

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/16/2010 11:13 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

**Reader #4:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(i) CSP contribution to student achievement</b>		
1. Student achievement	30	30
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	30
<b>Selection criteria</b>		
<b>(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law</b>		
1. Flexibility	30	30
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	30
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(iii) Number of high-quality charters created</b>		
1. Number of schools	30	30
<b>(iv) Quality of the management plan</b>		
1. Management plan	30	20
<b>(v) Authorizer accountability</b>		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	25
<b>(vi) Dissemination activities</b>		
1. Dissemination activities	30	15
<b>(vii) Quality of the evaluation</b>		
1. Evaluation	30	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	150	110
<b>Total</b>	210	170

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2010 84.282A - 2: 84.282A

Reader #4: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

## 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

DC's public charter schools serve higher percentages of minority and economically disadvantaged students than are served by the DC public school system (p24.) Graduation rates for DC charter schools are higher than at traditional public schools. There is no cap on the # of charter schools that can be authorized. Grant funds will be used to assist schools to establish teaching, leadership and trustee corps to establish "best practices" from other charter schools. DC charter schools offer a wide variety of programming options.

#### Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

None

Reader's Score: 30

### 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

District has a strong charter law providing a high degree of autonomy as indicated by the high charter law rating received from the Center for Education Reform, by the high percentage (38%) of DC students attending charter schools and by the high number of charters in existence (p28.) While only one authorizer exists, authorizer is well organized and maintains a strong monitoring and assessment program with extensive annual and five-year reviews. Authorizer actively solicits and supports new charter applicants, yet only approves proposals after a thorough evaluation.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

None

**Reader's Score: 30**

**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

Applicant plans on issuing 24 new charters over a five year period which is consistent with past activity and within their capacity to manage. Acceptances are driven by the quality of the application. Poor applications are rejected with generally one in three being accepted. Applicant works closely with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education to disseminate information about federal grant programs and funding opportunities.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

None

**Reader's Score: 30**

**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:**

Strtengths

DC's Charter Schools Program has detailed process and outcome performance measures for each of its 4 program objectives (p44-51.) Budget includes funding for an evaluator to monitor grant.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

Staffing for program officer and program analyst open so not clear how current grant is being monitored and if sufficient staffing is available to implement and monitor sub-grants. Delineation of responsibilities between the Office of Charter School Financing and Support and the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board not clear.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**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

Very strong system in place for authorizer.

The DC authorizer, the Public Charter School board (PCBS) has a strong accountability system and has adopted new more challenging learning standards (p6.) DCPS has specific, measurable goals for addressing achievement gap for minority and low-income students. In addition, the PCBS tracks data for every NAEP subgroup (ethnicity, special needs, ELL, economically disadvantaged students and gender. Received NACSA 2008 Award for Excellence in Improving Practice.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

District has only one authorizer.

Reader's Score: 25

**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:**

Strengths

Sub-grants will target activities from schools demonstrating high levels of student achievement and high levels of parent satisfactions.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

No discussion of the outcomes obtained from prior dissemination grants, only discussion of activities. Goal is to increase academic achievement by: using data from multiple assessments, identify schools needing assistance, providing evidence of capacity to disseminate, and provide a budget for the project. (p54-5) Not clear how project to be implemented and run.

How does this fit in with the PCSB's Performance Management Framework?

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:**

Strengths

**Sub Question**

Sub-grants will target activities from schools demonstrating high levels of student achievement and high levels of parent satisfactions.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses.

No discussion of how outcomes will be measured.

**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

Funding is included in the budget for a project evaluator to implement and monitor the project.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

Proposed evaluation plan not specific. Goals for the plan are listed but no specifics. Plan specifics should be identified and bidding for an outside evaluator should be to implement the plan, not develop it.

**Reader's Score: 20**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/16/2010 11:13 AM



Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/15/2010 10:05 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(i) CSP contribution to student achievement</b>		
1. Student achievement	30	28
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	28
<b>Selection criteria</b>		
<b>(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law</b>		
1. Flexibility	30	27
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	27
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(iii) Number of high-quality charters created</b>		
1. Number of schools	30	25
<b>(iv) Quality of the management plan</b>		
1. Management plan	30	18
<b>(v) Authorizer accountability</b>		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	23
<b>(vi) Dissemination activities</b>		
1. Dissemination activities	30	15
<b>(vii) Quality of the evaluation</b>		
1. Evaluation	30	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	150	101
<b>Total</b>	210	156

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2010 84.282A - 2: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

## 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

DCPCS currently serves a higher percentage of minority and educationally disadvantaged students than do the traditional public schools within the DC public school system. (p. 23)

A higher percentage of students in DCPCS middle and high are proficient in reading and math. (p. 23)

The application indicates that the DC charter schools have a higher graduation rate than in traditional public. (p. 23)

CSP funds will be used to purchase instructional resources, professional development, implementing business systems, and academic technology. (p. 24)

#### Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

The narrative does not contain and details on how and when the applicant plans to inform teachers, parents, and community of the CSP program.

The application contains few details on how project objectives will be met.

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:**

Strengths

The applicant has been recognized by CER and Alliance as having a strong charter school law, offering a great deal of autonomy. (p. 27)

Financial accountability is the responsibility of individual charter school governing boards. (p.29)

The law provides an exemption from definitions of DC Government and DC public school. (p. 29)

DC Code exempts charters from DC statutes, policies, rules, and regulations (p.29)

The law provides for equal funding for charters. (p. 30)

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The law includes a cap on the number of charter schools that may be authorized. (p. 28)

**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:**

Strengths

The application includes a reasonable, if not ambitious projection for new schools. (p.36)

The application includes a description of a process for the integration of federal funds and programs within the Department. (p. 37)

The applicant describes how information on available federal funds included in annual training. (37)

The application makes a strong argument that the authorizer is committed to quality, as demonstrated by the number of applications denied (p.35)

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The projection included in the narrative of 24 new schools over five years (p. 37) differs from the outcome measure of 3 new schools per year (p. 44)

Outside of initial training, no active effort to inform schools. No information on how many charter schools actually receive federal funds, or if there is a mechanism for schools to complain about lack of federal funding being provided.

**Reader's Score: 25**

**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 application includes a clear description of duties split between staff. (p. 39)

The collaboration with Walton Family Foundation in a panel review for charter school funding will likely increase capacity. (p. 43)

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

No information on how applications are assessed for quality, or what type of information is requested. No information on minimum score requirements, or if CSP applications are ever rejected for poor quality. Little detail on how the peer review process works.

Outcome measures only call for 3 new schools (p. 45) while projections stated 5 new schools per year (p.36)

Little detail on what types of assistance and professional development will be offered- makes it difficult to assess if activities will likely have an impact.

Outcome measures for Dissemination projects are process measures, and do not predict any impact on student achievement. (p.48)

Timelines are missing for most of the activities, except for the release of the CSP application.

Reader's Score: 18

**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

Authorizer is required to complete an annual report and submit to the Mayor, DC Council, the Board of Education, Secretary of Education, and the appropriate congressional committees. (p. 51)

The application describes several examples of collaboration between PCSB and OSSE. (p. 52)

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The PCSB is subject to minimal oversight by any DC governmental agency, including OSSE. (p. 51)

The application includes no plans to provide technical assistance or professional development for the authorizer.

There are no plans to increase the capacity of the authorizer.

Reader's Score: 23

**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.

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

Strengths

The applicant will inform charter school leaders, parents, and community members about the dissemination grant opportunity. (p. 56)

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The applicant does not include any timelines for the dissemination grants.

No detail on the types of dissemination activities that will be funded, which makes it difficult to assess the likelihood that they will result in improving student achievement.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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:**

Strengths

The applicant's proposed RFA will require potential applicants to provide data demonstrating their success in improving student achievement. (p. 54)

RFA requires potential applicants to demonstrate capacity. (p. 54)

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

RFA does not include any information on projected outcomes related to increased student achievement.

**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:**

Strengths

The evaluation will attempt to determine value added. (p. 56)

The evaluator and OSSE will work together to review data and make mid-course corrections as needed. (p. 56)

The required credentials for future evaluator are strong. (p. 57)

Student level analysis will compare achievement and growth. (p. 57)

OSSE has already begun discussions about potential evaluators. (p. 55)

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The application provides no timelines for reporting.

The application does not include specific information on how data will be analyzed to decide if mid-course corrections are necessary, including when interim reports will be completed, or how OSSE will analyze those reports to determine if corrections are necessary.

Data systems are not yet in place- no timeline for completion. (p.58)

Outcome measures for objectives 1 and 4 do not provide any baseline data, so it is impossible to determine if they are appropriate. (pp 45, 51)

Outcome measures for objective 3 are process measures, with no projected outcomes related to student achievement or improved school functioning.

**Reader's Score: 20**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 06/15/2010 10:05 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/13/2010 05:18 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(i) CSP contribution to student achievement</b>		
1. Student achievement	30	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	25
<b>Selection criteria</b>		
<b>(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law</b>		
1. Flexibility	30	30
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	30
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(iii) Number of high-quality charters created</b>		
1. Number of schools	30	26
<b>(iv) Quality of the management plan</b>		
1. Management plan	30	19
<b>(v) Authorizer accountability</b>		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	22
<b>(vi) Dissemination activities</b>		
1. Dissemination activities	30	13
<b>(vii) Quality of the evaluation</b>		
1. Evaluation	30	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	150	100
<b>Total</b>	210	155

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2010 84.282A - 2: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

## 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 applicant presents clear, concise objectives that are aligned with the purpose of the CSP program. The applicant provides a brief description of each objective (p26-28). Objective 3 is solely dedicated to the dissemination of "effective" practices of charter schools (p 27).

#### Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

The application is lacking specific details regarding ways the charter school grant program will assist educationally disadvantaged and other students in achieving State Academic content standards and State student academic achievement. For example, Objective 2 is dedicated to improving student academic achievement; however, a clear description on how this will be accomplished is not provided (p 27). Information on steps the SEA will take to inform teachers, parents and communities of the SEA's charter school grant program is limited and could be expanded upon

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:**

Strengths

The applicant provides a thorough description of how the law establishes an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency. It is evident that charter schools are exempt from significant State and/or local rules that inhibit flexible operation and management. The applicant details the degree of autonomy charter schools have. The applicant supports this by stating " The Act provides public charter school a high degree of autonomy from the District government and the District of Columbia Public Schools, creates a separate accountability and reporting system overseen by the authorizer, and protects public charter schools and the charter authorizer from legislative or regulatory incursions into their autonomy."(p 30)

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

None

**Reader's Score: 30**

**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 applicant's estimate of 24 charter schools to be authorized over the 5 year grant period is reasonable. The applicant clearly describes various steps taken to inform each charter school about Federal funds. Activities include an informational webpage, initial training to DC LEA's related to various Federal grant programs and annual training for new public charter schools (p 37).

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The response could have been strengthened by providing more information regarding the manner in which first year operational schools receive their commensurate share of federal funds. The applicant describes the requirement of new and expanding charter schools to notify OSSE but does not describe how this notification facilitates a guarantee that the schools then receive their commensurate share of funds (p 38).

**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:**

Strengths

The applicant has provided a management plan that includes objectives, inputs, outputs, and outcomes. The management plan is further broken down into program investments, activities, participation, short term, intermediate and long term outcomes (p44-51). The applicant also provides process performance measures and outcome performance measures for each objective.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The applicant provides minimal detail regarding the peer review process. Detail regarding the actual selection and training of peer reviewers would have strengthened the response. In regard to Objective 4, p 51, all of the measures listed are process measures.

**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:**

Strengths

The applicant provides a description of how the authorized public chartering agency is held accountable. The eligible charter authorizers is required to submit an annual report to the Mayor, the DC Council, the BOE, the Secretary of Education, appropriate congressional committees, and the Consensus Commission, that provides details of major Board actions; identifies major findings from school reviews of academics, financial information, compliance with health and safety standards, and the number of schools that have required intervention by the authorizing board.(p 52)

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The applicant clearly indicates that "the Act" provides for charter schools to be highly autonomous and therefore is subject to minimal direct oversight by any DC governmental agency (p 52). The response could have been strengthened by including a plan for technical assistance for the authorized public chartering agency.

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: 13

**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 applicant provides a detailed explanation of the steps the SEA takes to award dissemination funds to eligible applicants. Quality is assessed through the evidence of student achievement and progress (p 54). The applicant provides a brief description of the review process (p 56).

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The response could have been strengthened by providing a more detailed description of the review process to include trainings offered to reviewers.

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:**

Strengths

The applicant provides a brief description of the review process (p 56).

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

The response could have been strengthened if the applicant had provided a more direct link as to how dissemination activities will improve student academic achievement as well as by providing a more detailed description of the review process to include trainings offered to reviewers.

**Reader's Score:** 6

## 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

An evaluation plan was included in the application. The applicant states "the intended purposes of the evaluation are to: (1) determine if the performance measures for each of the project objectives were met as proposed in the CSP grant application, and (2) determine the value of the benefit for achieving the project objectives" (p 57). This statement indicates intent to use objective performance measures that are related to the intended outcomes of the project. Performance and outcome measures are included previously in the application (p44-51) however, it is not indicated if these will be used as the measures for the evaluation plan.

### Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

The applicant's response could have been strengthened by providing a more clear design that included benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives, and educational requirements of the proposed evaluator. Although the applicant references that the evaluator will have access to SLED (p 59), it is unclear how this system will be used for the evaluation plan. The applicant did not address when various types of data will be collected, the methods that will be used, the instruments that will be developed and when, how the data will be analyzed, when reports of results and outcomes will be available, and 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.

**Reader's Score:** 20

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 06/13/2010 05:18 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/05/2010 05:31 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

**Reader #5:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(i) CSP contribution to student achievement</b>		
1. Student achievement	30	28
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	28
<b>Selection criteria</b>		
<b>(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law</b>		
1. Flexibility	30	29
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	29
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(iii) Number of high-quality charters created</b>		
1. Number of schools	30	30
<b>(iv) Quality of the management plan</b>		
1. Management plan	30	23
<b>(v) Authorizer accountability</b>		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	28
<b>(vi) Dissemination activities</b>		
1. Dissemination activities	30	22
<b>(vii) Quality of the evaluation</b>		
1. Evaluation	30	25
<b>Sub Total</b>	150	128
<b>Total</b>	210	185

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2010 84.282A - 2: 84.282A

Reader #5: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

## 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

Washington, DC has adopted four objectives in order to assist educationally disadvantaged and other students achieve State academic content standards: Increase the number of high-quality public charter schools; improve academic achievement of charter school students; promote the dissemination of effective practices from high achieving public charter schools; and supporting charter schools to be operationally sound for long-term sustainability (page 26-28).

Washington, DC charter schools currently show higher graduation and proficiency rates than traditional public schools in the District (pages 25 and 26) and it is reasonable to project that increasing the number of high quality charter schools in the District will result in continuing student gains. There is a commitment to "targeting geographic areas where there is a lack of quality public school options, public schools have been identified as in need of improvement, or both" (page 26). By starting more charter schools in these educationally disadvantaged areas, there should be a commensurate improvement in student achievement among the communities served.

The OSSE proposes to identify successful public charter schools as measured by "(1) substantial progress in improving student academic achievement; (2) high levels of parent satisfaction; and (3) management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable public charter school" (page 53) to apply for dissemination grants to be used to disseminate their successful practices to other charter schools and traditional public schools in the District.

#### Weaknesses:

##### WEAKNESSES

While it is clear that there is a strong charter school community in the District in which best practices should easily transfer, it isn't clear how the best practices will then transfer over to public schools in general in the District.

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:**

**STRENGTHS**

By code, Washington, DC charter schools are nonprofit corporations which have autonomy with regards to "statutes, policies, rules, and regulations established for the District of Columbia public schools by the Superintendent, Board of Education, Mayor, [and] District of Columbia Council" and have exclusive control over their "expenditures, administration, personnel, and instructional methods" ( page 30).

**Weaknesses:**

**WEAKNESSES**

There is no reference to freedom to employ non-certified personnel.

There is a high level of required reporting beyond participating in accountability testing.

**Reader's Score: 29**

**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 District projects adding 24 charter schools in the next 5 years, an increase of 25%. The approval rates of the last five years were averaged in order to determine this figure (pages 36,37).

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) has created a webpage for subgrantees with "information, guidance, and tools to support grants management across various federal programs" (page 37). The OSSE provides training for new public charter schools and their personnel on how to use the website and ensure that they are aware of the full array of federal funds available to them.

There is a mechanism in place to ensure that charter schools inform the OSSE of their opening or expansion so that they receive commensurate funding for their students.

Funding for all public schools in the District is fully portable and based on the students served. This includes facilities dollars which truly leveling the playing field for charter schools

**Weaknesses:**

WEAKNESSES: None

**Reader's Score: 30**

**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 District has a long history of effectively managing charter school applications, startup grants and accountability. The District will continue these practices. There are clear and time specific process performance measures for personnel and measurable outcome performance measures for each of the four objectives. These include; timely funding of approved charter school planning groups; biannual applicant training activities; annual workshops for new subgrant awardees; semi-annual publications with specialized technical assistance, yearly monitoring of schools receiving dissemination funds; and, developing indicators for use in identifying financially unstable charter schools. Activities, participants, short term and intermediate measures are all aligned to meet their stated objectives (pages 44-51).

Charter schools are embraced in the District and are included in professional development activities available to all public schools in the District.

**Weaknesses:**

**Weaknesses:**

Explicit criteria are not listed for evaluation of charter school grant applications. It is clear that there is a high bar set for approval with only one in every three applications approved, but other than citing that "the PCSB is committed to providing only high-quality public charter schools" (page 36).

The response would be strengthened if a full description of the peer review process, an application and the scoring rubric were included.

**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:**

STRENGTHS The OSSE of the District and the PCSB enjoy a cooperative relationship with charter schools receiving direct technical assistance from the OSSE (page 52). While the PCSB has a low approval rate and will not sustain charter schools which are not fulfilling their charters when they are reviewed every five years, the student achievement in the charter schools and the sustained growth in the number of charter schools in the district evidence the efficacy of the PCSB as an authorizer (page 53).

**Weaknesses:**

## WEAKNESSES

The Public Charter School Board is the only authorizer, is highly autonomous from the District SEA and subject to minimal oversight by statute.

Reader's Score: 28

**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: 22

**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 grant will be available to overall successful charter schools as determined by "(1) substantial progress in improving student academic achievement; (2) high levels of parent satisfaction; (3) management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable public charter school" (page 53). The criteria for dissemination activities is clearly supplied and includes providing documentation of student academic gains over time, schools to be assisted or criteria for selecting a school to be helped, evidence of organizational capacity and a detailed budget (pages 54, 55).

The goal of "increasing student academic achievement among all public schools" (page 54) is stated explicitly as a goal for applicants.

**Weaknesses:**

## WEAKNESSES:

A rubric for evaluating grants is mentioned, but the weighting isn't specified for factors. Minimum qualification scores are not mentioned.

The yearly timeline for the grant process isn't specified.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 11

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:**

STRENGTHS: The dissemination grants support institutional reflection for the grantee and will provide mentoring and examples of successful applications to similar students for the new schools. These should result in higher success rates for new charter schools and continual improvement for established charter schools.

The close coordination of the OSSE and PCSB and shared professional development opportunities will encourage dissemination of best practices from charter school to traditional schools.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses: While past dissemination activities are listed (page 54), there is no reference to what impact the past activities had on the goal of "increasing student academic achievement among all public schools".

Reader's Score: 11

**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 evaluation is to "be outcomes-based and focus on formative and summative evaluations to assess progress toward achieving the identified short-term, medium-term, and long-term outcomes of the program" (page 57). There are clear criteria for the evaluator to be selected through competitive bidding: experience assisting state agencies in program evaluations; work experience with state level staff on said projects; demonstrated previous success; flexibility in working with staff; and familiarity with public charter schools (page 57). The OSSE intends for student level growth to be included.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses

The evaluation plan doesn't include a timeline for formative evaluations to occur throughout the grant period. There is a lack of detail as to how data will be collected, when the data will be collected, the instruments to be used, and when. Too few details are listed to describe a thorough competitive bid.

**Reader's Score:**     **25**

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**Status:**           Submitted

**Last Updated:**   06/05/2010 05:31 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/09/2010 09:03 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(i) CSP contribution to student achievement</b>		
1. Student achievement	30	28
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	28
<b>Selection criteria</b>		
<b>(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law</b>		
1. Flexibility	30	29
<b>Sub Total</b>	30	29
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>(iii) Number of high-quality charters created</b>		
1. Number of schools	30	30
<b>(iv) Quality of the management plan</b>		
1. Management plan	30	22
<b>(v) Authorizer accountability</b>		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	22
<b>(vi) Dissemination activities</b>		
1. Dissemination activities	30	20
<b>(vii) Quality of the evaluation</b>		
1. Evaluation	30	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	150	114
<b>Total</b>	210	171

# Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2010 84.282A - 2: 84.282A

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

Applicant: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (U282A100025)

## 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 plan to close the achievement gap by 3.5 points per year is ambitious and consistent with the goals of the CSP program (page 5).

The District has demonstrated gains in NAEP scores in special education students, ELLs, and economically disadvantaged students, which proves the capacity to raise student achievement further through this program. (page 6, paragraph 1)

New schools will be held to the same performance standards in their second year of operation, which demonstrates the sense of urgency the District places on student achievement. (page 10, paragraph 4)

#### Weaknesses:

##### WEAKNESSES

There are no details on informing teachers, parents, and the community (page 27, paragraph 2)

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:**

STRENGTHS

Charter schools in DC are non-profit corporations so financial accountability is the responsibility of the board of trustees. (page 17, paragraph 1)

DC code exempts charter schools from the definitions of "District of Columbia Government" and "District of Columbia public school." (page 17, paragraph 1)

Charter schools are their own LEA's (page 28, last paragraph).

There is no limit on the expansion of charter campuses. (page e28)

There has never been a challenge to the cap in the fourteen years of charter schools in the District. (page 36, last paragraph)

**Weaknesses:**

WEAKNESSES

There is no flexibility in hiring non-certified personnel.

The charter cap favors existing charter models and may inhibit the development of new and innovative types of schools. (page 29)

**Reader's Score: 29**

**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 District has considerable capacity to develop high quality charter schools so that 24 new schools to be created over the grant period is reasonable; already 38% of children in the District attend charter schools, accounting for 42.5% of the number of schools. (page 28)

The District focuses on the high quality of charter schools, with grants to disseminate the best practices of schools with the highest levels of achievement. (page 12, paragraph 2)

The District provides facilities funding of \$2800 per student, which helps to ensure the financial viability of charter schools. (page 18, last paragraph)

Charter schools are informed of federal funding during an annual training and there is a website for all federal programs. (page 27, paragraph 2)

Charter schools are their own LEA's (page 28, last paragraph).

The rate of rejection of charter applications is 2 to 1. Considering that there are a high percentage of charter schools in the District, this high rate of rejection suggests strong high quality barriers to entry (page 35, paragraph 2)

**Weaknesses:**

WEAKNESSES

None noted.

**Reader's Score:** 30

**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

Staff members, who are described with specific roles, have the capacity to manage the grant (page 40).

Increase in AYP is stated as an outcome measure. (page 45)

Process performance measures align with objectives (pages 44-46)

**Weaknesses:**

WEAKNESSES

The peer review process is not described.

The manner in which the application are assessed is not described.

Measurable outcomes other than AYP are not clearly specified: "15% growth on a metric supported by OSSE." (page 45, last column)

The student outcomes for objective two are not specific: "Increase student achievement through quality public charter schools." (Page 46, last column)

**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:**

STRENGTHS

The charter authority, under DC Code, must submit an annual report which details board actions, major findings of school reviews, and the number of schools which have required intervention by the authorizer. (page 52, paragraph 1)

**Weaknesses:**

WEAKNESSES

Other than the annual report, little additional oversight of the chartering authority is required. (page 52)

**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: 20**

**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

Sample activities are described. (page 54, paragraph 1)

**Weaknesses:**

WEAKNESSES

The peer review process is stated but not described in detail (page 56, paragraph 1)

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 12

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:**

STRENGTHS

The RFA requires evidence of substantial progress in improving student academic achievement. (Page 54, bullet one)

**Weaknesses:**

WEAKNESSES

The outcomes are not measurable or linked with precision to student achievement.

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:**

STRENGTHS

The plan specifies the types of data to be gathered such as student level exit, transfer and drop out data are specified in the SLED system (page 59, paragraph 1)

**Weaknesses:**

WEAKNESSES

No timelines were provided for reporting. (page 59)

The qualifications of the evaluator require more detail (page 57, last paragraph)

The plan does not provide enough specifics about when reports will become available.

**Reader's Score:**     **20**

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**Status:**           Submitted

**Last Updated:**   06/09/2010 09:03 PM