

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/04/2010 10:22 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	26
(ii) Flexibility afforded by state law		
1. Flexibility	30	21
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	24
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	27
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	21
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	27
Sub Total	180	146
Total	180	146

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

Questions

Selection Criteria - (i) CSP contribution to student achievement

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

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

Strengths:

The application shows how charters target disadvantaged students and serve them well as regards academic achievement (8-10). Applicant provides a clear overview of the projects goals, proposed activities, and performance measures (13-26). The SEA has initiated and offers many services targeted to charter schools (9, 15, 18, 20, 21-22, 31).

Weaknesses:

Applicant states that SEA is confident that authorizers have high standards for charter approval, but offers no evidence (15). Activity descriptions lack detail and in some cases are vaguely explained (17, 23, and 25).

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - (ii) Flexibility afforded by state law

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

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

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

Strengths:

The application describes flexibility provided in key areas of operations, educational program, finances and budgeting, and length of year/day (27). There are multiple authorizers (29).

Weaknesses:

There is no description of the charter funding formulas or amounts either by school or per student (27).

Reader's Score: 21

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:

There are four authorizers that have accounted for 53 charter schools distributed across communities and demographics in the state (29-30).

Weaknesses:

Application focuses on number of schools open and to be opened without indicating what are approval, oversight, monitoring and closure procedures and criteria. Instead this is explicitly left to each authorizer, but there is no indication of what are the minimal requirements of these elements either at the SEA level or authorizer level (32).

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - (iv) Quality of the management plan

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

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

Strengths:

Management plan is comprehensive and includes key elements of time line, activities, responsibilities (Appendix E 0-5). There is a comprehensive description of the sub-grant application review and approval procedures and criteria (37-44). Proposed project has support of governor and two of the largest authorizers, Indianapolis mayor, Ball State (Appendix B).

Weaknesses:

The management plan includes a partner, Center for Excellence in Leadership of Learning, that is not described and does not appear in budget as cost or in kind (Appendix E, Budget Narrative). There are a number of places where the sub-granting process description lacks detail (39, 40, and 41).

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:

There are multiple authorizers (29-30). SEA sponsors information sharing and training sessions for authorizers and potential authorizers aimed at helping them improve their data management oversight (42-43).

Weaknesses:

The application does not describe a system or a process for authorizer oversight at the state level and does not outline available intervention strategies or sanctions (42-44). Most of the information sharing and training activities described have more to do with a goal of school compliance rather than improvement of authorizer practice (42-44).

Reader's Score: 21

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:

Management plan includes evaluation activities and time line estimates for their implementation (Appendix E). Bringing in an outside evaluator should promote objectivity and potentially rigor (44). Application includes important evaluation specs (areas of investigation, data sources, and key questions linked to goals) as well as evaluator qualifications and a list of possible evaluators (44-49).

Weaknesses:

Amount budgeted for evaluation seems low in light of the number of evaluation activities and the qualifications called for (49-51, Budget Narrative).

Reader's Score: 27

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/04/2010 10:22 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/08/2010 08:11 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	25
(ii) Flexibility afforded by state law		
1. Flexibility	30	30
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	25
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	25
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	17
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	27
Sub Total	180	149
Total	180	149

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

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 states application describes the current enrollment of 18,512 students enrolled in 153 charter schools. Additionally, the application presents that 71 percent are minorities compared to the state average of 24 percent. Approximately 68 percent of the current charter school population is free or reduced lunch eligible, compared to the state average of 43 percent. 70 percent of charter schools exceeded the growth shown in Math by districts in which they are located, and 35 percent exceed growth shown in English-Language Arts in similar districts. This is convincing evidence that Indiana is not only making its charter schools available to diverse and disadvantaged populations but making significant academic progress with them.

The application proposes clear and measurable objectives with a detailed description around activities to fulfill the objectives. The application describes the CSP Advisory Groups consisting of various charter stakeholders, such as the states major authorizers, charter school advocacy groups, and policymakers. The group works in a non-rulemaking, advisory capacity to the SEA project manager. The application proposes the Advisory Group will work with the SEA in strengthening the alignment between the required strategic plan, curriculum description, implementation strategy and grant expenditures.

The application describes the formation of a mentor program for newly organized charter schools to be paired with a more experienced school. This will enhance dissemination of promising practices and will assist in the strategic planning for new schools

The application includes comprehensive and measurable performance indicators for each goal. Additionally, appendix A provides an exhaustive chart including time expectations and responsible parties to accomplish the activities listed.

Weaknesses:

The application proposes activity 2.3 to revise implementation award process in promoting growth for student subgroups. The application proposes that the year three award increase for schools showing significant progress in reducing achievement gaps. Additionally, the application proposes preferential awards given to charter high schools that are closing the gap. However, the application lacks detail regarding the rationale to increase the award in the third year.

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:

Charter schools in Indiana experience large amounts of autonomy in areas such as budget, daily operation and personnel. Indiana law specifically provides flexibility that exempts charter schools from any Indiana state rules applicable to a governing body or school district; any rules or guidelines adopted by the state board; any rules or guidelines adopted by a school district unless incorporated into the schools charter; and any rule or guideline adopted by the advisory board of the state's teacher licensing division.

Charter schools are accountable solely to authorizers under Indiana law (page 28).

Weaknesses:

None noted

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 application presents historical evidence of charter school growth to support a reasonable estimate of 10 new charter schools per year during the 5 year grant program.

The SEA proposes adding preference points to the application, providing workshops, professional development opportunities and technical assistance meetings.

The SEA proposes a community awareness campaign that will include performance data and unique characteristics of charter schools to inform parents of educational options and increase community understanding and support for charter schools.

The application provided assurance that each charter school in the state receives its commensurate share of federal funds, including those funds allocated during the first year of operation or when the school is significantly expanding. Additionally, Indiana provides a method of early count to ensure that new and expanding charter schools receive their commensurate share of federal funds for special education students.

Weaknesses:

The application proposes continuing to work with the advisory group to increase the number of new charter schools. However, the application is unclear around the detail of this partnership to accomplish the goal. Additionally, the application did not provide evidence of how the advisory has contributed in the past.

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:

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

The applicant describes a thorough application process. Specifically, the planning grant application describing the school mission, educational goals, ways in which the school is autonomous, how the school will comply with special education law, conduct a lottery and methods to involve parents and community. The application is reviewed by an external review panel using a common scoring rubric.

Weaknesses:

The application described the external review panel members. However, the application did not include a description around the external review panel selection process and training.

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 application presented a training and technical assistance to sponsors that occurs during the first hour of the advisory group meeting.

Weaknesses:

Although Charter schools are accountable solely to the authorizer, it is unclear if the authorizer has accountability to the SEA or state board. The application fails to detail monitoring and accountability structure of the four authorizers in the state.

The application fails to connect how the presentation and technical assistance to the advisory group provides assistance on planning and system development so as to improve the capacity of authorizers.

Reader's Score: 17

Selection Criteria - (vii) Quality of the evaluation

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

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

Strengths:

The application describes a thorough process that will be used to select a responsible and qualified evaluator (qualification articulated on page 44). The logic model, project goals, activities to be undertaken, performance indicators and external independent evaluator help determine whether the project is meeting its goals. The evaluator will be expected to provide a detailed response to all research questions, data and data collection instruments, methods and reports (qualitative and quantitative data collection expectations listed on pages 47-51). It is clear that the evaluation will be developed to assess the extent to which each of the program outcomes in the project meet the projects 4 goals

The evaluator will be required to make status reports to the SEA and the Charter Schools Advisory Group and least quarterly. Additionally, the evaluator will report on suggestions for goal setting and performance indicator setting for the next grant phase.

Weaknesses:

The application fails to describe an evaluation of technical assistance from the SEA to authorizers. Specifically, goal 3, question 1 (page 48) addresses the technical assistance in helping schools prepare to open. However, the evaluation

does not address the relationship between authorizer and school or authorizer and state.

Reader's Score: 27

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/08/2010 08:11 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/04/2010 02:29 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	26
(ii) Flexibility afforded by state law		
1. Flexibility	30	22
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	25
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	26
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	18
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	30
Sub Total	180	147
Total	180	147

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

Questions

Selection Criteria - (i) CSP contribution to student achievement

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

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

Strengths:

Strengths:

The state sets four specific project objectives and identifies action steps and performance indicators for each (p. 13-26). The activities are strongly connected to the goals. For example, for the goal to prepare charters to serve diverse populations and close the achievement gap, the state sets an activity to increase award amounts for schools in Year Three showing significantly progress reducing achievement gaps (p. 17). The SEA communicates a strong commitment to charter schools with proposals to create a video series on best practices (p. 23) and partner with the state association to conduct a community awareness campaign (p. 24).

The application reports that the state's charter schools serve a significantly higher percentage of educationally disadvantaged students than traditional schools (p. 3,9). The application adequately describes best practice dissemination activities (p. 12).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The descriptions of the activities/action steps are somewhat redundant, as the application already listed the activities. Much of the information is already presented in a table format in the appendix.

Parts of the structure of the response were confusing. The inclusion of the "compliance with special education law" section was not explained (p. 11).

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - (ii) Flexibility afforded by state law

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

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

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

Strengths:

Strengths:

The application clearly details the flexibility grants to charter school (p. 27). Charters are exempt from statutes, regulations and rules unless they are incorporated in the charter. The freedoms grant charters control over curriculum and daily operations. The state and federal funds flow directly to charters and charters control their own budgets (p. 5-6).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The application is unclear about charter's control over hiring/firing and collective bargaining (p.28).

Reader's Score: 22

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 state, which does not have a cap on the number of charter schools (p. 0), sets a target of 10 new schools a year. The application describes recent growth in the charter sector, with 10 schools approved to open in the fall (53 already open) (p. 1). The state demonstrates opportunities for additional growth by citing thousands of students on waiting lists (p. 2). Authorizers in the state encourage growth by having multiple application windows each year (p. 29). The application provides encouraging growth model performance data and includes information on the geographic distribution of charters in the state (p. 30).

The application includes a description of how the state ensures charters received federal and state funding.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

While setting an ambitious target of 10 new schools a year, the state does not describe the capacity for organizations to open new charter schools beyond mentioning LEA interest in starting charters. The application lacks a definition of a high quality charter application.

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 detailed description of the subgrant review process. The management plan, as included in the appendix, connects project objectives to activities, target dates and responsible parties.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The management plan is an extremely vital component of the application. It is surprising that the state chose to place the plan in the appendix.

Reader's Score: 26

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 state has multiple authorizers, and Ball State University (36 charters) and the Indianapolis mayor's office (22 charters) are very active charter sponsors (p. 3). The state also has an appeals process. The application implies an active partnership between the state and the authorizers, describing data sharing agreements and active communication about compliance issues (p. 42-3). The state indicates that training for sponsors on SEA programs occurs at various points throughout the year, such as the monthly charter school advisory group meetings.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

The application does not include plans or timelines for authorizing-focused trainings. The state does not communicate an intention to partner with external organizations to develop charter authorizing capacity.

Reader's Score: 18

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 application clearly communicates the state's intention to evaluate the SEA's CSP implementation effectiveness and the effects of CSP funding on charter academic achievement (p. 16). The state has developed detailed performance indicators for each of their project objectives (selection criteria (i)). The application includes criteria for choosing an evaluator (p. 44-5). The application includes detailed responses regarding data collection and evaluation methods (p. 46-7).

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

None identified

Reader's Score: 30

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/04/2010 02:29 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/15/2010 02:31 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

Reader #6: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	25
(ii) Flexibility afforded by state law		
1. Flexibility	30	26
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	25
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	26
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	23
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	27
Sub Total	180	152
Total	180	152

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #6: *****

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

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:

Two of the applicant's goals are to improve student achievement. One is centered on preparing charter schools to be academically successful and the other is focused on closing the achievement gap between minority and non-minority and paid lunch and free/reduced price lunch student groups. The activities and performance indicators are clear on the measuring and fulfilling the objectives.

The SEA describes processes for disseminating best or promising practices of charter schools through "Best Practices Clearinghouse" which is will placed in Learning Connection on the SEA website.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not describe how the best or promising practices of charter schools will be disseminated to each LEA in the State.

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:

Indiana has a high degree of flexibility for its charter schools. Indiana Code specifically exempts charter schools from any Indiana statute that applies to a governing body or school district. The charter school boards have complete control over their daily operations, curricular and instructional decisions. Charter Schools are treated as School Districts (LEAs) for funding (Federal, state and local) so they receive funding directly. Employees working in a start-up charter school are employees of the charter schools.

Weaknesses:

Those charter schools that are conversion charter schools, have employees that are employees of both the charter school and the school district sponsoring the charter school.

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:

The number of charter schools projected to be open is ten each year of the grant. The SEA is diligent in holding meetings specifically for charter schools to learn about access to Federal funds. They inform charter schools of their ability to receive the funds, the process to obtain the funds and the proper and efficient use of the funds. After a charter school is open for a year, the SEA fiscal managers of Federal funds work with the charter schools to determine whether the school's enrollment is expanding significantly by using estimated enrollment numbers or counts just after school starts.

Weaknesses:

10 high-quality schools opening a year is a high number given the lack of a definition of "high-quality".

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:

The description of the review and award process was clear and delineated. Each goal/project objective was outlined in "Appendix A: Detailed Management Plan" providing a clear path for anyone trying to implement the CSP grant for Indiana.

Weaknesses:

While preference points are given for charter school grant applicants if they serve proportions of minority and free and reduced price lunch students or for charter high schools that plan to locate in areas in which there is at least one high school not making AYP, it was not clear how these points figured into the scoring or ranking of the award.

Reader's Score: 26

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 SEA has meetings of a charter school advisory group to provide program specific training to sponsors. The SEA communicates directly with the sponsor when a charter school has a compliance issue.

Weaknesses:

The SEA did not present a plan to monitor and hold accountable the public chartering agencies.

Reader's Score: 23

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 provided a clear description of the evaluation and design. The application was clearly written with evaluation in mind.

Weaknesses:

The description of the evaluator was thin, the description of CEEP was clear.

Reader's Score: 27

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 06/15/2010 02:31 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 06/04/2010 04:55 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
(i) CSP contribution to student achievement		
1. Student achievement	30	28
(ii) Flexibility afforded by state law		
1. Flexibility	30	26
(iii) Number of high-quality charters created		
1. Number of schools	30	24
(iv) Quality of the management plan		
1. Management plan	30	26
(v) Authorizer accountability		
1. Authorizer accountability	30	23
(vii) Quality of the evaluation		
1. Evaluation	30	22
Sub Total	180	149
Total	180	149

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Indiana Department of Education (U282A100027)

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:

Good detail regarding historical charter data and diversity of charter school students. Good data on how charter schools are assisting diverse student academically. Inclusive of one case study. Inclusion of partnerships to foment charter quality. Objectives are include with methods of attainment and procedures.

Weaknesses:

As this is a multi-year grant, it would be beneficial to see how the first year informs the second, etc. That is, if successive years held common objectives and action steps yet relied on input from previous years, this would make this plan even stronger.

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:

Indiana's charter law is one of the best, which includes autonomy and flexibility. Legal, fiscal and operational autonomy are listed.

Weaknesses:

Listing of current waiver requests or citations of flexibilities within specific charters that have led to success.

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:

History reflects consistent commitment to sustained growth. Encouraging that charters are moving into new territory. Preference point incentive has been included in the application. Well thought out presentation to reflect commensurate federal funding for charter schools.

Weaknesses:

More elaboration on the community understanding of charters is needed. Stats on receptivity of the workshops would be beneficial for a higher understanding of the effect. Using fiscal managers as contact point for charter school funding is appropriate but could be heightened if contact included school leadership and or governing board leadership.

Reader's Score: 24

Selection Criteria - (iv) Quality of the management plan

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

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

Strengths:

Broad array of partnerships to be involved in the management plan. Use of Advisory Board will be instructive. Well constructed plan for grant review, notification and awarding.

Weaknesses:

Management plan could benefit if years 2 and 3 were formative and relied upon preceding years experience. That is, based on the obstacles encountered and the success realized in preceding years, successive years management plan could still contain the characteristics in place but would be augmented with information from earlier years. Overall points are 150 but passing is 100, which equals 66%.

Reader's Score: 26

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:

Good relationship between LEA charters and SEA via monthly meetings. Expanding partnership base.

Weaknesses:

Citing earlier attempts and their successes would provide a higher understanding of the accomplishments. Need discussion on process and procedures if school is found to be out of compliance.

Reader's Score: 23

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:

Listing of external evaluator with experience in charter schools and working with State. Formative and summative evaluations.

Weaknesses:

How to ensure a high rate of survey response? More discussion on the growth model. More information needed on the value-added component aside from student achievement.

Reader's Score: 22

Status: Submitted
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