some of the data to be collected (p. 54) and potential research questions connected to each objective (p. 55-8).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The application includes vague responses to components of the question, such as "multiple methods of assessment will be incorporated into the evaluation plan" (p. 54). The lack of specifics in the application implies that plans for the

evaluation have not been a priority for the state, and likely won't be until the RFP is developed (p. 52).

Reader's Score: 21

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	25
Sub Total	30	25
Selection criteria		
(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law		
1. Flexibility	30	28
Sub Total	30	28
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	20
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	25
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	24
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	11
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	30
Sub Total	150	110
Total	210	163

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 2010 84.282A - 1: 84.282A

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Questions

Selection Criteria - (i) CSP contribution to student achievement

1. 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.

Note: The Secretary encourages applicant to provide a description of the objectives for the SEA's charter school grant program and to explain how these objectives will be fulfilled, including steps taken by the SEA to inform teachers, parents, and communities of the SEA's charter school grant program and how the SEA will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the State.

Strengths:

Application provides a well-formulated overview of the strategies for ensuring sub-grant applicants promote student achievement (17). Includes a list of possible innovative methods to help orient applicants as to what are the expectations (17).

Weaknesses:

Collaborating agencies are named as sub-contractors, but there are no criteria for selecting which will do what activities, no contract provisions, and no notion of whether there will; be an RFP or bid-process (15-16). Application mentions importance of capacity-building activities but provides no detail as to who is eligible, what these activities consist of, or how and when they will be delivered (16). The application does not provide a definition of best practice or examples of what some might be. Yet it says that preference will be given to applicants that show they will disseminate best practices (18).

Reader's Score: 25

Selection criteria - (ii) Flexibility afforded by State law

1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to charter schools under the State's charter school law.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a description of how the State's law establishes an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and exempts charter schools from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools.

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to include a description of the degree of autonomy charter schools have achieved over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel in accordance with their State's law.

Strengths:

Provides a thorough discussion of flexibility that includes reference to statute and also lists examples (30-33). Statute provides for multiple authorizers and also defines fairly broad parameters of flexibility (30-31).

Weaknesses:

There are no examples of how specific charter schools implement the flexibility allowed (30-31).

Reader's Score: 28

Selection Criteria - (iii) Number of high-quality charters created**1. The number of high-quality charter schools to be created in the State.**

Note: The Secretary considers the SEA's reasonable estimate of the number of new charter schools to be authorized and opened in the State during the three-year period of this grant.

The Secretary also considers how the SEA will inform each charter school in the State about Federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and 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 during a year in which the school's enrollment expands significantly.

Strengths:

Presents a very ambitious target for new school approvals that is nearly twice the current number (34).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address the high-quality component of the criteria. There is no explanation how it will help insure that the 610 new schools approved will be high-quality (33-34).

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - (iv) Quality of the management plan**1. The quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

Note: In addition to describing the proposed objectives of the SEA charter school grant program and how these objectives will be fulfilled, the Secretary encourages applicants to provide descriptions of the steps to be taken by the SEA to award subgrant funds to eligible applicants desiring to receive these funds, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for assistance, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

There are thorough and clear explanations of the administrative oversight of the CSP grant, the sub-grant funding structure, the capacity-building activities required of the sub-grantees, and the T/A and monitoring processes with responsibilities, time lines, performance indicators, and benchmarks (35-40, 41-45, 46-50).

Weaknesses:

Some important documents, e.g., sub-grant screening and scoring processes, sub-contractor qualifications, are referred to but not explained or included (40, 38-39). Inclusion of an organizational chart would help the reader understand where the administrative components rest in the Dept hierarchy, thus the amount of influence and authority each has (35-38).

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - (v) Authorizer accountability

1. The SEA's plan to monitor and hold accountable authorized public chartering agencies through such activities as providing technical assistance or establishing a professional development program, which may include providing authorized public chartering agency staff with training and assistance on planning and systems development, so as to improve the capacity of those agencies to authorize, monitor, and hold accountable charter schools.

Strengths:

Provides a concrete description of a strategy of training authorizers how to develop and/or adopt essential overview and monitoring functions with a list of training topics and a sample schedule included (51). Identify NACSA as a partner in developing the trainings (51).

Weaknesses:

The terms of the collaborative training program development with NACSA are not explained, the work does not appear in the management plan, and the collaborative does not appear in the budget (34-50 51, Budget Narrative)

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - (vi) Dissemination activities

1. In the case of SEAs that propose to use grant funds to support dissemination activities under section 5204(f)(6) of the ESEA:

Reader's Score: 11

Sub Question

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

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to award these funds to eligible applicants, including a description of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

The applicant already has established a Web portal to assist with dissemination activities (21). The portal will be enhanced and there is a list of proposed topics and delivery enhancements included (22).

Weaknesses:

There is no time line or estimate of when the enhancements will be launched and completed (21-22).

Reader's Score: 11

Sub Question

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

(b) the likelihood that those activities will improve student academic achievement.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to award these funds to eligible applicants, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

None apparent.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address impact. There is no description of how applicant will monitor how or how often schools use the portal, their use of the information in it, how they apply the information in it, or the positive effects its use will have on schools or students (17-18).

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - (vii) Quality of the evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a strong evaluation plan in the application narrative and to use that plan, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The Secretary encourages the applicant to design the plan so that it includes (a) benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and (b) outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. In its plan, we encourage the applicant to identify the individual and/or organization that will serve as evaluator and to describe the qualifications of the evaluator. We also encourage the applicant to describe in its application, the evaluation design, indicating: (1) the types of data that will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) the methods that will be used; (4) the instruments that will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Strengths:

Bringing in an outside evaluator will add objectivity and potential rigor to the evaluation (53). Explains why evaluator cannot be identified in proposal (52). Applicant presents a comprehensive and thorough outline of the key components of the evaluation plan including crucial questions, which could be used as RFP specs (54-58).

Weaknesses:

None apparent.

Reader's Score: 30

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/04/2010 10:21 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/08/2010 08:08 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	27
Sub Total	30	27
Selection criteria		
(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law		
1. Flexibility	30	27
Sub Total	30	27
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	26
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	23
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	22
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	16
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	30
Sub Total	150	117
Total	210	171

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 2010 84.282A - 1: 84.282A

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Questions

Selection Criteria - (i) CSP contribution to student achievement

1. 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.

Note: The Secretary encourages applicant to provide a description of the objectives for the SEA's charter school grant program and to explain how these objectives will be fulfilled, including steps taken by the SEA to inform teachers, parents, and communities of the SEA's charter school grant program and how the SEA will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the State.

Strengths:

The application proposes clear and measurable objectives for assisting educationally disadvantaged and other youth in achieving state academic content standards. Specifically, the applicant proposes a thorough communication strategy to announce the availability of CSP sub-grant funds to parents, teachers and communities throughout California.

The application presents a succinct goal around increased student achievement that leads to closing the achievement gap. The goal is supported by four defined objectives that will lead to the goal.

The application proposes 610 new grants (including up to 20 dissemination grants) during the project period of five years.

The grant proposes methods to accomplish the objectives within the grant program. The application explained how these objectives will be fulfilled, including steps taken by California to inform teachers, parents, and communities about charter school grant program and how the State will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each school in the State.

Weaknesses:

The application lacks clarity around the current performance of charter schools in California.

Reader's Score: 27

Selection criteria - (ii) Flexibility afforded by State law

1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to charter schools under the State's charter school law.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a description of how the State's law establishes an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and exempts charter schools from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools.

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to include a description of the degree of autonomy charter

schools have achieved over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel in accordance with their State's law.

Strengths:

California law provides large amounts of autonomy. Charter law states that charter schools shall comply with all charter school laws but is otherwise exempt from laws governing school districts except those pertaining to the teacher retirement plan, the charter school revolving loan program, laws around minimum age for public school attendance and the California Building Code.

Weaknesses:

The application failed to adequately describe the administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency. Specifically, the method utilized to ensure the flexibility to design and innovate instruction and delivery methods. The legislative intent is clear. However, the oversight process to ensure the practice is vague.

Reader's Score: 27

Selection Criteria - (iii) Number of high-quality charters created

1. The number of high-quality charter schools to be created in the State.

Note: The Secretary considers the SEA's reasonable estimate of the number of new charter schools to be authorized and opened in the State during the three-year period of this grant.

The Secretary also considers how the SEA will inform each charter school in the State about Federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and 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 during a year in which the school's enrollment expands significantly.

Strengths:

The application proposes 610 new charter schools to be developed during the grant period (five years). The projection anticipates growth based on historical growth data.

California law provides assurance that each charter school in the state receives its commensurate share of federal funds, including those funds allocated during the first year of operation or when the school is significantly expanding.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address the details around ensuring that new schools are high quality new schools.

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - (iv) Quality of the management plan

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

Note: In addition to describing the proposed objectives of the SEA charter school grant program and how these objectives will be fulfilled, the Secretary encourages applicants to provide descriptions of the

steps to be taken by the SEA to award subgrant funds to eligible applicants desiring to receive these funds, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for assistance, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

The application proposes a clear and detailed management plan. Specifically, performance measures for each objective that includes responsibility for actions, timelines, and clear measurable milestones.

Weaknesses:

The application describes sub-grant monitoring as a file desk review within the first year of funding. Department staff will also review sub-grantee's quarterly benchmark reports to track progress toward sub-grant objectives. However, an onsite review is only conducted if indicated. The applicant proposes that each school will be officially monitored in their first year. The application lacks detail around triggers for onsite review and intervention strategies.

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - (v) Authorizer accountability

- 1. The SEA's plan to monitor and hold accountable authorized public chartering agencies through such activities as providing technical assistance or establishing a professional development program, which may include providing authorized public chartering agency staff with training and assistance on planning and systems development, so as to improve the capacity of those agencies to authorize, monitor, and hold accountable charter schools.**

Strengths:

The application proposes a partnership with NACSA to create statewide capacity and offer trainings to charter authorizers in the State. Specifically, a minimum of two trainings per year will be developed and offered to authorizers.

Weaknesses:

The application lacks a description of the states administrative relationship with authorizers.

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - (vi) Dissemination activities

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

Reader's Score: 16

Sub Question

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

(a) the quality of the dissemination activities.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to

Sub Question

award these funds to eligible applicants, including a description of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

The application proposes reasonable steps to be taken by California to award dissemination funds to eligible applicants.

The performance measures for dissemination grant recipients are clearly stated with measureable expectations.

Weaknesses:

The States application is vague regarding the peer review process, timelines for awarding funds during the five year grant period.

Reader's Score: 8

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

(b) the likelihood that those activities will improve student academic achievement.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to award these funds to eligible applicants, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

The California dissemination sub-grant program will encourage high performing charter school applicants to develop partnerships with the leading charter school organizations, charter school service providers and school districts to design and implement effective and efficient dissemination programs.

The application proposes up to ten charter schools to disseminate best practices in increasing student achievement.

Weaknesses:

The application lacks a description regarding the peer review process.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - (vii) Quality of the evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a strong evaluation plan in the application narrative and to use that plan, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The Secretary encourages the applicant to design the plan so that it includes (a) benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and (b) outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. In its plan, we encourage the applicant to identify the individual and/or organization that

will serve as evaluator and to describe the qualifications of the evaluator. We also encourage the applicant to describe in its application, the evaluation design, indicating: (1) the types of data that will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) the methods that will be used; (4) the instruments that will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Strengths:

The application describes a thorough RFP process that will be used to select a responsible and qualified evaluator (qualification articulated on page 53). Under the RFP applicants will be expected to provide a detailed response to all research questions, data and data collection instruments, methods and reports (qualitative and quantitative data collection expectations listed on page 53-57). It is clear that the evaluation will be developed to assess the extent to which each of the program outcomes in the project meet the goal of increasing student achievement that leads to closing the achievement gap.

Weaknesses:

None noted

Reader's Score: 30

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/08/2010 08:08 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2010 10:43 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	28
Sub Total	30	28
Selection criteria		
(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law		
1. Flexibility	30	26
Sub Total	30	26
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	24
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	22
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	22
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	10
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	20
Sub Total	150	98
Total	210	152

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 2010 84.282A - 1: 84.282A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Questions

Selection Criteria - (i) CSP contribution to student achievement

1. 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.

Note: The Secretary encourages applicant to provide a description of the objectives for the SEA's charter school grant program and to explain how these objectives will be fulfilled, including steps taken by the SEA to inform teachers, parents, and communities of the SEA's charter school grant program and how the SEA will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the State.

Strengths:

Partnership between several charter stakeholder groups. Emphasis on admin, governance and fiscal matters. Assumption that a majority of new charter schools will meet or exceed their API targets and meet AYP.

Weaknesses:

Emphasis on capacity building for charters but unclear as to what/how those strategies are delivered by stakeholder groups and implemented by charters. What is the historical precedent for new schools hitting their API goals and making AYP?

Reader's Score: 28

Selection criteria - (ii) Flexibility afforded by State law

1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to charter schools under the State's charter school law.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a description of how the State's law establishes an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and exempts charter schools from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools.

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to include a description of the degree of autonomy charter schools have achieved over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel in accordance with their State's law.

Strengths:

Mega-waiver law. Legal citations that define the relationship of authorizer and charter school to ensure flexibility. Breaks out flexibility with regard to types of charters, authorizers, programs and funding.

Weaknesses:

With the number of successful charters in California, documentation of the flexibility and outcomes would assist this application. That is, what flexibilities provided the greatest ROI and which did not. Did this lead to overall student achievement and positive school climate and operation?

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - (iii) Number of high-quality charters created**1. The number of high-quality charter schools to be created in the State.**

Note: The Secretary considers the SEA's reasonable estimate of the number of new charter schools to be authorized and opened in the State during the three-year period of this grant.

The Secretary also considers how the SEA will inform each charter school in the State about Federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and 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 during a year in which the school's enrollment expands significantly.

Strengths:

Regularly scheduled meetings (60 days) to provide information regarding federal funding initiatives. Venues and methods to distribute this information.

Weaknesses:

What is the response rate of the Annual Information Survey? How is this ensured? Does it match with monitoring or oversight visitations? Is this information available to other charters or non-charters? How to discern if a charter has not received its funds and what is the follow up. Necessary to see historical data on this component.

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - (iv) Quality of the management plan**1. The quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**

Note: In addition to describing the proposed objectives of the SEA charter school grant program and how these objectives will be fulfilled, the Secretary encourages applicants to provide descriptions of the steps to be taken by the SEA to award subgrant funds to eligible applicants desiring to receive these funds, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for assistance, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

Worked in past with OII to correct irregularities. Some definition of roles and responsibilities for management plan. Lists components of management plan of state operations for admin, charter TA, planning and implementation grants, sub-grant TA, dissemination and program evaluation.

Weaknesses:

Need for comprehensive timeline that alludes to completion of milestones on time and within budget. More information on responsibilities of roles for project period. Could benefit from a project logic model that incorporates objectives year 1-5. Need to illustrate how year 1 informs years 2-5 and how that is reflected in objectives and TA/PD deliverables.

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - (v) Authorizer accountability

- 1. The SEA's plan to monitor and hold accountable authorized public chartering agencies through such activities as providing technical assistance or establishing a professional development program, which may include providing authorized public chartering agency staff with training and assistance on planning and systems development, so as to improve the capacity of those agencies to authorize, monitor, and hold accountable charter schools.**

Strengths:

Intent to work with NACSA. Guidance will include outcome development, evaluation strategies, fiscal stability, compliance, ELL, best practices, etc.

Weaknesses:

With California's lengthy history with charter schools, more information is needed to understand what strategies have been implemented in the past and their success (or lack of). Additionally, how have the state's interventions (TA/PD) been received and how has that been reflected in the overall success of the school?

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - (vi) Dissemination activities

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

Reader's Score: 10

Sub Question

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

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to award these funds to eligible applicants, including a description of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

California already has experienced success in this regard. Listing of Brokers of Expertise. Allows for multiple users and wide audience participation. Planned use of data to inform instruction.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

More information needed on the actual process: application, rubric, review team, etc. Difficult to assess the quality. No mention of external partnerships or non-charter dissemination.

Reader's Score: 5

2. In the case of SEAs that propose to use grant funds to support dissemination activities under section 5204 (f)(6) of the ESEA,
- (b) the likelihood that those activities will improve student academic achievement.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to award these funds to eligible applicants, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

Robust system for delivery of TA/PD for charter schools.

Weaknesses:

Unable to ascertain previous success or obstacles encountered and overcome. As such, despite the resources allocated to this, it is difficult to understand how this will be an effective component.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - (vii) Quality of the evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a strong evaluation plan in the application narrative and to use that plan, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The Secretary encourages the applicant to design the plan so that it includes (a) benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and (b) outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. In its plan, we encourage the applicant to identify the individual and/or organization that will serve as evaluator and to describe the qualifications of the evaluator. We also encourage the applicant to describe in its application, the evaluation design, indicating: (1) the types of data that will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) the methods that will be used; (4) the instruments that will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Strengths:

Emphasis on external evaluator and have listed qualities to be included in the RFP for this service. Annual collection of quantitative and qualitative data. Evaluation links with objectives.

Weaknesses:

Existing studies (e.g. USC's annual charter report) need to be referenced in order to benefit from their analysis and improve upon the study methodology. Evaluation leans toward several component areas: demographics, student achievement data, attendance, etc. but is non-committal in its overall evaluation strategy.

Reader's Score: 20

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/28/2010 10:43 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/15/2010 02:13 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Reader #6: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	24
Sub Total	30	24
Selection criteria		
(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law		
1. Flexibility	30	27
Sub Total	30	27
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	19
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	19
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	21
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	15
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	19
Sub Total	150	93
Total	210	144

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 2010 84.282A - 1: 84.282A

Reader #6: *****

Applicant: California Department of Education for the State Board of Education -- California Department of Education for the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100013)

Questions

Selection Criteria - (i) CSP contribution to student achievement

1. 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.

Note: The Secretary encourages applicant to provide a description of the objectives for the SEA's charter school grant program and to explain how these objectives will be fulfilled, including steps taken by the SEA to inform teachers, parents, and communities of the SEA's charter school grant program and how the SEA will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the State.

Strengths:

The applicant has one goal with four objectives. Objectives are described and link back to the overall goal.

Weaknesses:

The description in Objective 3 is weak. Awarding sub-grants to charter schools in the specific areas listed does not mean the charter schools awarded will improve student achievement.

Reader's Score: 24

Selection criteria - (ii) Flexibility afforded by State law

1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to charter schools under the State's charter school law.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a description of how the State's law establishes an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and exempts charter schools from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools.

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to include a description of the degree of autonomy charter schools have achieved over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel in accordance with their State's law.

Strengths:

The applicant describes the large amount of flexibility CA charter schools have. They have flexibility in methodology, instructional resources and can annually elect to be direct-funded or locally-funded. They are free to spend their general apportionment funds without the requirements binding traditional public schools.

Weaknesses:

It was not clear how employees of charter schools are hired, through the charter school? If so, are they part of any collective bargaining?

Reader's Score: 27

Selection Criteria - (iii) Number of high-quality charters created

1. The number of high-quality charter schools to be created in the State.

Note: The Secretary considers the SEA's reasonable estimate of the number of new charter schools to be authorized and opened in the State during the three-year period of this grant.

The Secretary also considers how the SEA will inform each charter school in the State about Federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and 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 during a year in which the school's enrollment expands significantly.

Strengths:

The CDE notifies the charter school within five business days after receiving a "number" the information necessary about state funding and Federal funding. The process of notifying the individual charter schools is evidence of ensuring the charter schools receives the school's commensurate share for Federal and State funds.

Weaknesses:

This applicant projects 610 new charter schools over a 5 year grant period. That is more than 100 per year. The large number per year is fine, but what about the high-quality piece? There is no evidence of the definition of high quality and how that will be monitored. It was not clear the definition the applicant uses for "significantly expanding".

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - (iv) Quality of the management plan

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

Note: In addition to describing the proposed objectives of the SEA charter school grant program and how these objectives will be fulfilled, the Secretary encourages applicants to provide descriptions of the steps to be taken by the SEA to award subgrant funds to eligible applicants desiring to receive these funds, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for assistance, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

There was a statement of intent to improve to CDE administrative procedures based on the findings of the WestEd California Monitoring Report. A rolling timeline for submission of sub-grants will help accommodate the flexible year-round authorization process.

Weaknesses:

Timelines for each of the Objectives are stated in broad terms. More detail was needed. There was no evidence of who was responsible for the monitoring of the tasks during the life of the grant.

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - (v) Authorizer accountability

- 1. The SEA's plan to monitor and hold accountable authorized public chartering agencies through such activities as providing technical assistance or establishing a professional development program, which may include providing authorized public chartering agency staff with training and assistance on planning and systems development, so as to improve the capacity of those agencies to authorize, monitor, and hold accountable charter schools.**

Strengths:

The applicant will work with NACSA to create statewide capacity to strengthen the authorizers review processes and oversight. Providing the professional development program is a step towards giving the training authorizers need to hold accountable the charter schools.

Weaknesses:

There was no evidence of the SEAs plan to monitor and hold accountable the public chartering agencies. Providing the professional development is a step, but there wasn't a measure of what the SEA was looking for in quality authorizing.

Reader's Score: 21

Selection Criteria - (vi) Dissemination activities

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

Reader's Score: 15

Sub Question

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

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to award these funds to eligible applicants, including a description of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

The dissemination sub-grants will be awarded to schools that agree to participate in the using California's new web-based community of practice (Brokers of Expertise). The use of this tool will ensure the identified projects are disseminated widely to charter and non-charter public schools.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

There was no definition of "best practices" and "high-quality" charter schools. What determines "best practice" and "high quality"?

Reader's Score: 7

2. In the case of SEAs that propose to use grant funds to support dissemination activities under section 5204 (f)(6) of the ESEA,
- (b) the likelihood that those activities will improve student academic achievement.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the steps to be taken by the SEA to award these funds to eligible applicants, including descriptions of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications for dissemination, the timelines for awarding such funds, and how the SEA will assess the quality of the applications.

Strengths:

Applicant will fund up to ten charter schools to disseminate best practices in increasing student achievement. Partner schools will show accelerated rate of student achievement compared to prior years due to working with a dissemination grant awardee.

Weaknesses:

The monitoring of this grant for these outcomes is lacking. The monitoring of the impact of the dissemination project was not clear.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - (vii) Quality of the evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a strong evaluation plan in the application narrative and to use that plan, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The Secretary encourages the applicant to design the plan so that it includes (a) benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and (b) outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. In its plan, we encourage the applicant to identify the individual and/or organization that will serve as evaluator and to describe the qualifications of the evaluator. We also encourage the applicant to describe in its application, the evaluation design, indicating: (1) the types of data that will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) the methods that will be used; (4) the instruments that will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Strengths:

To choose an evaluator, the applicant described the necessary qualities desired in the contractor. Example questions to be answered by the evaluator were of good quality. The questions pertaining to Objective 3 were especially insightful.

Weaknesses:

The questions pertaining to Objective 1 called into question the definition of high-quality. What criteria will the evaluator be looking for to determine whether a charter school is high-quality? It is not clear how the evaluator will determine the quality of training for the governance and fiscal management.

Reader's Score: 19

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/15/2010 02:13 PM