

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/05/2010 05:20 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division
(U282A100007)

Reader #5: *****

	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	26
Sub Total	30	26
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	30
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	24
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	29
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	18
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	23
Sub Total	150	124
Total	210	177

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100007)

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

Georgia has five objectives of the CSP grant which clearly align with the goals of the Federal CSP Charter Schools Program, with all of them including measurable goals. Goals for steadily improving academic achievement as measured by state assessments are listed with particularly high goals for high school achievement.

Georgia charter schools have been growing in number recently due to greater statewide support of charter schools. This is evidenced by the passage of charter supportive legislation and fiscal commitment to growing and improving charter schools in the state. Charter schools are demonstrably improving academic achievement even as they serve a greater proportion of economically disadvantaged and minority students than traditional public schools (pages e147-e154). In most areas charter schools match or slightly exceed the local school districts' achievement.

Georgia plans to include financial incentives for charter schools to develop in districts that are not currently making AYP, for charter schools to offer a comprehensive secondary program and for charter schools to locate in a district that currently does not have a charter school (pages e32, e33).

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

The requirement of an application score for GSP subgrants for implementation of only 70/100 by two out of three reviewers seems low for "high quality."

There wasn't a strong emphasis on parental and community satisfaction.

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:

STRENGTHS

Georgia allows full flexibility to be requested by charter schools. The Georgia Department of Education encourages schools to request "maximum flexibility" (page e8). Charter schools have as much autonomy over their budgets as they request.

There is a preference to award grants to schools which request full flexibility.

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

Schools must request flexibility and there doesn't seem to be a list of encouraged waivers.

There wasn't a definition of maximum flexibility with regards to autonomy for charter schools.

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:

(3) STRENGTHS:

Georgia proposes to have 60 new charter schools over the next three years. This number is projected based on changes to statute that provided for an alternate authorizer under which charter schools receive equal funding to district sponsored charter schools (page e31).

Georgia has a strong plan for recruiting and assisting charter school applicants in targeted areas.

Georgia has a strong mechanism in place to ensure that all charter schools receive their commensurate amount of federal funding, regardless of their sponsor. Especially noteworthy is the creation of a dedicated Charter Schools Title I program specialist within the Title I office and the development of a Charter Schools and Title I protocol (page e37).

There is a plan to expand the internal fiscal review capacity of the GaDOE in order to provide greater protection for new charter school and charter schools with dramatically increasing student enrollments (page e38). The new fiscal analyst will advise charter schools of available funding opportunities and monitor LEA's compliance with providing appropriate federal funding amounts to their charter schools.

Georgia has a clear definition of high quality with regards to student academic achievement. This includes academic

growth, absolute academic achievement and high school completion.

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 GaDOE has clear job descriptions for staff to implement the GSP grant program. The resumes of current staff evidence experience that will be necessary to implement the grant proposal.

The GaDOE fully explains the peer review process for sub-grant applications. PG 43

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

The process measures don't necessarily directly link to the performance measures listed. (page e17-e26). Clear timelines are not listed.

Reader's Score: 24

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

As noted above, the GaDoE intends to increase its internal fiscal review capacity in order to ensure that LEA's are providing funding to their sponsored charter schools as required by law.

Georgia has a regular and thorough reporting of charter school performance and it is disaggregated by subgroups to hold schools and authorizers accountable for student achievement.

The State Board of Education can overrule the approval or denial of a charter school by the CST.

The GaDOE plans to provide technical assistance to charter school authorizers regarding successful authorization.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

The response would be strengthened with more details regarding the process of overruling the CST and the types of technical assistance to be delivered.

Reader's Score: 29

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: 18

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

"Evidence of student progress or academic achievement, high levels of parental satisfaction and financial viability" are listed as requirements for subgrant applications (page e46).

The GaDOE will provide dissemination workshops and technical assistance to participating charter schools.

The applications are reviewed by three reviewers with a standard cut score set.

There is a clear plan for both encouraging more charter school applications to serve high-needs students and for greater financial support for high quality applications to serve these students.

The review process for the sub-grants is clear.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

It is not apparent that there will be as many charter schools qualified and able to apply for the dissemination subgrants as is projected.

Reader's Score: 13

- 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

Peer mentoring by the leadership of charter schools eligible to participate in the dissemination grant may lead to higher student achievement in schools receiving the mentoring.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

Other than presenting at the State Board's Charter Committee Meeting and being published in the Charter School Annual Report, there doesn't seem to be a great dissemination of the information on best practices to other charter schools and non charter schools in the state (page e27 and e45).

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 evaluators being considered are qualified and familiar with the charter school and traditional public school communities in Georgia. Their previously presented report regarding the state of charter schools in Georgia is coherent and provides useful suggestions for improvement in charter schools.

The evaluation will be aligned with the stated objectives of the grant application.

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

While "parental and community satisfaction" are listed in the evaluation piece, they aren't listed in the objectives and performance measures of the CSP grant (page e48).

Interim assessment will only be done by the CSD rather than receiving formative external assessment. The measures for the interim assessments are not clearly specified.

Collection methods for qualitative data is not specified

Reader's Score: 23

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/05/2010 05:20 PM

Status: Submitted

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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division
(U282A100007)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	30
Sub Total	30	30
Selection criteria		
(ii) Flexibility afforded by State law		
1. Flexibility	30	30
Sub Total	30	30
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	28
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	25
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	18
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	28
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	15
Sub Total	150	114
Total	210	174

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100007)

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 successfully describes 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. The applicant provided relevant data and supporting documentation to further support the claim that "Georgia's charter schools currently enroll a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students than their traditional counterparts" (p 14-16). The applicant successfully describes 5 objectives for the State's charter school program. The applicant also provides detailed explanations of how each objective will be fulfilled. This explanation includes specific inputs, outputs, and outcomes for each objective as well as relevant process and performance measures for each objective. Objective 5 of the application specifically targets outreach to teachers, parents, communities and other public schools and the dissemination of best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the state (p 26).

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:

The applicant has clearly demonstrated how the State's charter school law allows charter schools to request maximum flexibility from state and local rules and regulations. For example, charter schools have used the maximum flexibility in the

State's law to establish fiscal and budgetary guidelines that are directly related to the needs of the school (p 30). Charter schools may also request specific waivers from administrative or organizational rules.

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:

The applicant provides a very detailed description of how charter schools are informed about Federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and assurance that charter schools receive their commensurate share of federal funding. Some methods of outreach are monthly charter school committee meetings, the posting of guidelines on the Charter School Division website, and workshops conducted across the State to ensure that all charter schools are aware of the federal funds they are entitled to receive (p35). The applicant clearly describes various methods for ensuring charter schools receive their commensurate share of federal funds. These include, consolidated application training, specific consolidated application review, and annual compliance review to ensure that as charter school enrollment expands funding expands as well. (p36-38)

Weaknesses:

The applicant's estimate of 60 charter schools to be authorized over the 3 year grant period is ambitious. The data the applicant provided does not support growth trends this large (p 32-33).

Reader's Score: 28

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 applicant addresses the steps to be taken to award subgrant funds to eligible applicants. The applicant also provides a detailed description of the peer review process the SEA will use to review applications. The applicant describes the SEA's system of using 3 external reviewers who attend an extensive training on the review and rating of applications (p 43). Although not responded to in this particular section, the applicant does provide a plan for achieving the proposed objectives of the project (p17-27). This plan includes the objective, the objectives relationship to the purpose of the CSP grant, inputs, outputs, and outcomes. The plan provided is adequate to accomplish the stated objectives.

Weaknesses:

The response could have been strengthened if the applicant provided clearly defined responsibilities, a time line, and more specific milestones for accomplishing project tasks

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:

The applicant indicates that the CSD will provide technical assistance to the Georgia Charter Schools Commission. The CSD will also invite the Commission to all technical assistance and training workshops that it hosts for LEA's. (p 45)

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided a vague plan to monitor and hold accountable authorized public chartering agencies. The response could have been strengthened by providing a more detailed description of technical assistance provided to improve the capacity of the Commission to authorize, monitor, and hold accountable charter schools.

Reader's Score: 18

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: 28

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 applicant provides a clear, concise detailed explanation of the steps the SEA takes to award dissemination funds to eligible applicants. Quality is assessed through the evidence of student progress or academic achievement, evidence of high levels of parent satisfaction, and evidence of financial viability (p 47). The applicant provides a detailed description of the external peer review process, which follows the same process as described for selection criteria iv (p 47).

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 15

- 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 applicant has provided a plan to award a funding priority to projects that increase student achievement at the secondary level or in identified high-need areas (p 47).

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.

Reader's Score: 13

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 applicant, in a previous section, does provide outcome and performance measures for each objective (p 17-27). The credentials of the Evaluator are sufficient to complete the evaluation of the project. The selected evaluator displays experience in evaluations.

Weaknesses:

The applicant describes a vague evaluation plan. The applicant indicates the evaluation will align with the five program objectives but does not adequately support ways in which the evaluation plan will support these objectives. Benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives were not included. A specific description of the evaluation design, indicating: 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 was also not addressed.

Reader's Score: 15

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

Status: Submitted

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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division
(U282A100007)

Reader #1: *****

	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	25
Sub Total	30	25
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	30
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	25
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	25
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	23
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	23
Sub Total	150	126
Total	210	179

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100007)

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 indicates that charter schools in the state currently enroll a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students than their traditional counterparts, which will provide the applicant the opportunity to increase the academic achievement of this population. (p. 13)

The applicant will provide preference points for charter schools that will be located in high-need districts or near schools that are in need of improvement. (p. 13)

The applicant is working with traditional public schools that are considering the conversion process. (p. 13)

Georgia's application process includes requirements related to academic standards and requires academic performance objectives for all grades and subjects. (p. 14)

The applicants project objectives are aligned with the CSP objectives. (p. 16)

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

The application contains little detail on how it will inform parents and the community about the CSP program.

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 have a high degree of autonomy over the charter school's budget and expenditures. (p. 29)

The state does not impose any caps on the number of charter schools allowed to operate. (p. 31)

The law sets up autonomy in exchange for accountability.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

Charter schools are required to petition, with justification, for waivers to administrative and organizational rules. (p. 29)

The application would have been stronger if more information was provided on the waiver process; specifically, how often waivers were denied, and if there was a process to ensure that reasonable waivers were automatically granted.

Reader's Score: 25

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 projects 60 new charter schools will be operational by the end of the grant. This estimate is ambitious yet reasonable. (p. 31)

The application includes plans to encourage and incentivize growth in poorly performing districts and in districts that do not currently have any charter schools. (p. 33)

The applicant has a strong process for review and renewal, using academic performance over the entire charter period. (p. 34)

The applicant holds monthly charter school committee meetings, posts guidelines on the website, and conducts workshops across the state to ensure that all charter schools are aware of the federal funds they are entitled to. (p. 34)

The applicant has a process to communicate federal funding opportunities to new charter schools, and coordinate annual consolidated application training for all charter schools that operate as their own LEA. The applicant works with LEAs to ensure that charter schools are included in the consolidated application list. (p. 35) The applicant monitors LEAs to ensure that they have consulted with charter schools to determine the number of eligible children attending the charter school. The applicant conducts an annual compliance review of all LEAs in the state.

The applicant has created a dedicated charter school Title I specialist. (p. 36)

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

The applicant includes a clear description of responsibilities for each of the staff positions. (p. 39)

The applicant requires sub-grantees to attend the Managing Your Federal Funds workshop to increase the efficiency of the schools as they move through their grant. (p. 41)

The applicant clearly describes the peer review process used to review sub-grant applications, including the minimum score required for funding. (p. 43)

The application includes a detailed description of the process followed to award sub-grant funds. (p. 42-44)

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

The application does not include any timelines or milestones. The lack of timelines or milestones may make it difficult for the applicant to monitor progress.

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:

Strengths

The applicant will provide authorizer training to the Commission and all LEAs that will receive charter school petitions in the first year of the grant cycle. The training will cover authorizer best practices and review federal and state laws. The training will also review local authorizer responsibilities toward ensuring charter schools receiving their share of federal funding. Authorizers will also be informed about high-performing Georgia charter schools and national trends. (p. 28)

The State Board of Education has the ability to monitor the Commission's authorizing practices. (p. 44)

Weaknesses:

Weaknessess

The plan did not include adequate detail on the plans for providing technical assistance to authorizers.

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: 23

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 will work with the Georgia Charter Schools Association to identify high-quality charter schools. (p. 45)

All dissemination projects must propose to accomplish one of the four allowable activities under federal law, and must also address one of four priority areas determined by the applicant. (p. 46)

Sub Question

The applicant will provide funding priority for applicants that propose to replicate successful practices or support start-up of new charter schools that increase student achievement at the secondary level or in identified high-need areas.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

The applicant does not include a clear definition of what constitutes a successful school that will be eligible for dissemination funding.

Reader's Score: 13

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 detailed description of the peer review process and the process for awarding funds. (p. 47)

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

The outcome measures associated with dissemination do not address student achievement. (p.26)

Reader's Score: 10

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 applicants proposed evaluator is highly qualified and competent. (p. 47)

The evaluation will align with the five project objectives. (p. 48)

Weaknesses:

Weaknessess

The applicant does not provide any detail on when or how often the evaluator will provide reports to the state. This makes it difficult to assess if how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project.

Reader's Score: 23

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

Status: Submitted

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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division
(U282A100007)

Reader #4: *****

	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	24
Sub Total	30	24
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	25
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	22
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	18
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	22
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	20
Sub Total	150	107
Total	210	159

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100007)

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

Traditional public schools can convert to charters and 4 have done so. Georgia charters successfully serve children in poverty as demonstrated by their serving a higher % of FRL students and achieving AYP status equal to traditional schools. Struggling traditional schools are converting to charter districts. 5 grant objectives are listed that are in alignment with CSP objectives. There is a detailed listing of activities, outputs and outcomes for each objective. Short, medium and long term outputs are given allowing for mid-course corrections. There is a good description of process and performance measures for each objective. Financial incentives are provided for charters being implemented in districts that have not achieved AYP.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

No description provided of steps to be taken to inform parents, teachers and communities of the grant program.

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

Law provides significant flexibility. Additionally waivers may be requested and granted.(p28.) Waivers may be granted in exchange for performance goals (p 29.) A review is completed of charter petitioners that do not request full waivers to understand and justify request (p30.) Preference is given to applicants that request full waivers.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

No specific explanation and discussion of exactly what "maximum flexibility" means regarding employment conditions, i.e. the need for certification, at will employment and participation in a state pension system.

Reader's Score: 24**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

No cap on number of charters. a new authorizer (State Charter School Commission) was recently created and is actively chartering. In 09-10, the year after the Charter School Commission was created as an authorizer, 14 new schools were chartered. Increased technical assistance will be provided to ensure quality applications. Number of students in charter schools doubled as a result of the new authorizer.

Only charters that meet academic goals are renewed. Application for planning and implementation grants is included and is very complete.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

With 14 total charter schools created in 09-10, 20 per year for the next 3 years may be too high a target. Not clear if State Charter Commission schools receive a local share of funding.

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

Georgia Charter Schools Division has a well qualified staff. Grant funding will be used to provide additional staff to provide technical assistance to all stakeholders.

Data is provided on outcomes achieved from the prior CSP implementation grant cycle. Grant funding is scaled based on additional criteria. Grant applications are attached and a strong independent review process is used to rate applications.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

Scoring rubric for implementation grants requiring an overall score over 70 points from 2 of 3 evaluators is low as it could allow applications that are severely deficient in certain critical areas.

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

State Board is separate from Charter Commission. LEA authorizer decisions can be overruled by the State Board. Authorizer training is provided.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

No discussion provided about holding non state authorizers accountable.

Reader's Score: 18

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:

Strengths

A strong dissemination grant application is provided. Performance eligibility requirements must be met before an application can be submitted. CSD will conduct workshops for applicants. There is a common forum for presentation of dissemination grants. There is an external peer review process for awarding grants. Allowable activities support program objectives.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

Application does not define how success will be measured.

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

Workshops will be conducted. External peer review process to be used.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

No specific plan presented on how student achievement outcomes will be measured.

Reader's Score: 10

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

Well qualified experienced external evaluator to be used. Evaluation is in alignment with program objectives. Previous evaluator report attached to the application was clear and made suggested improvements to the program.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses

No statement of activities, timelines, targets and measurements to be used for evaluation.

Reader's Score: 20

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

Status: Submitted

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

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division
(U282A100007)

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	29
Sub Total	30	29
Selection Criteria		
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	30
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	27
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	28
(vi) Dissemination activities		
1. Dissemination activities	30	18
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	20
Sub Total	150	123
Total	210	180

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Georgia Department of Education -- Georgia Department of Education, Charter Schools Division (U282A100007)

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

Existing charter schools in Georgia target educationally disadvantaged students. During the 2008-2009 school year, 60% of students qualify for FRL, which is higher than the state-wide average of 53%. (p 14, paragraph 3)

Objectives are focused on measurable student achievement and dissemination of best practices, with precise expectations of AYP and SAT performance of charter schools. (p 17, last paragraph and pp 19,21,23)

Best practices are disseminated through direct training and website reporting of data and listserv (pp 28-29).

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

Existing charters in Georgia are performing at a slightly lower rate of 85% rather than 86% statewide making AYP. (p 17, chart)

The plan to disseminate best practices lacks clear criteria for determining best practices (pp 28-29).

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

There is an independent charter authorizer, the Georgia Charter Schools Commission (p 4, last paragraph).

Charter schools are being approved by the Commission in districts that were resistant to chartering (p 5, paragraph 2).

Charters can also be approved directly by the SBOE (p 8, paragraph 3).

Charters are able to exchange regulatory compliance for increased performance expectations and 124 out of 139 charters operate under maximum flexibility (pp 9-10, p 29).

Charter schools have high degree of autonomy over their budgets but they must submit annual independent audits. (p 30, last paragraph)

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

Some schools in resistant districts do not request maximum flexibility. (p 31, paragraph 2).

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 number of charter students has almost doubled since 2007 suggesting Georgia has the capacity to continue to increase the number of charter schools (p 6, chart).

The SBOE is only renewing charters that met their charter goals thus ensuring high quality schools (p 6, paragraph 1).

There is no cap on the number of charter schools (p 32, paragraph 1).

The application expects 20 charters to open up each year, a 50% increase in the rate of new schools opening (p 32, paragraph 1).

The SDOE ensures charter schools are aware of federal funds through monthly charter school meetings, posted guidelines on websites, forwarding federal funds notices, consolidated application training, the employment of a Title One specialist for charter schools on the state level, workshops conducted across the state, and ensuring that LEA include charters that are part of their LEA in the calculations for federal funding. (pp 35-37)

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

None stated.

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 management plan specifies the names, appropriate qualifications, and responsibilities of the staff on the state level managing the grant. (pp 40-41)

The management plan includes specific steps the way raters evaluate applications and the timelines for awarding funds. (p 41 and 44)

The management plan outlines specific performance outcomes (with milestones and specific dates) such as the percentage of students meeting AYP and benchmarks for SAT scores (pp 19 and 21).

The peer review process is clearly defined (p 43).

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

The application does not explicitly require reviewers to be peers. (p 44)

The process measures could be more explicitly linked to performance measures (pp e17-e26).

Reader's Score: 27

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 SBOE ensures that LEA include charters that are part of their LEA in the calculations for federal funding and conducts compliance reviews of LEA's. (p 36-37)

The SBOE can overrule LEA decisions on authorizing charters (p45, last paragraph).

There is training for authorizers in which local authorizer responsibilities are reviewed. (page 46, first paragraph)

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

The plan to monitor authorizing agencies requires more specific detail. (pages 45-46)

Reader's Score: 28

Selection Criteria - (vi) Dissemination activities

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: 18

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 peer review process is described with detail, outlined on a 100 point scale (pp 47-48).

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

There is no timeline for the awarding of funds. (pp 47-48)

There is no specific plan on the dissemination of practices or outcome measures aligned with student achievement. (pp 46-48)

The criteria for best practices is not described.

Reader's Score: 9

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

Best practices are disseminated through direct training and website reporting of data and listserv (pp 28-29).

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

There is no specific plan on the dissemination of practices or outcome measures aligned with student achievement. (pp 46-48)

The criteria for best practices is not described.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 9

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 evaluator is well qualified to conduct the evaluation, with experience in developing teacher evaluation systems, assessment systems, and forming district consortia. (p48)

Weaknesses:

WEAKNESSES

The plan for evaluation is not specific in describing the review process, timelines, and the questions asked of the application are too general and not outcome oriented. For example, the measures for interim assessments are not clearly specified. (pp 48-50)

Reader's Score: 20

Status: Submitted

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