

U.S. Department of Education

Washington, D.C. 20202-5335



APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE

**2011 CSP 84.282A (SEA) APPLICATIONS
CFDA # 84.282A
PR/Award # U282A110006
Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT10829106**

Closing Date: MAR 18, 2011

****Table of Contents****

Forms

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	e1
2. Standard Budget Sheet (ED 524)	e5
3. SF-424B - Assurances Non-Construction Programs	e7
4. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	e9
5. 427 GEPA	e10
Attachment - 1	e11
6. ED 80-0013 Certification	e12
7. Dept of Education Supplemental Information for SF-424	e13
Attachment - 1	e14

Narratives

1. Project Narrative - (Abstract Narrative...)	e15
Attachment - 1	e16
2. Project Narrative - (Project Narrative...)	e17
Attachment - 1	e18
3. Project Narrative - (Other Narrative...)	e75
Attachment - 1	e76
Attachment - 2	e79
Attachment - 3	e80
Attachment - 4	e81
Attachment - 5	e84
4. Budget Narrative - (Budget Narrative...)	e86
Attachment - 1	e87

This application was generated using the PDF functionality. The PDF functionality automatically numbers the pages in this application. Some pages/sections of this application may contain 2 sets of page numbers, one set created by the applicant and the other set created by e-Application's PDF functionality. Page numbers created by the e-Application PDF functionality will be preceded by the letter e (for example, e1, e2, e3, etc.).

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

* 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	* 2. Type of Application: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): <input type="text"/> * Other (Specify) <input type="text"/>
--	--	---

* 3. Date Received: <input type="text" value="03/17/2011"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	--

5a. Federal Entity Identifier: <input type="text"/>	* 5b. Federal Award Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	---

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State: <input type="text"/>	7. State Application Identifier: <input type="text"/>
---	---

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name:

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text" value="04-6002284"/>	* c. Organizational DUNS: <input type="text" value="799538178"/>
--	---

d. Address:

* Street1:	<input type="text" value="75 Pleasant Street"/>
Street2:	<input type="text"/>
* City:	<input type="text" value="Malden"/>
County:	<input type="text"/>
* State:	<input type="text" value="MA: Massachusetts"/>
Province:	<input type="text"/>
* Country:	<input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>
* Zip / Postal Code:	<input type="text" value="02148-5023"/>

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name: <input type="text" value="Elementary & Secondary Educati"/>	Division Name: <input type="text" value="Charter School Office"/>
---	--

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

Prefix: <input type="text" value="Ms ."/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Joanna"/>
Middle Name: <input type="text" value="Cirame"/>	
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Laghetto"/>	
Suffix: <input type="text"/>	

Title:

Organizational Affiliation:

* Telephone Number: <input type="text" value="781-338-3221"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text" value="781-338-3220"/>
---	---

* Email:

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

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

U.S. Department of Education

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

84.282

CFDA Title:

Charter Schools

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-012511-002

* Title:

Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII): Charter Schools Program (CSP): State Educational Agencies CFDA Number 84.282A

13. Competition Identification Number:

84-282A2011-1

Title:

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

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

Massachusetts Charter School Program Project

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

16. Congressional Districts Of:

* a. Applicant

* b. Program/Project

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

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date:

* b. End Date:

18. Estimated Funding (\$):

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="12,125,950.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="12,125,950.00"/>

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

- a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on
- b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

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

- Yes No

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

** I AGREE

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

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: * First Name:

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

Suffix:

* Title:

* Telephone Number: Fax Number:

* Email:

* Signature of Authorized Representative: * Date Signed:

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

*** Applicant Federal Debt Delinquency Explanation**

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



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Control Number: 1890-0004

Expiration Date: 06/30/2005

Name of Institution/Organization:
 MA Department of Elementary and ...

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

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

Budget Categories	Project Year 1(a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	\$ 93,750	\$ 96,563	\$ 99,460	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 289,773
2. Fringe Benefits	\$ 31,622	\$ 32,571	\$ 33,548	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 97,741
3. Travel	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,540	\$ 10,113	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 28,653
4. Equipment	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
5. Supplies	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 5,000
6. Contractual	\$ 16,000	\$ 76,320	\$ 16,657	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 108,977
7. Construction	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
8. Other	\$ 3,035,000	\$ 5,140,000	\$ 3,350,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 11,525,000
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	\$ 3,187,372	\$ 5,356,494	\$ 3,511,278	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 12,055,144
10. Indirect Costs*	\$ 21,789	\$ 25,954	\$ 23,063	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 70,806
11. Training Stipends	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	\$ 3,209,161	\$ 5,382,448	\$ 3,534,341	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 12,125,950

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

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

- (1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? Yes No
- (2) If yes, please provide the following information:
 Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: 7/1/2010 To: 12/31/2010 (mm/dd/yyyy)
 Approving Federal agency: ED Other (please specify): _____
- (3) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:
 Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? or, Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)?



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Control Number: 1890-0004

Expiration Date: 06/30/2005

Name of Institution/Organization:
 MA Department of Elementary and ...

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

SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY
NON-FEDERAL FUNDS

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

ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

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

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

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

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

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States and, if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§290 dd-3 and 290 ee- 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and, (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally-assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally-assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and, (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.

<p>* SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL</p> <p>Julia Jou</p>	<p>* TITLE</p> <p>Commissioner</p>
<p>* APPLICANT ORGANIZATION</p> <p>MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education</p>	<p>* DATE SUBMITTED</p> <p>03/17/2011</p>

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

DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

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

Approved by OMB
0348-0046

1. * Type of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. grant <input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperative agreement <input type="checkbox"/> d. loan <input type="checkbox"/> e. loan guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> f. loan insurance	2. * Status of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. bid/offer/application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. initial award <input type="checkbox"/> c. post-award	3. * Report Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a. initial filing <input type="checkbox"/> b. material change
--	--	--

4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity:

Prime SubAwardee

* Name: Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

* Street 1: 75 Pleasant Street Street 2: _____

* City: Malden State: MA: Massachusetts Zip: 02148-5023

Congressional District, if known: _____

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

6. * Federal Department/Agency: US Department of Education	7. * Federal Program Name/Description: Charter Schools
	CFDA Number, if applicable: 84.282

8. Federal Action Number, if known: _____	9. Award Amount, if known: \$ _____
---	---

10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant:

Prefix _____ * First Name NA Middle Name _____

* Last Name NA Suffix _____

* Street 1 NA Street 2 _____

* City NA State _____ Zip _____

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

Prefix _____ * First Name NA Middle Name _____

* Last Name NA Suffix _____

* Street 1 NA Street 2 _____

* City NA State _____ Zip _____

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

* Signature: Julia Jou

* Name: Prefix Mr. * First Name Mitchell Middle Name _____
* Last Name Chester Suffix _____

Title: Commissioner Telephone No.: 781-338-3111 Date: 03/17/2011

Federal Use Only:	Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)
--------------------------	--

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

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

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

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

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

What Does This Provision Require?

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

description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

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

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

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

- (1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.
- (2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.
- (3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

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

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

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

Optional - You may attach 1 file to this page.

MADESE_84.282A_FY11_App_GEPASection427Narr

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

Massachusetts Department of Education
FY2007 Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program
(CFDA Number: 84.282A)
GEPA Section 427 Statement

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

Free and open admission to charter schools is one of the hallmarks of the Massachusetts charter law:

Charter schools shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, or proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, and academic achievement. (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 89(m)).

All schools that conduct project activities funded under this grant program must adhere to these legal requirements. In addition, as described in Selection Criteria (i), this CSP grant project is designed to increase access to high-quality educational opportunities for all students, particularly those who are educationally disadvantaged.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

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

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

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

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

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

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

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

* APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION

MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Prefix: Mr. * First Name: Mitchell Middle Name:

* Last Name: Chester Suffix:

* Title: Commissioner

* SIGNATURE: Julia Jou

* DATE: 03/17/2011

Close Form

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
REQUIRED FOR
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GRANTS

1. Project Director:

Prefix: * First Name: Middle Name: * Last Name: Suffix:

Ms. Joanna Cirame Laghetto

Address:

* Street1: 75 Pleasant Street

Street2:

* City: Malden

County:

* State: MA: Massachusetts

* Zip Code: 02148

* Country: USA: UNITED STATES

* Phone Number (give area code) Fax Number (give area code)

781-338-3221 781-338-3220

Email Address:

jlaghetto@doe.mass.edu

2. Applicant Experience:

Novice Applicant Yes No Not applicable to this program

3. Human Subjects Research

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

Yes No

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

Yes Provide Exemption(s) #: 2 and 4

No Provide Assurance #, if available:

Please attach an explanation Narrative:

MADESE_84.282A_FY11_App_HumanResearch_03.18.11_F Add Attachment Delete Attachment View Attachment

Massachusetts Department of Education
FY2011 Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program
(CFDA Number: 84.282A)
Exempt Human Subjects Research Narrative

The research activities proposed for the *Massachusetts Charter School Program Project* are fully described in *Selection Criteria (vii)*, *Evaluation*, in the *Project Narrative*. The scope of research involves human subjects in two primary ways:

- A re-analysis of required state student testing data already collected by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

No personally identifiable information will be disclosed in any reporting that describes the outcome of the research. The same measures that are already in place at the MADESE to protect the privacy of individual students in relation to the release of testing data—in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act—will be applied for any research conducted for this CSP project.

This activity falls under Exemptions (2) and (4) as described in the *Definitions for Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424*.

- Surveys of adults conducted to evaluate the efficacy of project activities.

Results of surveys will always be reported in aggregate form. Responses will never be linked to an individual in an identifiable way.

This activity falls under Exemptions (2) as described in the *Definitions for Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424*.

Project Narrative

Abstract Narrative

Attachment 1:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1234-MADESE_84.282A_FY11_App_Abstract_03.18.11_.pdf**

**Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
FY2011 Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program
(CFDA Number: 84.282A)
Abstract**

The landmark Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 initiated the creation of independently operated public charter schools to provide high-quality public school choice, particularly for educationally disadvantaged families. In the fall of 1995, 15 charter schools opened their doors in Massachusetts. By the fall of 2010, 63 charter schools were operating, 43 of which were located in urban areas, serving primarily low-income and minority students. Because Massachusetts charter schools provide access to high-quality educational opportunities for a proportionately higher percentage of educationally disadvantaged students, it is critical to ensure that the necessary capacity and resources exist to continue to create and implement high-quality schools. In passing the historic legislation of January of 2010 (*An Act relative to the Achievement Gap*), Massachusetts has demonstrated its national leadership by strategically lifting the cap on charter schools in the lowest-performing districts to provide high-quality educational opportunities for students most in need. Over the next six years, the number of seats made available in Massachusetts's lowest-performing districts will double from 9 to 18 percent.

The *Massachusetts Charter School Program Project, 2011-2011*, will support the federal Charter School Program goal to increase the national understanding of the charter school model and expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to students across the nation through the following objectives:

- (1) Increase the number of high-quality charter schools in Massachusetts, especially those serving high needs students who are at greatest risk of not meeting state academic standards;
- (2) Promote the dissemination of Massachusetts charter school best practices to other public schools;
- (3) Improve student achievement in Massachusetts charter schools, particularly for students who have historically underachieved.
- (4) Increase the number of charter high school graduates and college enrollment especially for *high needs students* (defined as students with disabilities, English learners, and low income students).

The *Massachusetts Charter School Program Project* will provide planning and implementation funds to charter founding groups and all schools chartered by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education over the next three years, with increased funding available to schools that will:

- be considered a *high poverty school* (defined as 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch or are from low income families);
- focus on increasing *high school graduation* and *college enrollment rates* for high needs students;
- serve a *diverse population*

Successful charter schools may also compete for funds to disseminate the innovative best practices that they have developed. In addition, the project will provide funds to further strengthen the quality of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's oversight of and guidance for all new and currently operating charter schools. All of these activities serve to support the ultimate goal to improve student achievement for all students.

Massachusetts Charter School Program Project, 2011-2014

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Charter School Office
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148

Project Contact: Joanna C. Laghetto; Contact Information: 781-338-3221; jlaghetto@doe.mass.edu

Project Narrative

Project Narrative

Attachment 1:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1243-MADESE_84.282A_FY11_App_Project Narrrative03.18.11 Final.pdf**

**Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
 FY2011 Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program
 (CFDA Number: 84.282A) Project Narrative**

I. COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES.....	2
COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY (1): PERIODIC REVIEW AND EVALUATION (UP TO 10 POINTS).	2
COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY (2): NUMBER OF HIGH-QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOLS (UP TO 8 POINTS).....	5
COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY (3): ONE AUTHORIZED PUBLIC CHARTERING AGENCY OTHER THAN A LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY (LEA), OR AN APPEALS PROCESS (5 POINTS)	9
COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY (4): HIGH DEGREE OF AUTONOMY (UP TO 5 POINTS).....	9
COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY (5): IMPROVING ACHIEVEMENT AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES (UP TO 12 POINTS).....	11
COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY (6): PROMOTING DIVERSITY (UP TO 5 POINTS).	16
COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY (7): IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY (UP TO 5 POINTS).....	16
INVITATIONAL PRIORITY:	17
II. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	19
(I) OBJECTIVES	19
(II) FEDERAL FUNDS INFORMATION	19
(III) COMMENSURATE SHARE OF FEDERAL FUNDS	19
(IV) DISSEMINATION TO LEAS.....	19
(V) REVOLVING LOAN FUNDS	19
(VI) WAIVERS.....	19
(VII) CHARTER SCHOOL COMPLIANCE WITH IDEA	19
III. SELECTION CRITERIA	21
(I) CSP CONTRIBUTION TO ASSISTING STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE (20 POINTS)	21
PROJECT OBJECTIVE (1): INCREASE THE NUMBER OF HIGH-QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOLS IN MASSACHUSETTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE SERVING STUDENTS WHO ARE AT GREATEST RISK OF NOT MEETING STATE ACADEMIC STANDARDS.....	22
PROJECT OBJECTIVE (2): PROMOTE THE HIGH QUALITY DISSEMINATION OF MASSACHUSETTS CHARTER SCHOOL BEST PRACTICES TO OTHER PUBLIC SCHOOLS.	26
PROJECT OBJECTIVE (3): IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN MASSACHUSETTS CHARTER SCHOOLS, PARTICULARLY FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE HISTORICALLY UNDERACHIEVED.....	26
PROJECT OBJECTIVE (4): INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CHARTER HIGH SCHOOLS GRADUATES AND COLLEGE ENROLLMENT ESPECIALLY FOR HIGH NEED STUDENTS (HIGH NEEDS STUDENTS ARE DEFINED AS STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, ENGLISH LEARNERS AND LOW INCOME STUDENTS).	27
(II) CHARTER SCHOOL FLEXIBILITY (20 POINTS)	27
(III) NUMBER OF HIGH-QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOLS (20 POINTS).....	28
REASONABLE ESTIMATES OF NEW CHARTER SCHOOLS TO BE AUTHORIZED AND OPENED:	29
CHARTER SUBGRANT APPLICATION PROCESS:.....	32
POST-CHARTER PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION SUBGRANTS	33
TABLE 1: PROPOSED PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION SUBGRANT REQUIREMENTS AND BENCHMARKS	34
PROSPECTUS AND FINAL APPLICATION PANEL REVIEW	34
(IV) QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN (10 POINTS)	36
TABLE 2: MASSACHUSETTS CSP PROJECT 2011-2014 MANAGEMENT PLAN.....	36
RESPONSE TO US EDUCATION MONITORING OF CHARTER SCHOOL'S PROGRAM MONITORING.....	39
FEDERAL FUNDS INFORMATION	39
COMMENSURATE SHARE OF FEDERAL FUNDS	41
(V) MONITOR AUTHORIZER.....	42
(VI) DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES	44
TIMELINE FOR AWARDED DISSEMINATION SUBGRANTS.	47
PEER REVIEW PROCESS; HOW THE ESE ASSESSES THE QUALITY OF APPLICATIONS.	48
OTHER EFFORTS TO PROMOTE DISSEMINATION TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.	49
(VII) QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION (10 POINTS)	49
TABLE 3: MASSACHUSETTS CSP PROJECT 2011-2014 EVALUATION PLAN.....	51

I. Competitive Preference Priorities

Competitive Preference Priority (1): Periodic Review and Evaluation (up to 10 points).

The State provides for periodic review and evaluation by the authorized public chartering agency of each charter school at least once every five years, unless required more frequently by State law, to determine whether the charter school is meeting the terms of the school's charter, and is meeting or exceeding the student academic achievement requirements and goals for charter schools as set forth under State law or the school's charter.

Note: *The Secretary invites the applicant to provide information regarding whether the periodic review that takes place at least once every five years includes a public vote on whether to terminate, extend, or renew a school's charter and on whether a failure to affirmatively renew or extend a school's charter during the periodic review that takes place at least once every five years would result in the charter school being closed.*

The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) is the sole public charter authorizer in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under Massachusetts' charter school statute, (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89). A study released in January 2011 by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools ranked Massachusetts as having one of the strongest charter school laws in the country. This report, [*Measuring Up to the Model: A Ranking of State Charter School Laws*](#), is a ranking of state public charter school laws across the country focusing on quality controls and accountability. Massachusetts ranks first in quality and accountability and ranked third overall; the state improved its ranking due to the historic Achievement Gap legislation passed in January 2010, [*An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap*](#) (Acts of 2010, c.12), that partially lifted the state's cap on charter school growth and explicitly allowed charter governing boards to hold multiple charter contracts to promote the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools.

The establishment of high-quality charter schools begins with Massachusetts' charter school application process. Groups seeking to establish a charter school submit an application for a public charter school and undergo a rigorous criteria-based evaluation process that considers the founding group's ability to found and operate a high-quality charter school. Once the BESE has awarded a charter on the basis of a successful application for a public charter school, the new charter school has the freedom to organize around the core mission, curriculum, theme, or teaching method

described in the application. It is allowed to control its own budget and hire (and fire) teachers and staff. In return for this freedom, a charter school must demonstrate positive results within five years or risk losing its charter.

Massachusetts maintains a rigorous accountability system which provides for the periodic review and evaluation of charter schools. The BESE is obligated by Massachusetts General Law, c. 71, § 89, and regulations under 603 CMR 1.00 to conduct an ongoing review of charter schools and, by the fifth year of a school's operation, determine if its charter should be renewed. Specifically, the renewal of a Massachusetts public charter school is based on affirmative information in the three guiding areas of accountability:

- Academic program success;
- Organizational viability; and
- Faithful to the terms of the charter.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (ESE) accountability system is guided by protocols, systems, and structures all designed to hold Massachusetts charter schools to the highest levels of performance. Developed in 2006 and updated in September 2010, the [*ESE's Charter School Common School Performance Criteria \(Criteria\)*](#) contains thirty-one criteria that describe what is expected of a high-quality charter school in the three guiding areas of charter school accountability. The *Criteria* defines charter school success, outlines the basis for charter school evaluation, and clarifies charter school, state, and federal accountability standards. All charter schools in t Massachusetts are subject to regular performance review in relation to the *Criteria*.

The [*Massachusetts Charter School Accountability Guide*](#) details the systems and structures used by the ESE during its evaluation of each charter school's performance in relation to the *Criteria*. Evaluation of the school is based on a variety of information that is provided by the school and gathered by the ESE. In order to track a school's progress in terms of the *Criteria*, the ESE requires each charter school to submit an accountability plan (Plan) prior to the start of its second year of operation that is clear, rigorous, and measurable. Charter schools create their own Plans by choosing specific elements of the

Criteria as overall school objectives and explicitly defining how progress toward those objectives is measured. The Plan must receive approval from the ESE Charter School Office (CSO). A charter school must report on progress toward the objectives stated in its accountability plan in its annual report to the BESE and to the public. Each school's progress in attaining its accountability plan objectives and measures is taken into consideration during the charter school renewal process.

The ESE conducts regular review of charter schools. The ESE conducts a site visit to each school during the second year of its charter and sometimes during the third and/or fourth years as well. Site visit teams are comprised of individuals with educational and organizational expertise and are most often led by a staff member of the CSO. The primary purpose of a site visit is to corroborate and augment the information contained in a school's annual report, especially regarding stated progress relative to the school's accountability plan performance objectives, and to gather evidence about school performance relative to the standards articulated in the *Common School Performance Criteria (Criteria)*. The site visit team is guided by a series of questions and areas of inquiry described in the Site Visit Protocol guidance documentation. Site visit reports are issued by the CSO.

By August 1 prior to the fifth year of its charter, a school must submit an application for renewal of a public charter school in order to receive a new charter for five more years of operation. Following the ESE's guidelines, each school presents affirmative evidence regarding why a new charter is deserved, addressing the three areas of inquiry that guide charter school accountability, the areas outlined in the *Criteria*, plus additional questions about the school's plans for the next five-year term if its charter is renewed.

In response to its application for renewal, each school undergoes a two to four-day high stakes Renewal Inspection designed to corroborate and augment the school's application for renewal, its progress toward meeting its accountability plan objectives, and performance relative to the *Criteria*. The renewal inspection team's final report provides an additional record of the school's performance and serves as one more piece of evidence that the CSO, the commissioner of elementary and secondary education (commissioner), and the BESE consider regarding the renewal of a school's charter.

The commissioner's recommendation regarding renewal is presented to the BESE. Based on this recommendation and evidence summarizing the school's performance over the past four years the BESE publically votes to renew, renew with conditions, or not renew a school's charter for another five-year term.

Competitive Preference Priority (2): Number of High-Quality Charter Schools (up to 8 points).

The State has demonstrated progress in increasing the number of high-quality charter schools that are held accountable in the terms of the school's charter for meeting clear and measurable objectives for the educational progress of the students attending the schools, in the period prior to the period for which an SEA applies for a grant under this competition.

Note: The Secretary invites the applicant to provide the following information: (1) its definition of "high-quality charter school"; (2) the number of "high-quality charter schools" in the State and a description of how the rate has changed over the past five years; and (3) the percentage of "high-quality charter schools" in the State and a description of how the percentage has changed over the past five years.

The Massachusetts Charter School Initiative has resulted in the creation of high-quality charter schools over the past five years. The rigorous charter application and accountability processes executed and supported by the ESE and the BESE has resulted in the creation and sustainability of a high number of high-quality charter schools.

Forty two prospectuses (pre-applications) for new charter schools were submitted in August of 2010. This extraordinary interest in the creation and expansion of charter schools was due in large part to the enactment of the Achievement Gap legislation last January (Acts of 2010, c.12). The [amended statute and regulations](#) can be found on our website. One of the many provisions in this far-reaching reform law was an increase in the charter school cap in the lowest-performing public school districts. Over the next six years, the number of seats made available in Massachusetts's lowest-performing districts will double from 9 to 18 percent. The legislation mandated that the additional seats made available by this cap increase be awarded only to proven providers; i.e., individuals or groups that have a demonstrated record of success in establishing and operating successful schools. The intention of the legislation is to replicate and to expand the highest performing charter schools in order to provide additional opportunity and choice for students and their families in the lowest performing districts. After a thorough review of the

prospectuses, founding groups that demonstrated the capacity to establish and operate a charter school were invited to submit final applications, resulting in twenty three final applications. A vast majority of these final applications were developed by high-quality charter schools with proven success rates seeking to create a network of schools. Sixteen of these final applicants were awarded charters, thirteen Commonwealth charter schools and three Horace Mann charter schools ([defined in Priority 4](#)). Poised on the threshold of its largest charter expansion, the BESE will demonstrate to the nation that proven charter school models can replicate and develop networks while maintaining extremely high standards for quality and rigorously exercising its charter authorizing oversight responsibility.

Massachusetts uses its *Common School Performance Criteria (Criteria)* to define high-quality charter schools and, therefore, charter school success. This definition includes thirty-one criteria that outline what is expected of a high-quality charter school in the three guiding areas of charter school accountability: academic success, organizational viability, and faithfulness to charter. The *Criteria* defines charter school success, outlines the basis for charter school evaluation, and clarifies charter school, state, and federal accountability standards. All charter schools in Massachusetts are subject to regular performance review in relation to the *Criteria*. As described above, every five years charter schools are subject to a rigorous charter renewal application, review, and vote by the BESE. If the school has not met the standards of high-quality as defined by the *Criteria*, the BESE has the authority to not renew that charter or impose conditions on its charter. Conditions are imposed upon some schools at the time of renewal to bring the school into alignment with performance expectations outlined in the *Criteria*.

In 2007, sixty charters were open and operating in Massachusetts. In 2011, there are 63 charter schools operating. Between 2007 and 2010 (prior to the most current application cycle), 31 prospectuses yielded 14 invitations from the BESE to submit final applications of which 5 charters were awarded. In addition, the BESE during this time:

- Closed two charter schools for poor performance (two revocations);
- Reduced the grade span and maximum enrollment allowed by the charter of two schools for mediocre academic performance, along with additional conditions; and

- Imposed stringent conditions on eight schools that were not demonstrating success. If the schools do not meet the conditions, they face revocation and closure.

Supporting the creation and sustainability of high-quality charter schools remains a primary focus of the BESE. The BESE has determined that a school does not earn the distinction of being high-quality until it has demonstrated success in the areas outlined by the *Criteria* and has been awarded a charter renewal (after 5 years of operation). Also, a school is not considered high-quality if it is operating under conditions. In 2007, 60 charter schools were operating, 40 of which had received at least one charter renewal. Of these 40 schools that were eligible to be considered high-quality, three were operating under conditions placed upon them by the BESE; 93 percent of all eligible charter schools in Massachusetts were considered high-quality in 2007.

In the current 2010-2011 school year, 89 percent of the 63 charter schools operating in Massachusetts are considered high-quality by the BESE standards: 53 have received at least one charter renewal, six of which are currently operating under exacting conditions. As the number of high-quality charter schools has increased in Massachusetts over time, the ESE and BESE continues to implement stringent accountability standards which have resulted in imposing conditions on a number of charter schools. Some examples of current conditions include a requirement to improve student performance on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests, improve the quality of services provided to student who are English learners or who require special education services, or to better align the school's program to its charter. Though these conditions indicate that the schools have not sufficiently meet areas of the *Criteria*, they indicate our efforts to support all Massachusetts charter schools in becoming and maintaining high-quality educational programs for all student populations. New schools and schools operating under conditions are under increased scrutiny requiring additional site visits and reporting.

Strong evidence of the high-quality Massachusetts charter school initiative is demonstrated by several studies commissioned by the ESE Charter School Office. Two years ago, the ESE, The Boston Foundation, and the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University partnered to produce a

groundbreaking report, [*Informing the Debate: Comparing Boston's Charter, Pilot, and Traditional Schools*](#). *Informing the Debate* found large positive effects of Boston-based charter middle and high schools on student performance. For example, the study found that for each year of attendance in a public charter middle school, it is estimated that charter schools raised student achievement .09 to .17 standard deviations in English Language Arts and .18 to .53 standard deviations in mathematics when compared to student achievement in traditional Boston Public Schools. The estimated impact on students' mathematics achievement for charter middle schools was found to be extraordinarily large. Increasing achievement by .5 standard deviations is comparable to moving from the 50th to the 69th percentile in student performance, or roughly half of the size of the black-white achievement gap. The Boston Foundation subsequently published [*Out of the Debate and Into the Schools*](#). This study was designed to illustrate the differences among charter, traditional public, and pilot schools and outline best practices of each model. Several practices employed by charter schools were found to be directly related to student success. For example, students at Boston charter schools spend 378 additional hours in school each year, the equivalent of 62 days more than peers attending traditional public schools. The study also found that charter schools benefit from the principal's ability to hire the teachers who will perform best for their students and remove teachers who do not.

Massachusetts further advanced this research with the January 2011 report, [*Student Achievement in Massachusetts' Charter Schools*](#) which examined the impact of charter schools statewide. The findings suggested that students in Massachusetts' charter middle and high schools often perform better academically than their peers in traditional public schools. Similar to results of previous studies, this report noted that achievement of students at charter middle schools and at charter high schools located in urban areas outperformed students enrolled in the traditional public schools. The statewide gain in middle school mathematics is .25 standard deviations per year of charter school attendance, a sizeable impact. Effects were found to be strongest in urban middle schools, with significant positive impacts in both mathematics and English language arts (ELA). The results for urban middle school charters were consistently positive for African-American, Latino, and White students as well as for students who

received a subsidized lunch and those who do not. The study also found that positive charter school impacts were largest for students who performed below grade level when entering the school. The results for charter high schools show strong effects in both mathematics and ELA. The per year gain in charter high school attendance is .26 standard deviations for ELA and .37 standard deviations for math. The statewide findings were broadly consistent with the results of earlier studies.

Competitive Preference Priority (3): One Authorized Public Chartering Agency Other than a Local Educational Agency (LEA), or an Appeals Process (5 points).

The State --

(a) Provides for one authorized public chartering agency that is not an LEA, such as a State chartering board, for each individual or entity seeking to operate a charter school pursuant to State law; or

(b) In the case of a State in which LEAs are the only authorized public chartering agencies, allows for an appeals process for the denial of an application for a charter school.

The Massachusetts Charter School Statute (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89) establishes the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) as the sole public charter authorizing entity in Massachusetts as part of its mission to strengthen the Commonwealth's public education system to close all proficiency gaps so that every student is prepared to succeed in postsecondary education, compete in the global economy, and understand the rights and responsibilities of American citizens. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) cannot authorize charter schools in Massachusetts. The law defines two types of charter schools authorized by the BESE—Commonwealth and Horace Mann—whose differences are detailed in [Competitive Preference Priority \(4\)](#) below.

Competitive Preference Priority (4): High Degree of Autonomy (up to 5 points).

The State ensures that each charter school has a high degree of autonomy over the charter school's budget and expenditures.

The Massachusetts Charter School Statute (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89) defines two types of charter schools that can be authorized by the BESE: Commonwealth and Horace Mann, both of which are independent LEAs that are governed by a board of trustees and operate independently of any school committee. Massachusetts charter schools have the freedom to organize around a core mission, curriculum, theme, and/or teaching method and control the school's budget and staffing. In return for this

freedom, both types of charter schools face a higher degree of accountability and must demonstrate success or face non-renewal at the end of a five year charter.

Horace Mann and Commonwealth charter schools differ in that a Horace Mann charter school must have its charter application approved by the local school committee and, in some cases, the local teachers' union when submitting an application. The revision of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89 in 2010 created three types of Horace Mann charter schools, each with a particular set of requirements for collective bargaining unit involvement. To the extent provided by the charter and as agreed to in a memoranda of understanding (MOU) with the school committee, as well as all relevant collective bargaining units, some types of Horace Mann charter schools may be exempt from certain provisions in local collective bargaining agreements, such as work hours and hiring policies.

Commonwealth charter schools operate independently from a local school district and operate according to the core mission, curriculum, theme, and pedagogy described in the school's charter application. Commonwealth charter schools receive tuition directly from the state, receive allocations for federal entitlement funds, and may receive reimbursement for transportation services. Commonwealth charter schools are afforded complete autonomy to control their own budgets and expenditures, to hire (and fire) teachers and staff, and to set their schedules and work rules. It is the responsibility of each individual charter school's board of trustees to approve the school's annual budget and to monitor expenditures and revenues against the approved budget.

As briefly mentioned earlier, Horace Mann charter schools have similar freedom to organize around a core mission, curriculum, theme, and pedagogy, but they must receive approval from the local school committee before submitting a charter application to the BESE. However, a Horace Mann charter school is governed by a board of trustees, not the local school committee. Though their local budget allocation is negotiated with and paid directly by the local school district, Horace Mann charter schools are afforded the same autonomy to budget and expend their funds as Commonwealth charter schools. State law requires that a Horace Mann charter school's budget allocation be consistent with the allocation to other public schools in the district. The school may appeal a disproportionate budget allocation to the

commissioner of elementary and secondary education who "shall determine an equitable funding level for the school and shall require the school committee to provide such funding" (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(w)). Horace Mann charter schools receive their own allocations for federal entitlement grants, and report independently from their district for almost all requirements. As with Commonwealth charter schools, they are treated as single-school districts for Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) purposes, and their results are distinct and separate from the district that the school is located. Other flexibilities from district policies, such as work hours, are negotiated with the local school district or teachers union as part of the charter approval process.

The ESE respects the fiscal autonomy awarded to charter schools and has no involvement in the day-to-day management of funds at a charter school, but rather evaluates the overall fiscal health of a school as part of its oversight responsibilities. In return for this freedom, both types of charter schools must demonstrate good results, provided in the form of an annual independent audit submitted to the ESE CSO by November 1 of each year.

Competitive Preference Priority (5): Improving Achievement and High School Graduation Rates (up to 12 points).

Projects that are designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the Federal Register Notice) and college enrollment rates for students in rural local educational agencies (as defined in the Federal Register Notice) (up to 3 points).

(b) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the Federal Register Notice) and college enrollment rates for students with disabilities (up to 3 points).

(c) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the Federal Register Notice) and college enrollment rates for English learners (up to 3 points).

(d) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates in high-poverty schools (as defined in the Federal Register Notice) (up to 3 points).

Note: For each population of students for which the applicant is seeking competitive priority points, the Secretary invites the applicant to discuss the steps it would take to meet the priority. For example, the applicant could describe any guidance or support it would provide to charter school developers to assist such developers in recruiting and providing high-quality services to students who are members of the particular student population(s);

how it would monitor charter schools in the State to ensure that they are taking effective and active steps to recruit and enroll students who are members of the particular student populations; how it would monitor charter schools in the State to ensure that students who are members of the particular student population(s) are being served by such schools; or how it would design its subgrant competition, which may include the use of preferences, to ensure that students who are members of the particular student population(s) are being served at rates equal to or greater than such students are being served in other schools in the area.

The ESE has a strong history of supporting innovative charter schools that have improved academic achievement, high school graduation rate, and college enrollment rate, particularly of students who would be at the greatest risk of not meeting Massachusetts academic standards or completing high school and enrolling in college.

All Massachusetts charter schools are required to submit assurances that the school:

- Will be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement;
- Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws; and
- Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to students who are English learners including, but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, and chapter 71A of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Furthermore, the 2010 revision of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89 established a requirement that all Massachusetts charter schools develop and implement a student recruitment and retention plan that includes deliberate, specific strategies the school will use to attract, enroll, and retain a population of students which is comparable to the sending districts. The student groups include, but are not limited to:

- Students with disabilities;
- English learners;
- Students eligible for free lunch;
- Students eligible for reduced price lunch;
- Students who are sub-proficient (as determined by a previous score of “needs improvement”, “warning”, or “failing” categories on the mathematics or English language arts tests of the MCAS for the previous two years);
- Students at risk of dropping out of school;
- Students who have dropped out of school; and
- Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap.

Recruitment and retention plans (R&R plan) are submitted to the ESE for approval and must meet the requirement of M.G.L. c.71, § 89(f). R & R plans are updated annually by each charter school and will include specific annual goals related to student recruitment and retention activities as well as goals for student retention. The ESE intends to monitor the R & R plan annually through the school’s annual report. To strengthen the ability of charter schools to target diverse student populations, school districts are required to share student information with charter schools, unless prohibited by the student’s parent or guardian, to permit targeted outreach to all students eligible to enroll in the charter school. The ESE requires charter schools to create recruitment materials in the most prevalent languages of the district or districts that the charter school is authorized to serve.

The ESE provides guidance through the [Application for a Massachusetts Public Charter School](#), the [Opening Procedures Handbook](#), and opening procedures trainings to assure that new charter schools understand and develop high-quality policies and procedures to meet the needs of all student populations. The final submitted application must include a description of how the school will serve high needs student populations.

One of the major goals of the new charter school legislation enacted last year was to encourage both new schools and existing charter school to better serve under-represented populations; including English learners and students with disabilities. During the coming year, the CSO will enhance training and oversight in these areas to ensure that all charter schools meet not only the minimum legal requirements but also the ambitious goals set by the Legislature. The ESE's Office of Language Acquisition and Office of Special Education Planning and Policy Development will assist in this regard, and the CSO has planned outreach to the major advocacy groups in each field to advise on appropriate policies and expectations.

Many Massachusetts charter school's primary missions include increasing high school graduation rates and college preparedness for high needs students. SABIS® International Charter School in Springfield has a 94.4 percent graduation rate for its low income students, and for the past 10 years, 100 percent of its students have been accepted to college. The Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter School has a 95.5 percent graduation rate for their low income students. Beginning in the fifth grade, the focus on all students attending college guides the curriculum and the daily life of the school. The class of 2010 had a 100 percent college acceptance rate. In 2009, 100% of the students were accepted to college with 97% matriculating.

Currently, there are four Massachusetts charter schools that share a mission driven goal of serving those students who are at risk for dropping out or have already dropped out of school. Boston Day and Evening Academy, Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School, Amesbury Academy Charter Public School, and Phoenix Charter Academy have worked to meet the needs of students, many of whom are English learners and from high poverty areas. In February 2011, the BESE awarded a charter to Salem Community Charter School, a Horace Mann charter public high school whose mission is to serve students who have dropped out or at risk for dropping out.

The remaining charters that were awarded in February 2011 will establish schools in some of Massachusetts' highest poverty districts. Nine new schools will open in September 2011 and seven the following year. All sixteen charter schools will be eligible for the CSP SEA grant. During the opening

procedures process, all new schools will submit their final R&R plans which will specifically address the priorities of attracting and enrolling students with disabilities, English learners, and students from high poverty districts. To continue the proven success of our charter schools in these targeted areas, the BESE will incentivize their creation by providing additional CSP start-up funds to schools that meet the subgrant priorities of high school graduation and college enrollment for various populations as detailed on the [Project Objective 1](#) described in [Selection Criteria \(i\)](#).

Several charter applicant groups were recently awarded charters based on the mission and vision of attracting and serving these targeted student populations:

- MATCH Community Day Charter Public School, serving K-12 grades, will combine MATCH's model of proven success as a Boston charter middle and high school with the proven success of Lawrence's Community Day Charter School, serving K-8 grades, to focus efforts on recruiting, enrolling, and serving English learners.
- Ninety percent of Gavin Middle School 7th and 8th grade students have committed to enroll at the newly founded UP Academy Charter School of Boston, a 'restart' school formed in collaboration with Boston Public Schools and Unlocking Potential, a non-profit management company. During the 2010-11 academic year, the Gavin Middle School provided special education services to 32.6% of its students and approximately 29% of its students were identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP). As described in the UP Academy charter application, the Gavin Middle School presently serves a 'highly specialized special needs population, including multi-handicap, autistic, and mildly cognitively-impaired students.' UP Academy is committed to providing a full 'continuum of services so that all students can participate fully in the education goals and mission' of the school.
- Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, a successful urban middle school with a college success mission, is now in partnership with the charter management organization, Uncommon Schools, to replicate what works at the existing school and expand to include 5th grade and high school. By adding a 5th grade, the school hopes to reach students who may arrive at school two or more grade

levels behind and then, by including a high school, the school can become more effective at fulfilling its mission of preparing students to enter, succeed in, and graduate from college.

Competitive Preference Priority (6): Promoting Diversity (up to 5 points).

Projects that are designed to promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation.

Note: The Secretary invites the applicant to discuss how it would design its subgrant competition to meet this priority.

[Competitive Preference Priority \(5\)](#) details the Recruitment and retention plan (R&R Plan) required by all charter schools in order to attract a diverse population. The ESE provides charter schools with race/ethnicity data showing the range of student subgroup enrollment in the sending district(s) schools. Using that data, schools create their R&R plans that include deliberate, specific strategies the school will use to attract, enroll and retain a student population that mirrors that of the primary sending district schools.

Subgrantees will be further incentivized to meet this priority of serving a diverse student body by receiving additional start-up funds for succeeding in their promotion of racial and ethnic diversity as detailed on the [Project Objective 1](#) described in [Selection Criteria \(i\)](#).

Competitive Preference Priority (7): Improving Productivity (up to 5 points).

Projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in the Federal Register Notice), or other strategies.

Building on the history of success already demonstrated by a majority of Massachusetts charter schools and with the aim of improving efficiency and productivity, Massachusetts recent statute (M.G.L. c. 71 § 89, as amended by Acts of 2010, c.12) created a priority to build networks of school in more than one municipality and replicate schools with a proven record of success. Chartering priority was given to charter applicants with a record of operating at least one school or similar program that has demonstrated academic success, organizational viability, and has served student populations similar to those the proposed school seeks to serve. Schools meeting these parameters are called proven providers. All applicants that sought to open a charter school located in the lowest performing Massachusetts school

districts had to demonstrate that they were proven providers. Chartering proven providers and networks can significantly increase efficiency and effectiveness. The proven provider schools will utilize the expertise and demonstrated capacity to found and sustain excellent schools in order to bring successful educational models to an additional 4871 Massachusetts school children. The proposed charter school networks have provided the BESE with plans that illustrate intentions to maximize efficiency in terms of time, money, and staff among all the schools in the network. The BESE's expectation is that proven provider networks will allow high-quality schools to build economies of scale and run more effectively and efficiently.

Invitational Priority:

For FY 2011, this priority is an invitational priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105 (c) (1), we do not give an application that meets this invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications. This priority is:

Support for Turnaround Schools.

The Secretary is particularly interested in projects that are designed to turn around persistently low-performing schools by providing support for one or both of the following types of activities:

(1) the creation of a charter school in coordination with an LEA in the vicinity of one or more public schools closed as a consequence of the LEA implementing a restructuring plan under section 1116(b) (8) of the ESEA; or

(2) the creation of a new charter school under the restart model of intervention as described in the Final Requirements for School Improvement Grants as Amended in January 2010 at (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/faq.html>). Under the restart model of intervention, an LEA converts a school into a charter school or closes and reopens a school under a charter school operator, a charter management organization, or an education management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process.

Note: For purposes of this invitational priority –

Charter management organization is a non-profit organization that operates, manages, or oversees multiple charter schools by centralizing or sharing certain functions and resources among schools.

Education management organization is an organization that provides whole-school operation services

Massachusetts' dedication to turning around low performing schools is especially highlighted by two recent charter awards. In February 2011, the BESE granted charters to UP Academy and Boston Green Academy, two Horace Mann Charter Public Schools in Boston.

UP Academy, a college preparatory middle school will replace the Gavin Middle School, an underperforming district school in Boston. This school will be 'restarted' as a charter school with a completely new governance structure and staff in collaboration with Boston Public Schools and with Unlocking Potential, a non-profit management company, with the intention to rapidly transform the academic outcomes. UP Academy aims to rapidly develop an academic environment that leads to core-skill development. The new school's long-term goal is to close the achievement gap.

Boston Green Academy will replace the Odyssey High School, also an underperforming Boston school. While they are not working with a Charter Management Organization or an Educational Management Organization, this will be 'restarted' as a charter school with a completely new governance structure and staff in collaboration with Boston Public Schools. The school's mission is to prepare students for college and workplace success and to prepare all students to be stewards of the local and global environment. The school's founding group has planned a student responsive, trauma-informed culture in which academic failure is not an option.

II. Application Requirements

Applicants applying for CSP grant funds must address both the following application requirements, which are based on the statute, and the selection criteria described in the notice. An applicant may choose to respond to these application requirements in the context of its responses to the selection criteria.

(i) Describe the objectives of the SEA's charter school grant program and 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;

Please see [Selection Criteria \(i\)](#) for the response to this requirement.

(ii) Describe how the SEA will inform each charter school in the State about Federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and Federal programs in which the charter school may participate;

Please see [Selection Criteria \(iv\)](#) for the response to this requirement.

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

Please see [Selection Criteria \(iv\)](#) for the response to this requirement.

(iv) Describe how the SEA will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each local educational agency (LEA) in the State.

Please see [Selection Criteria \(i\)](#) for the response to this requirement.

(v) If an SEA elects to reserve part of its grant funds (no more than 10 percent) for the establishment of a revolving loan fund, describe how the revolving loan fund would operate;

The ESE will not establish a revolving loan fund under this program.

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

The ESE does request any statutory or regulatory waivers at this time

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

CSO Educational Specialists knowledgeable with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Massachusetts special education law review all charter prospectuses and final applications submitted to the ESE to ensure that the school has proposed a program of special education that meets federal and state requirements. Concerns identified during the final application review process are addressed directly with the applicant group during the required interview and during the startup phase for approved applicants.

All newly chartered schools are required to participate in opening procedures trainings, which provide information about a range of special education related topics, including program operation, record keeping, privacy requirements, and an overview of the ESE's compliance review procedures. CSO federal programs staff visit each new charter school facility prior to opening, to ensure that handicapped accessibility requirements and special education instructional spaces meet applicable standards. Each charter school is also visited during its first year of operation for an initial implementation check-in. During this visit, a meeting is held with the special education administrator to discuss overall program operation, and a review of student records is conducted to ensure that IEPs are current, signed, and fully implemented. In addition, the CSO site visit protocol for subsequent years of a school's charter includes a federal programs review component, inclusive of special education.

All public school districts in Massachusetts receive a full Coordinated Program Review (CPR) every six years. All charter schools in Massachusetts are considered single-school districts and operate as their own LEAs. The CPR process for charter schools generally begins in their 2nd or 3rd year of operation. During the CPR, a 2-to-3-member ESE team conducts a 3-to-4-day inspection. CPR activities include a review of school documentation including special education policies and procedures, a review of selected student records, and interviews with special and regular education staff, related service providers, and school administrators. Following publication of the ESE's CPR report, if necessary, the charter school submits a Corrective Action Plan, and is assigned progress report submission dates. All elements of the Corrective Action Plan must be fully implemented within 1 year of publication of the ESE's CPR final report. The ESE conducts an onsite mid-cycle CPR review in the third year following the full CPR to monitor implementation of the Corrective Action Plan. A comprehensive special education program analysis and compliance synopsis is prepared by the CSO presented to the BESE as part of the renewal decision making process.

III. Selection Criteria

- (i) ***The contribution the charter schools grant program will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards (20 points).***

Note: *The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide a description of the objectives for the SEA’s charter school grant program and to explain how these objectives will be met, including steps that will be 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.*

Massachusetts has been nationally recognized as one of the leading states in the nation for raising educational standards and achievement for all students. Broad-scale reforms achieved by the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 include the creation of the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), and the implementation of a “foundation budget,” which required all school districts to fund education at adequate levels and re-directed state aid to achieve the same. In addition, one of the hallmarks of education reform in Massachusetts was the creation of independently operated public charter schools to provide high-quality public school choice, particularly in urban and low-income communities.

The Massachusetts Charter School Statute (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89) as amended (Acts of 2010, c.12), originally enacted as part of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, describes the several purposes for establishing charter schools, including to provide parents and students with greater options in choosing schools within and outside of their school districts. In addition, the law requires that access to these options be prioritized for those families residing in lower performing districts. Subsection (i) of the law states that “not less than two of the new charters approved by the board in any year shall be granted for charter schools located in districts where overall student performance on the statewide assessment system ... is at or below the statewide average in the two years preceding said charter application.” In the past several years, the ESE has further prioritized providing families with this access through a CSP subgrant priority for creating charter schools in “targeted areas”—districts not meeting state academic standards as defined by both the Massachusetts accountability system and No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

The BESE’s charter authorizing practices have realized this legislative priority. Of the 63 charter schools currently operating in Massachusetts, 40 are located in urban areas, serving a majority of students

who would have attended local school districts that are not meeting state academic standards. On average, Massachusetts charter schools enroll a significantly higher percentage of minority and low-income students than their district school counterparts. In the 2009-2010 school year, 47 percent of students attending charter schools were from low-income families compared to the statewide average of 33 percent; 57 percent of students attending charter schools were non-white minorities versus 31 percent statewide.

The statewide results for the ESE's most recent administration of the MCAS tests in 2010 indicate that although there has been some improvement, on the whole, the achievement of state academic standards by many minority and low-income students still trails behind the state average as well as the performance of white students (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/2010/results/summary.doc>). Because Massachusetts charter schools provide access to high-quality educational opportunities to a proportionately higher percentage of educationally disadvantaged students, it is critical to ensure that the necessary capacity and resources exist to create and implement high-quality schools. As detailed in [*Competitive Preference Priority \(3\)*](#), evidence of the high-quality of Massachusetts charter schools can be found in the January 2011 Harvard Study, *Student Achievement in Massachusetts' Charter Schools*, particularly with regard to the performance of minority, and low income students.

Federal CSP grant funds provide the critical support charter schools need to develop and implement innovative and effective educational programs to serve their students. The four project objectives and primary activities that the ESE will conduct to support the achievement of these objectives during the next three-year grant period are outlined below. Specific details about how the achievement of these objectives will be managed and evaluated are detailed in [*Selection Criteria \(iv\)*](#) and [*Selection Criteria \(vii\)*](#), respectively.

Project Objective (1): Increase the number of high-quality charter schools in Massachusetts, especially those serving students who are at greatest risk of not meeting state academic standards.

Federal CSP grant funds are key to the successful development and implementation of high-quality charter schools in Massachusetts. Founders of charter schools have reported that without these

funds, the schools would not have the tools necessary to open and operate with the high-quality for which their charter was granted.

The ESE will achieve this objective through the following activities:

- **Post-charter planning and implementation grants with focused subgrant priorities.**

The ESE will make post-charter planning and implementation grants available to all schools that are awarded charters by the BESE. However, ESE will specifically incentivize the development of high-quality charter schools that will serve educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve Massachusetts academic standards through the use of the three subgrant priorities described below. New charter schools that meet these priorities will receive significantly larger start-up grants (specific details about subgrant funding levels can be found in the *Budget Narrative*).

1. **High Poverty Area focus: The charter school will serve a high poverty population as defined by the Federal Register/Vol. 76, No.16.**

This subgrant priority mirrors the [Competitive Preference Priority \(5\)](#) for the CSP, and further encourages charter schools to provide high-quality educational choices for low income students.

2. **High School Graduation focus: The charter school's mission is focused on increasing the graduation rate for high needs students.**

This subgrant priority mirrors the [Competitive Preference Priority \(5\)](#) for the CSP, and further encourages charter schools to design a program to increase the high school graduation rates of high needs students. Schools do not have to be secondary schools to achieve this priority.

3. **College enrollment focus: The charter school's mission is focused on increasing the college enrollment rate for high needs students.**

This subgrant priority mirrors the [Competitive Preference Priority \(5\)](#) for the CSP, and further encourages charter schools to design a program to increase the college enrollment rates of high needs students. Schools do not have to be secondary schools to achieve this priority.

4. **Diverse Population: The charter school will serve a diverse population.**

This subgrant priority mirrors the [Competitive Preference Priority \(6\)](#) for the CSP, and further encourages charter schools to design an enrollment policy and R&R Plan to promote racial and ethnic diversity thereby avoiding racial isolation.

- **Clear communication and marketing plan.** The ESE will inform teachers, parents, and communities of the availability of public school charters and start-up CSP grant funds through a number of strategies. The ESE constantly evaluates its marketing activities related to the chartering of new schools and dissemination of CSP grants in order to increase the availability of information to potential applicant groups, particularly from communities performing below the state average on MCAS. The ESE aims to increase the effectiveness of its marketing activities, as described below.
 - The ESE will continue to distribute extensive paper and electronic communications about applying for a charter and the related start-up CSP grant on the website and to a targeted group of schools, districts, charter support organizations, and other non-profit organizations as well as hold a series of informational meetings and workshops in various communities around the state. The ESE has gone from having a few information sessions per year to at least a dozen. Attendance at information sessions has increased by nearly 100 percent. For example, 56 people attended information sessions for the 2008-09 application cycle, 72 people attended information sessions for the 2009-10 application cycle, and 108 people attended information sessions for the 2010-11 application cycle. In addition to these efforts, the ESE is always trying to broaden its outreach, improve the effectiveness of its outreach and enhance the content of the information sessions and workshops. Newly chartered schools will also receive extensive information about the availability of start-up funds (and funding through all other federal programs) through opening procedures trainings as described below in the [Federal funds information](#) section of [Selection Criteria \(iv\)](#).
 - The ESE will continue to update the Charter School Office's website to allow for easier navigation in general and ample information about the CSP grant program and the charter application process in particular.

- The ESE will collaborate closely with the Massachusetts Center for Charter Public School Excellence to ensure that the appropriate information about the charter application process and the CSP grant program is communicated to potential charter developers, teachers, parents, and community organizations.
- **Increasing the exposure of charter school best practices.**
 - The ESE published a best practices guide of charter school dissemination projects from recent years that is organized topically and for particular audiences (e.g., teachers, principals, superintendents, central office staff, and school councils/boards). In 2009, this guide was distributed to schools and districts throughout Massachusetts and is available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/bestpractices/>.
 - In 2009, the CSO completed a corresponding update and re-design of its current dissemination web page to allow for easy searching by topic area.
 - The ESE will continue to work in collaboration with the Massachusetts Public Charter School Association (MCPSA). The MCPSA, a CSP National Leadership Activity grantee, coordinated with the ESE for the three year project, *Keeping the Promise: The Massachusetts Charter School Dissemination and Replication Project*. The project studied five, high-performing urban charter schools: Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School , Boston Collegiate Charter School, Community Day Charter Public School, MATCH Charter Public School, and Roxbury Preparatory Charter School resulting in study tours, research findings, school-based papers, and a film. The ESE will continue to use the MCPSA as a vehicle to present best-practices and to provide updates to its member schools.

Longer school days, more instructional time on core content, a “no excuses” philosophy, and other structural elements of school organization appear to contribute to the positive results from Massachusetts highest performing charter schools. Perhaps most importantly, many of these elements could be implemented in traditional public schools, providing a potential model for improvement across the state. The Charter School Office continues to strive to disseminate the strategies for success and to work with stakeholders statewide on using school redesign as a potential lever for improving school performance.

- **Focused trainings to improve the quality of all charter schools.**

The ESE expects all charter schools to demonstrate increased student achievement under state and federal laws, particularly for subgroups that have historically underachieved. To that end, the ESE intends to increase the number of high-quality charter schools in Massachusetts through focused trainings. These training activities are related to a systematic revision of oversight protocols and guidelines described in [Projective Objective \(ii\)](#). Specifically, the ESE recently revised the [Guidelines for Writing Charter School Accountability Plans](#) with a particular focus on providing guidance around writing measurable performance outcomes. The ESE provided trainings for recently renewed charter schools on the *Guidelines* and will subsequently develop and conduct targeted workshops for all charter schools—with a focus on those newly-opening—to ensure that their Accountability Plans adhere to the revised guidelines and focus school efforts on improving student achievement. The refinement of this critical guiding document and the subsequent trainings are crucial steps to ensuring that schools are held to high standards of accountability. The ESE will also conduct statewide trainings at least annually to ensure that all charter schools are fully informed of the latest changes to state and federal accountability requirements applicable to all schools, and those that affect charter schools.

Project Objective (2): Promote the high quality dissemination of Massachusetts charter school best practices to other public schools.

Activities to support this objective are described in [Selection Criteria \(vi\)](#).

Project Objective (3): Improve student achievement in Massachusetts charter schools, particularly for students who have historically underachieved.

This objective is part of the overall goal of the ESE's CSP grant project, and the activities for *Project Objective (1)* specifically support this objective. In combination with the dissemination activities of *Project Objective (2)*, this CSP project is designed to support the overall goals of NCLB, the CSP, and the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 as well as the *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap* (Acts of 2010, c.12): to improve student achievement for all students and to close achievement gaps.

Project Objective (4): Increase the number of charter high schools graduates and college enrollment especially for high need students (high needs students are defined as students with disabilities, English Learners and low income students).

This final objective is part the overall goal of the ESE’s CSP grant project, and the activities for *Project Objective (1)* specifically support this objective. The dissemination activities of *Project Objective (2)*, the student improvement activities of *Project Objective (3)* and [Competitive Preference Priority \(5\)](#) specifically address the need to focus on improving the graduation and college enrollment rates of high needs students. This CSP project objective is designed to support the overall goals of NCLB, the CSP, and the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 well as the *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap* (Acts of 2010, c.12): to improve student achievement for all students and to close achievement gaps.

(ii) The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to charter schools under the State’s charter school law (20 points).

Note: *The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how the State’s charter school law establishes an administrative relationship between charter schools 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 describe the degree of autonomy charter schools in the State exercise over such matters as the charter school’s budgets, expenditures, daily operation, schedules, curricula, and personnel in accordance with the State’s charter school law.*

The Massachusetts charter school statute (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89) outlines an agreement made between each charter school and the BESE: with the greater degree of freedom granted to charter schools comes a greater degree of accountability. The Massachusetts charter law is considered one of the strongest charter school laws in the nation and has been consistently ranked near the top of the Center for Education Reform rankings based on the autonomy afforded to school operators. M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(k) states that a “charter school established under a charter granted by the board [of education] shall be a body politic and corporate with all powers necessary or desirable for carrying out its charter program, including but not limited to,” and goes on to enumerate the various powers of financial and operational freedoms granted.

The law establishes a direct relationship between the BESE, the only Massachusetts charter school authorizer, and each charter school’s board of trustees and allows the school tremendous freedom to make the critical decisions that drive instruction and operation, including all personnel policies. Charter

schools can organize themselves around a core mission or instructional approach, hire and fire their staff free of local collective bargaining restrictions, control their own financial resources, and structure their school day and calendar for optimal student learning. Massachusetts charter schools have taken full advantage of these freedoms to organize around myriad missions, including Montessori methods, rigorous college preparatory, expanded learning schedules, arts-infused curriculum, and alternative high school pathways to graduation, among many others.

Commonwealth charter schools are completely independent of any local school committee or collective bargaining unit. Horace Mann charter schools operate independently and are also held directly accountable for performance by the BESE, but exemption from some local rules must be negotiated with the local school district. The differences between the two types of charter schools in Massachusetts—Commonwealth and Horace Mann—are detailed above in [Competitive Preference Priority \(4\)](#).

The ESE requires each charter school to submit an accountability plan that is clear, rigorous, and measurable, prior to the start of its second year of operation. This plan must include each school's specific plan to increase and measure student achievement. Though most of the goals and objectives are created by the school, there are several mandatory ESE objectives required on each charter school's accountability plan regarding MCAS scores and student growth. Each charter school is required by statute to report on its progress toward these objectives in its annual report to the BESE and the public.

In carrying out oversight responsibilities, the ESE respects and honors the flexibility given to charter schools as it implements the state charter school law. The Massachusetts charter school accountability system fully detailed in [Competitive Preference Priority \(1\)](#), fully respects and honors the autonomy given to charter schools by state law.

(iii) *The number of high-quality charter schools to be created in the State (20 points).*

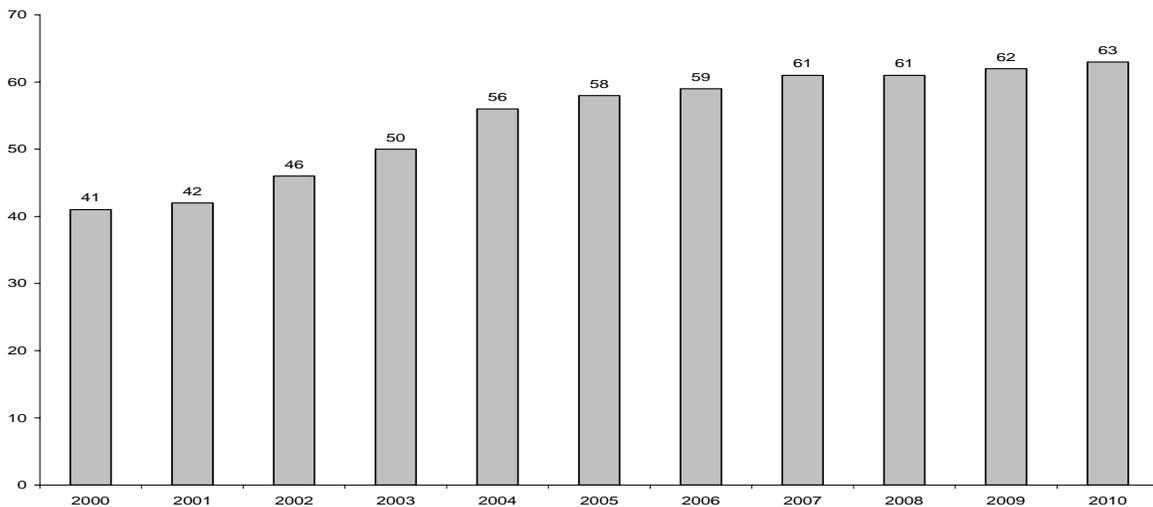
Note: *The Secretary considers the SEA's reasonable estimate of the number of new high-quality charter schools that will be authorized and opened in the State during the project period. The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe, in detail, its charter school subgrant application and peer review processes, how the peer review process will assess quality, and how the SEA will ensure that only high-quality charter school applicants (as defined by the applicant) are selected for funding. States that have received grants under this program previously are invited to provide*

data on the percentages of eligible applicants that were awarded subgrants and how this percentage related to the overall quality of applicants funded.

Reasonable estimates of new charter schools to be authorized and opened:

The BESE is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education in its *High Quality Charter Authorizing* guide as one of the nation’s highest quality charter school authorizers. The BESE takes its authorizing role very seriously, only granting charters to applicant groups that demonstrate the capacity to provide a high-quality public school choice for students in Massachusetts, and only renewing charters for schools that have provided solid evidence of success. Only twenty-four percent of prospective applicants have been awarded a charter by the BESE. Since the establishment of charter schools with the passage of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, the number of high-quality charter schools educating students in Massachusetts has grown steadily ([see Figure 1](#)), at the same time that the BESE has maintained high standards of accountability. Since 1994, there have been two non-renewals, four revocations, and four post-opening surrenders of charters in Massachusetts.

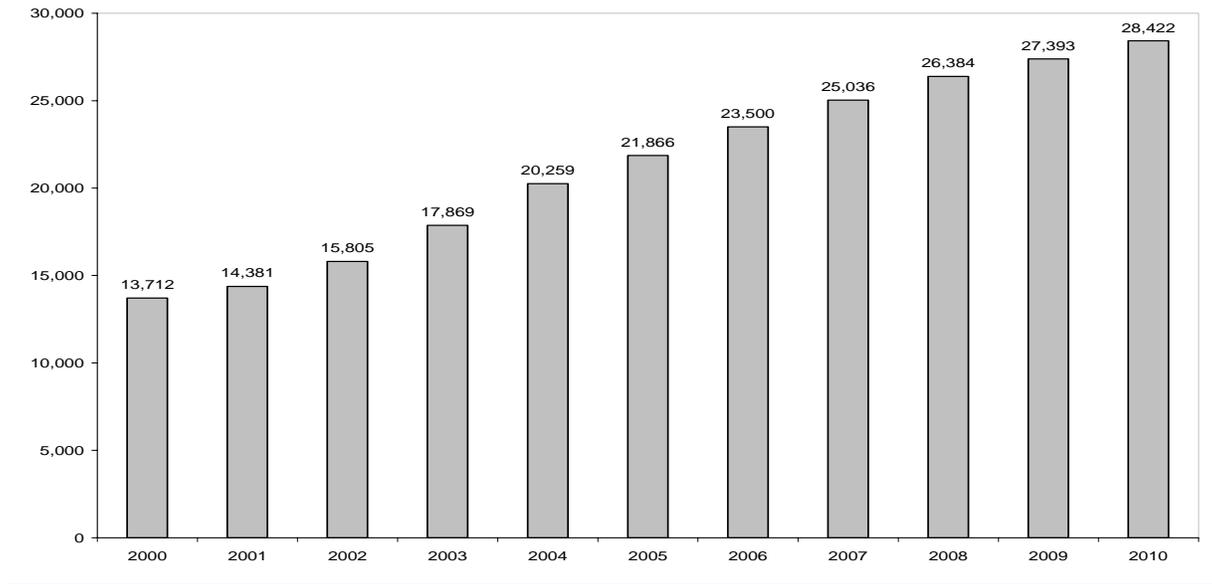
Figure 1: Number of Operating Charter Schools in Massachusetts, fall 2000 – 2010



The number of students enrolled in charter schools ([see Figure 2](#)) has continued to grow due to the opening of new schools, the planned expansion of operating charter schools, and the charter

amendments granted by the BESE to several successful charter schools to increase the number of students they are chartered to serve.

Figure 2: Number of students enrolled in Massachusetts charter schools, fall 2000-2010



Before 2010, district net school spending on charter schools was capped at nine percent. This cap led to a decreasing number of charter applicants, particularly in some urban charter markets. As previously detailed and described in *An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap*, (Acts of 2010, c.12), Massachusetts has demonstrated its national leadership by strategically lifting the cap on charter schools in the lowest-performing districts to provide high-quality educational opportunities for students most in need.

- The statewide cap that limits the total charter school population to nine percent of the general student population has been removed; the state’s spending cap for charter schools has been increased from nine percent to 18 percent in the state’s districts that perform in the lowest 10 percent. The cap increase is phased in over time, with an increase to 13 percent occurring in FY12 followed by a 1 percent increase each year to reach the new cap: 18 percent. Given the lifting of the

cap, Massachusetts expects to steadily increase the number of high-quality charter schools over the next three years.

- Nine schools are currently approved to open in fall 2011. Six have been granted charters based on their proven provider status; one will provide wraparound health and wellness services to the students of Boston as well as rigorous academics, four are replications of high performing charter schools, and one is opening in an underserved urban area with limited school choice options. Three are Horace Mann Public charter schools.
- Seven schools have been approved to open in the fall of 2012. Six of these schools are part of a proven provider network of schools, replicating high-quality and high performing charter schools and one is opening in an underserved urban area.
- As described above in [Competitive Preference Priority \(1\)](#), *Student Achievement in Massachusetts' Charter Schools* report, students in Massachusetts' charter middle and high schools often perform better academically than their peers in traditional public schools. The results are particularly large for students at charter middle schools and at schools located in urban areas, two areas where traditional public schools have found it most challenging to improve student performance. A past study on MCAS performance commissioned by the ESE's CSO, *Massachusetts Charter Schools Achievement Comparison Study* has shown that charter schools have performed relatively well in comparison to their sending districts, with particular success in closing the achievement gap with African American, Hispanic, Low Income, and Special Education subgroups.
- ESE has made a concerted effort to encourage school districts to consider the Horace Mann charter model as a formal way to provide an alternative educational option within the district or to re-start an existing school. As detailed in the [Invitational Priority](#), currently, two low-performing urban public schools in Boston will convert to Horace Mann charter schools for the 2011–2012 school year. Also, as detailed in [Competitive Preference Priority \(5\)](#) Salem Community Charter School will open as an alternative high school serving students who have dropped out or are at risk for

dropping out. Based on these factors, the recent lifting of the cap, the ESE estimates that during the next three-year grant period, approximately 22 new high-quality charter schools will be authorized and/or opened.

Charter Subgrant Application Process:

The Massachusetts single authorizer system allows for a high-quality, streamlined charter application process and CSP subgrantee application. The original charter application, once approved by the BESE, also serves as the post-charter planning grant application. Once the ESE is satisfied that an applicant group has proven the capacity to open and operate a high-quality school, they are awarded the post-charter planning grant. Therefore, one hundred percent of new charter schools are recipients of the USED CSP grants.

The ESE conducts a thorough review of charter applications, working within the timelines created by the statute and regulations. In this way, the ESE attempts to ensure that only high-quality charter school applicants receive the start-up grant.

The objective of the charter application review process is to award charters to applicants who show the greatest probability of creating public schools of the highest quality. The ESE conducts a process with multiple phases that includes participation by internal and external reviewers, as well as opportunities for public comment, and interviews with each founding group. The prospectuses and final applications are reviewed against extensive criteria which is outlined in 603 CMR 1.05 and established by the ESE through the application for a public charter school.

The commissioner of elementary and secondary education (commissioner) may recommend and the BESE may approve new charters where the application substantially meets the criteria as set forth in the statute, regulations, and application guidance; the applicant is determined to be a proven provider, if required by statute; and if there are sufficient seats available in the district(s) to be served under the applicable cap.

Post-Charter Planning and Implementation Subgrants

Newly authorized charter schools in Massachusetts are eligible to receive planning and implementation funding for a maximum 36 months. As stated above, the extensive and rigorous review process utilized by the ESE to determine which applicant groups will be granted a charter also serves as the review process for awarding post-charter planning and implementation funding through the CSP.

Schools that will open quickly in the upcoming fall (“fast-track”) will be eligible to receive planning funds immediately for a period up to six months. Once the charter school opens its doors to students in the fall, the school will be able to receive up to 24 months of implementation funding through the end of their second school year. Schools that wait to open until the following fall (“slow-track”) can choose to receive planning funds spread out over 18 months and will then access up to 24 months of implementation funding. However, in no instances will the total period of planning and implementation funding for a charter school exceed 36 months as required by federal law.

Upon receiving a charter, new charter schools submit formal grant applications to begin accessing planning and implementation funding and are required to attend a series of opening procedures trainings. The CSP Director then performs a technical review of each planning and implementation grant application to ensure compliance with federal and state grant requirements before initial funds are disbursed, and continuation funding is contingent upon the completion of specific project requirements and benchmarks. [Table 1](#) below presents a brief outline of the proposed subgrant requirements and monitoring benchmarks for funding at each stage of planning and implementation.

Table 1: Proposed Planning and Implementation Subgrant Requirements and Benchmarks

Post-charter Planning (6 to 18 months)	Year 1 Implementation (12 months)	Year 2 Implementation (6 to 12 months)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget narrative that includes at least \$5,000 towards the development of fiscal policies and procedures and \$10,000 towards curriculum and assessment system development. • Prior planning period fiscal audit or waiver to extend audit period. • Pre-enrollment numbers consistent with charter. • Attendance at all spring Opening Procedures trainings required of all pre-opening schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget narrative that includes at least \$10,000 for data management systems. • Completed Opening Procedures Checklist. • Planning year fiscal audit. • Enrollment verification for funding levels. • Full day on-site verification of initial implementation of all major federal and state programs (Special education, English learners, Title I, and Nutrition). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget narrative that includes at least \$5,000 for governance training. • Submitted Draft Accountability Plan and Annual Report for Year 1 prior to start of Year 2. • Year 1 fiscal audit. • Enrollment verification for funding levels. • Approval of Accountability Plan.

Prospectus and Final Application Panel Review

In the current application process, every prospectus and final application is reviewed by an average of six individuals. The ESE uses multiple external, peer reviewers for prospectuses and final applications, including school leaders and teachers, education consultants, representatives from non-profits, and members of the ESE staff. Reviewers are trained in order to establish greater reliability. Teams of reviewers read the prospectuses and final charter applications thoroughly, with reference to the criteria in the charter application. The ESE outlines many criteria in the Application for a Massachusetts Public Charter School and applicant groups are expected to address the criteria in their applications.

At the prospectus stage, CSO staff incorporates into their discussion and evaluation of each prospectus the external reviewers' submitted written comments on the strengths and weaknesses of each prospectus with respect to the criteria. The CSO maintains all written evaluations as part of the application record. As provided in the charter school regulations, the reviewers' role is solely advisory.

The CSO prepares a compilation of the reviewers' evaluations of the prospectus. The compilation is provided to and discussed with the commissioner. The commissioner makes the final determination about which applicant groups are invited to submit a final application.

Final applications are read by a review panel, including ESE staff and external readers. The CSO provides each reviewer with a copy of the application and a list of the criteria in advance of the review panel meeting. At the review panel meeting, reviewers are asked to comment generally on the application, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the application, and to identify areas where clarification or further information from the applicant is needed. The CSO prepares a written synopsis of the review panel discussion and maintains the synopsis as part of the application record. Again, the reviewers' role is solely advisory.

The ESE invites public comment on each application from the superintendents of the districts from which the charter school intends to draw students. In addition, public hearings are held in the district in which a proposed charter school is to be located, with at least one member of the BESE in attendance. Each BESE member in attendance at a public hearing makes an oral report on the comments received at such hearing at a subsequent meeting of the BESE.

The ESE also accepts written public comment on each application on or before a deadline established annually by the Charter School Office. All written comments are made available to BESE members in electronic format and are maintained by the CSO as part of the application record.

The CSO interviews all final applicant groups. Questions to be asked at the final interview are based on (a) the synopsis of the review panel's discussion; (b) issues and concerns raised during public comment; and (c) any other aspects of the application requiring clarification as determined by the CSO. Interviews last approximately two hours. Interviewers note the degree to which the applicant group

successfully addressed these areas of its application and get a clearer sense, in person, of the capacity of the founding group. A written synopsis of the interview is also maintained as part of the application record.

For each applicant that requests proven provider status, the ESE reviews the applicant's credentials against the criteria set forth in the statute and regulations. The result of the review is provided to and discussed with the commissioner. The commissioner makes the final determination on proven provider status.

The CSO prepares a written summary of each application's primary strengths and weaknesses based on the complete application record relative to the criteria. The summary is provided to and discussed with the commissioner. The commissioner also receives a copy of the final charter application and the complete application record. The commissioner determines which applicant groups, if any, will be recommended for a charter at the February meeting of the BESE. The BESE then votes to determine which proposed schools will receive a charter.

If a final applicant is not recommended for chartering, the CSO provides feedback to the applicant group and invites it to submit a stronger application in the following year. The CSO provides all applicant groups with complete written evaluations and detailed summaries from the prospectus and final application stages. The CSO offers to meet with any and all applicant groups to provide further guidance about the evaluation of their application in relation to the criteria.

Once a school is chartered it enters into the extensive opening procedures process. As mentioned earlier, the CSO conducts workshops designed to inform and assist new schools in completing the opening procedures process. The opening procedures process allows newly chartered applicant groups to develop and prepare for opening a school. This process ensures that each school has the legally mandated infrastructure that is required by charter school statute and regulations, as well as the laws applying to all public schools.

- (iv) ***Quality of the management plan (10 points).*** *In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers (a) 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; and (b) 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 (20 U.S.C. 7221b (b) (2) (A) and (B) and 7221e (a)) .

Note: *The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe any compliance issues or findings related to the CSP that have been identified in an audit or other monitoring review, as well as the steps taken to address such compliance issues or findings.*

Within the ESE's Charter School Office, two educational specialists—Joanna Laghetto, the Accountability and Grant Specialist, who serves as the CSP Project Director (PD), and the New Schools Development Coordinator (NS), Ruth Hersh—are primarily involved in the successful administration of the federal CSP grant. The NS coordinates Massachusetts' annual charter school application cycle, which determines which charter founding groups will be recommended to the BESE to receive a public school charter as well as CSP funding. The PD works closely with the NS to inform education stakeholders about the availability of funding through the CSP grant program, and to conduct several trainings, including opening procedures trainings detailed below. The PD administers the dissemination grant program, including the management of the review process, and performs all technical and financial oversight functions related specifically to all CSP subgrants. The PD also works directly with liaisons in the ESE's Budget, Business, and Grants Management Units to ensure the timely processing and payment of all subgrants. Other educational specialists perform oversight functions integrated with the ESE's authorizing responsibilities related to monitoring subgrantee schools. These include approving charter school board members, providing guidance for and approving accountability plans, reviewing annual reports, and conducting onsite monitoring and performance evaluation visits. The Charter School Director, (Barry Barnett, currently Acting Director) provides direct oversight of all of these activities. The resumes of all staff mentioned above are attached. Specific details about ESE project objectives timelines, funding timelines and peer review processes for awarding each type of subgrant are provided below.

Response to US Education Monitoring of Charter School's Program Monitoring

The ESE has made several changes in response to its results in the U.S. Department of Education's Charter School Program Monitoring Project. Massachusetts previously awarded pre-charter planning 'developer' grants, which at times, prevented the ESE from enforcing the 36 month maximum award. The Massachusetts Charter School office has decided not to offer these grants as it is more effective and efficient to fund the schools with the year 2 implementation grants (which would be eliminated in some cases due to the developer grant.) The monitoring report also recommended that Massachusetts take the necessary steps to monitor subgrantee projects to ensure federal compliance. Massachusetts has increased the scope of its annual independent audit requirements to ensure that the subgrantees use of funds is within federal guidelines. The final finding is related to the quality of the dissemination projects and the likelihood that they will result in improved student academic achievement. The rubric for dissemination subgrants has been changed to ensure that applicants demonstrate a likelihood that projects will increase student achievement. More details including the process for awarding dissemination grants, as well as the new rubric, is detailed in [Selection Criteria \(v\)](#).

Federal Funds Information

Describe how the SEA will inform each charter school in the State about Federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and Federal programs in which the charter school may participate.

The Massachusetts CSO operates within the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The CSO is the primary contact for charter schools regarding the grants provided under the federal CSP program and provides information about all federal funds and programs in which charter schools may be able to or are required to participate. Via our webpage, <http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/Grants/>, the ESE's Grants Management Unit provides information about all other federal funds—entitlement and discretionary—to all school districts, including charter schools, which are considered their own LEA in Massachusetts. This webpage provides all relevant information about accessing federal funds, including how to submit proposals, allocation amounts, and all program

guidelines for obtaining and administering grant funds. School district superintendents and charter school leaders are updated regularly about the posting of this information via the ESE's electronic mail listservs.

In addition to receiving federal entitlement funds such as Title I and IDEA special education grants, charter schools in Massachusetts have successfully competed for federal discretionary grant programs administered by the ESE. For example, in the last two years, several charter schools have been successful in securing Community Service-Learning Partnership, Language and Literacy Development, and Enhancing Education Through Technology competitive grants.

The CSO also conducts two annual trainings each year directed specifically at new charter schools and personnel new to operating charter schools to ensure that they are aware of the full array of the federal funds and programs available to them. A series of opening procedures trainings each spring are required for all charter schools prior to opening. As part of this series, a full day of training is provided on charter school funding, including an overview of all federal funds and programs available and how to access them. Representatives from most major grant programs, as well as the Nutrition Unit (which administers the National School Lunch programs), present information and provide follow-up technical assistance to new charter schools as they establish these programs during their planning period.

In addition, the CSO conducts a full-day Orientation for New Charter School Administrators each fall—intended for personnel *new to a charter school* (even if the charter school itself has been in operation for many years). Participants are provided the same federal funds overview and access to information, along with additional training around the administration of special education and Title I programs, as required by IDEA and ESEA.

Throughout the year, the Coordinator of Charter School Research and Finance (who serves as the CSP Project Director) and two Federal Programs staff within the CSO serve as a resource for schools when they have questions about accessing and administering federal funds allocated by the ESE. It is the common practice of the CSO to link charter school leaders with program officers within the ESE to ensure that charter school leaders are receiving the information they need to understand and access state and federal programs and funding. The CSP Project Director also utilizes the CSO website and a charter

leader/business manager listserv on a regular basis to update schools about deadlines and submission requirements for the various federal programs administered by the ESE.

Commensurate share of federal funds:

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

As described above, charter schools in Massachusetts are considered their own LEAs, and therefore receive their own allocations for all federal education funds allocated by formula each year. However, to ensure that all new and significantly expanding charter schools receive their commensurate share of federal funds in a timely manner, the CSO works collaboratively with program units within the ESE to ensure that these schools are included in these calculations.

According to state law, all charter schools are required to provide a “Pre-Enrollment” report to the ESE by mid-March, which includes their projected enrollment—by grade and by sending district—for the upcoming school year. However, charter schools that are new or significantly expanding are also required to submit a “Significant Expansion” report by May 1 of each year (to ensure at least 120 days of notice to the ESE), which includes projected numbers of low-income, special education, and limited English proficient students. The CSO provides these data to the appropriate program units within the ESE so that these projected numbers can be used to calculate allocations on current-year figures as required by federal regulations.

The ESE’s Office of Special Education Planning and Policy (SEPP) has outlined audit activities and procedures to ensure that all new or significantly expanding charter schools receive their commensurate share of IDEA entitlement funds in the year of opening or expansion. Specifically, SEPP uses “Significant Expansion” numbers provided by the CSO in May of each year to prepare allocations for the upcoming grant year. If the charter school has submitted its Special Education Program Plan Statement assuring that it is knowledgeable about its responsibilities in relation to special education and applied for IDEA funds, SEPP releases the first allotment of the grant to the

charter school in the fall of its opening or expansion year. After actual enrollment data for the current school year becomes available (approximately December), SEPP makes the appropriate adjustments to the grant allocation, if warranted, and notifies the charter school of the adjusted grant funds available.

The Title I Unit within the ESE follows similar procedures. In addition, the CSO worked with Title I program staff to allow new charter schools to open in their first year of operation with Schoolwide Title I programs, if they served student populations with at least 40 percent low-income students. In particular, new charter schools were allowed to reference the significant planning and development already documented as part of their charter applications in order to demonstrate that they met the 10 components required to operate a Title I Schoolwide program. Fifty-three of the 63 charter schools operating in Massachusetts are currently operating Title I Schoolwide programs.

These practices ensure that first year charter schools have the initial funds necessary to implement a solid Special Education and/or Title I program at the beginning of the first school year, rather than starting their program later and thereby losing valuable learning time for students.

- (v) ***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 (20 points). Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010, Division D, Title III, Pub. L. 111-117.***

In its *Supporting Charter School Excellence Through Quality Authorizing* report, the U.S. Department of Education recognized Massachusetts as one of the nation's highest quality charter school authorizers. Being a single authorizer state streamlines the ability for the BESE to hold charter schools, and therefore themselves, accountable for providing a high-quality education to the students of the Commonwealth. The BESE takes its authorizing role very seriously, only granting charters that demonstrate the capacity to provide a high-quality public school choice to students in the Commonwealth, and only renewing charters for schools that have provided solid evidence of their success. The BESE uses

the current status of all of the Massachusetts charter schools and their ability to meet the thirty-one standards listed in the *Common School Performance Criteria (Criteria)* as a gauge of their effectiveness. When a school is put on probation or is operating under conditions, a clear goal for turning the school's performance around is outlined by the BESE and schools under conditions understand that they must improve performance or face closure. The BESE and the CSO holds itself to high standards in maintaining well documented records of student performance data, charter school annual reports, and charter school site visits to enable the BESE to make informed decisions about whether to renew a school's charter, or not.

The Massachusetts Charter School Statute (M.G.L. c. 71, § 89) establishes the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) as the sole public charter authorizing entity in Massachusetts. LEAs or any other agency cannot authorize charter schools in Massachusetts. As the sole charter authorizer, the BESE is responsible for awarding charters for terms of 5 years; approving major amendments to charters, including changes in school size, grade levels, and location; and monitoring the performance of each school. Schools that are deemed high-quality can have their charters renewed for subsequent five-year terms. When deficiencies are noted, the BESE has a range of actions it can take, including imposing conditions on a charter, placing a school on probation, and non-renewal or revocation of a school's charter. As sole authorizer, the BESE has the responsibility to maintain high standards for charter schools, to uphold school autonomy, and to protect student and public interests. It ensures that the schools have the autonomy for which they are entitled while being responsible for public accountability. The rigorous accountability and renewal process is a constant evaluation of how the BESE is doing relative to its authorizing duty. The process, and its outcomes provide a continuous checks and balances ensuring our authorizing is of the highest quality.

Authorizing decisions have significant impact on the charter schools and the students and families they serve, and they can also have a significant financial impact on local districts. As a result, the BESE's deliberations on these matters are completed with great diligence and with regard to due process

requirements. It is a time-consuming process, and the significant increase in the number of schools expected over the next few years will increase the time demands on the BESE.

The BESE has instituted some efficiencies in its charter authorizing capacity. For example, the BESE voted in October 2008 to delegate to the commissioner the authority to approve requests from charter schools to incur temporary debt with repayment terms that exceed the duration of the charter. The BESE voted in September 2009 to delegate to the commissioner the authority to grant charter renewals that do not involve conditions or probation and to approve charter amendments that do not involve changes in grade span, maximum enrollment, or districts served, provided that the commissioner notifies the BESE in advance of all such actions and a member may ask to have the matter placed on a meeting agenda for discussion and action. The commissioner then reports to the BESE on all actions that have been taken under these delegations of authority. While these measures have been helpful, further self-evaluation by the BESE resulted in additional actions that will be taken to streamline its oversight of charter schools. A charter school subcommittee was appointed by the BESE chair, in order to review key questions under the new charter school statute as well as the BESE's charter granting process. At the January 2011 BESE meeting, the subcommittee reported about seat caps and the definition of proven providers under the new law to the BESE, including a set of recommendations on how to do this work more effectively and efficiently.

(vi) In the case of SEAs that propose to use grant funds to support dissemination activities under section 5204(f)(6)(B) of the ESEA, the quality of the dissemination activities (5 points) and the likelihood that those activities will improve student academic achievement (5 points).

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. Applicants that have previously awarded dissemination subgrants under this program are encouraged to describe the outcomes of such subgrants and to identify any improvements to the applicant's processes for awarding and administering dissemination subgrants.*

According to state statute, the purposes for establishing charter schools in Massachusetts are to stimulate the development of innovative programs, learning, assessments, and methods for educational

instruction within public education and to provide models for replication in other public schools. Many of Massachusetts' charter schools—particularly those located in high-poverty urban areas—have achieved great academic success, and with the assistance of Charter School Program (CSP) funds, they have conducted dissemination projects that are designed to document and share their successes. Charter schools have undertaken this work in spite of the inherent difficulties with sharing their best practices with traditional school districts that are often unwelcoming to them due to the financial impact of charter schools on municipal school budgets. This environment has negatively impacted the expected outcomes of some of Massachusetts charter school dissemination projects. A review of past activities has revealed that some of the projects have not been as effective as the CSO had hoped. To address this issue, the dissemination grant Request for Proposal rubric has been updated to evaluate the purpose and quality of the project. Future applicants will also be required to have an established partnership with a public district or a school in need in order to receive dissemination funds. BESE will only fund projects that are of high-quality and are data driven and will result in improved student outcomes. There will be no duplication of activities i.e., a charter school will not be funded for a dissemination project for which another school has already received grant funds.

Each year, the ESE sets competitive grant priorities, which provide a focus for the dissemination grant proposals; the ESE has funded many dissemination projects that have involved partnerships between charter and district schools. The projects serve as proof that charter schools are attempting to fulfill their obligations to create and implement innovative programs and share those practices with other charter and district schools to improve student achievement. Many of these projects have been successful or partially successful and some have been presented at the annual Massachusetts Charter School Best Practices Showcase, which has been supported in part by the ESE. Some of the grant project highlights, including lessons learned are as follows:

- Boston Preparatory Charter Public School partnered with the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association and Massachusetts 2020 in order to disseminate key Expanded Learning Time (ELT) Practices to other Massachusetts public schools through study tours of charter schools that offer ELT.

Lessons learned from final survey:

Boston Prep was *”very satisfied with the quality of study tours offered, the scope of our recruitment efforts, and the variety of attendees (representing districts, charters, and founding groups), we do want to mention that district attendees were different than we anticipated. Although we expected the schools receiving funding from the DESE to be a prime audience for our ELT study tours, only one such school attended, this despite considerable promotional efforts, including assistance from Mass2020”*.

- Prospect Hill Academy Charter School (PHA), shared collaborative inquiry professional development practices elementary strategies of with the full support of one of its main sending districts, Somerville Public Schools.

Lessons learned from final survey:

PHA found that *“As with most innovations, leadership understanding and support was crucial for effective implementation. [Somerville] School leaders accomplished this in two ways. First, they provided both the structural changes needed to implement Collaborative Inquiry (CI) and staff guidance that encouraged their effective engagement in the process. Second, they helped integrate Collaborative Inquiry with other structures and conditions in the school, including other ongoing improvement efforts”*.

Additionally, PHA found *“After some variation in the first few meetings, the CI Coach and the two school principals settled on scheduling most CI sessions for about 60 minutes. This appeared to be an appropriate length. It was difficult to complete discussions or activities when sessions were much shorter in length (40 minutes or less). While longer sessions were useful, they appeared to be necessary only for particular tasks (i.e. cooperatively grading student assessments).*

- Marblehead Community Charter Public School disseminated a standards based curriculum development project to several neighboring districts.

Lessons learned from final survey: The goal of uploading 20 units to the Forming Units to Elevate

- Learning (FUEL) was not realized so an alternative path was taken:

Because of the lack of response from individual participants after the FUEL workshop, the FUEL team chose to partner with districts and organizations to assist individual educators with the planning and implementation of engaging units of study. The FUEL team presented their program to six additional public and public charter schools.

- The BESE CSP grant provided partial funding to expand the unique, intensive urban tutoring model of the Phoenix AmeriCorps Urban Fellowship Program at Phoenix Charter Academy, and allowed the charter school to share the practice with two local high poverty public schools.

Of the fifty-nine charter schools potentially eligible for dissemination grants—i.e., currently in their fourth year of operation or later—the ESE has awarded dissemination grants to thirty eight of these schools, of which seventy six percent have received two years of funding.

The ESE will continue to provide dissemination funding in order to support this unique charter school mandate. Over the next three years, the ESE plans to continue supporting the dissemination of successful charter schools best practices that have made substantial progress in improving student achievement. Because Massachusetts enacted one of the first charter laws in the nation, there is a strong pool of mature, successful schools, who have already been awarded the limit of two years of federal dissemination funding. The CSO is giving strong consideration to applying for a waiver so that some of these high-performing schools could receive a second dissemination grant to ensure that there will be a strong pool of high-quality applicants.

The ESE plans to utilize up to 10 percent of our CSP grant award to continue administering the *Massachusetts Charter School Dissemination Grant* program for the next three years.

Timeline for awarding dissemination subgrants.

The ESE conducts an annual dissemination grant competition and promotes the availability of dissemination grant funding each spring with the release of the Request for Proposals (RFP). Specifically, invitations are made to charter schools that meet minimum eligibility requirements (those that will be in

year 4 of operation) as well as schools that are approaching renewal, as Massachusetts state law mandates dissemination by charter schools in order to earn renewal. The ESE will provide technical assistance training to increase the awareness of the availability of funding, clarify eligibility requirements, and improve the quality of dissemination proposals. These trainings also serve to communicate the competitive priorities for dissemination set annually by the CSO and will help in identifying best practices and outlining measurable outcomes. In the spring of each year the RFP is released and the grant proposals are due in October. Proposals are reviewed quickly, with the goal of the commissioner informing the BESE of his recommendations for subgrant awards at their October meeting. Subgrant project dates will run from approximately November 1 to the following August 31. Grantees that propose two-year projects must re-compete for a second year of funding after having demonstrated successful completion towards project goals in the first year of funding.

Peer review process; How the ESE assesses the quality of applications.

A panel of reviewers will rate dissemination subgrant proposals against an established scoring rubric. Reviewers will be asked to rate the proposal on how well it presents evidence in the following areas: competitive priority, purpose/quality, organizational capacity, demand, effective dissemination, evaluation, budget, and action plan. The panel of reviewers will include representatives from different units within the agency, particularly those involved with intervention for struggling traditional school districts, as well as external experts from the field if possible. After reviewers have individually scored and provided comments for proposals, they then meet as a panel to develop a consensus funding decision. Applicants are required to provide measurable goals and outcomes, as well as a plan to evaluate whether or not these goals have been met at the conclusion of the project. The ESE may work with an evaluator to assist grantees in setting clear benchmarks for performance as part of their proposals.

Other efforts to promote dissemination to improve student achievement.

Competitive subgrant priorities. The CSO will continue the practice of setting competitive subgrant priorities each year that better focus dissemination proposals to meet the current needs of the Massachusetts public school community. In the next three years, we will prioritize projects that propose direct partnerships between successful charter schools and other public schools/districts that have a high amount of students at-risk for dropping out. These priorities may also be developed by determining the existing needs of schools and districts that are currently working with the ESE School Turnaround and Redesign Unit.

(vii) *Quality of the project evaluation (10 points).*

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 the 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 about effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.*

Due to state procurement requirements, the ESE is unable to identify an individual and/or organization to complete an evaluation of this proposed CSP grant project until the formal awarding of grant funds. However, we have made initial inquiries of several potential evaluators, each of whom have preliminarily agreed to consider working as an evaluator for this CSP project.

Specifically with regard to the evaluation of academic achievement data, we anticipate continuing our work with the center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University. The Harvard Study,

Student Achievement in Massachusetts' Charter Schools (findings are detailed in [Competitive Preference Priority \(2\)](#)) will be expanded and updated. Harvard used the random assignment of students in charter school admission lotteries to compare students who were offered a seat in oversubscribed charter lotteries with those who were not, referred to as a “lottery study”. They also compare charter students to those in traditional public schools using statistical controls such as prior achievement to adjust for “observational differences”. For both studies, they reported several results for charter schools located in urban areas and charter schools located outside of urban areas in an effort to determine whether charter effects differ by community types.

We will also continue to work with RMC Research (RMC), a national leader in program research and evaluation, professional development, consultation, and product development. They support national, state, and local clients who serve schools, families, and communities. RMC Research conducted surveys during our previous grant period to specifically evaluate how well we were doing regarding our objectives and measures. The ESE commissioned *A Best Practices Awareness Survey* that was administered to traditional public school district superintendents, principals, and school staff in order to assess awareness of the availability of resources related to charter school best practices. Results of this survey were analyzed to determine the market penetration of the CSO’s dissemination of best practices promotion activities and the data was used to refine dissemination practices. RMC also updated the interview protocol that is used to interview dissemination subgrantee partner/recipient schools. The purpose of the interview was to elicit responses related to the usefulness and quality of services provided by the CSO and the impact on the partner/recipient school practice.

We are also considering continuing to work with the Clarus Group with regard to evaluating the CSP project as a whole. Clarus Group is a small consulting firm dedicated to helping government agencies and nonprofit organizations meet high standards of performance and integrity. The principals of Clarus Group have worked together since 1983 and collectively possess more than 50 years of experience that includes management and oversight of public and nonprofit agencies and programs, design and implementation of accountability systems, performance auditing and evaluation, public policy analysis,

effective and ethical procurement and contracting, and professional training development and delivery. They have extensive experience with Massachusetts charter schools: Clarus Group has participated in many charter renewal inspections and developed a two-day seminar uniquely-tailored to charter schools for the Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official program.

The chosen third party evaluator(s) will complete the evaluation plan, design evaluation instruments, conduct analysis, and report on results. Performance measures and evaluation activities are described in [Table 3](#) below for each objective in support of the overall goal of this CSP project as articulated in [Project Objective 4](#). Performance against these project objectives will be reported annually each summer to USED via the required Annual Performance Report (ED524B).

Table 3: Massachusetts CSP Project 2011-2014 Evaluation Plan

Project Objective (1): Increase the number of high-quality charter schools in Massachusetts, especially those serving students who are at greatest risk of not meeting state academic standards.			
<i>Performance Measure (A): By March 2014, the BESE will authorize and/or open 22 additional high-quality charter schools—at least 12 of which will meet two or more subgrant priorities.</i>			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
Authorize/open 2-8 new schools annually, 50 percent of which meet two or more subgrant priorities.	Track the number of charter prospectuses submitted, final applications submitted, and schools chartered at the end of each annual cycle. Track the number of priorities met at each stage.	Use a spreadsheet database for tracking.	Aggregate and report basic numeric summaries for each category.

Award all newly chartered schools post-charter planning and implementation funding within 1 month of their application for funding.	Track the amount and timing of disbursement of funds to schools on a quarterly basis.	Monitor spending via CSO project spreadsheets with internal controls provided by the Budget Office Spending Plan system and the Grants Management Unit through the Grants Information System.	Determine if spending levels and grant disbursement timelines need to be adjusted.
<i>Performance Measure (B):</i> 100 percent of new charter schools that begin their second year of operation within the three-year grant period will have ESE-approved Accountability Plans in place by December of their second year.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
Annually, all newly operating charter schools will submit draft Accountability Plans by Aug. 1 after their first year of operation.	Track the number of Accountability Plans received and approved.	Use a spreadsheet database for tracking.	Determine the school-level issues that delay the approval of an Accountability Plan.
Project Objective (2): Promote the dissemination of Massachusetts charter school best practices to other public schools.			
<i>Performance Measure (A):</i> By July 2014, the ESE will support 8 high-quality, data driven dissemination projects that meet annual competitive priorities.			

Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
Award 2-3 grants annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track the number of grants awarded. • Quantitative and qualitative data about impact of project provided by each subgrantee. • Qualitative feedback regarding the impact of these projects on the educational practices of “disseminees” (the recipient schools, districts, and/or teachers) in the fall following project conclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a spreadsheet database for tracking. • Required subgrantee evaluation data submitted at the conclusion of the project. • Utilize a survey instrument of “disseminees” to evaluate impact of projects. 	Results of both the school self-evaluations and surveys will be used to refine the elements requested in the dissemination grant RFP as well as to set new annual competitive priorities.
Project Objective (3). Improve student achievement in Massachusetts charter schools, particularly for students who have historically underachieved.			
<p><i>Performance Measure (A): Results from the 2013 updates to the ' Student Achievement in Massachusetts Charter Schools' will show that Massachusetts charter schools outperform their peers in traditional public schools.</i></p> <p>http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~pfpie/pdf/Student_Achievement_in_MA_Charter_Schools_2011.pdf.</p>			

Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
Massachusetts charter school students outperform their peers in traditional public schools.	The ESE will provide data to evaluator on all students enrolled in MA public schools. The data will include student race/ethnicity, gender, special education status, English proficiency status, income, residence, and MCAS scores.	Methods used in previous lottery study will be repeated.	Analysis of results will parallel that of the 2011 report.
<i>Performance Measure (B): The fall release of MCAS data in 2011, 2012, and 2013 over the next three years will show that the percentage of charter school students who are achieving at or above the proficient level in mathematics and English Language Arts will be higher than the previous year.</i>			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
2011 proficiency levels will be higher than baseline proficiency levels established in 2010; 2012 proficiency levels will be higher than 2011. 2013 proficiency levels will be higher than 2012.	Proficiency levels of charter school students in English Language Arts and Math on MCAS exams (The data submitted to USED via ED Facts)	Basic descriptive statistics will be used to aggregate the total number of proficient charter school students.	To the extent allowed by the data, an effort will be made to specifically analyze changes in proficiency levels depending on the age of the charter school. This analysis will be performed each fall after the state testing data has been finalized. Low performance automatically triggers an accountability site visit.

<i>Performance Measure (C): The fall release of MCAS student growth percentile (SGP) data in 2011, 2012, and 2013 over the next three years will show that the median SGP for mathematics and English Language Arts for all charter schools will be higher than the previous year.</i>			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
2011 growth rates will be higher than baseline growth rates established in 2010; 2012 growth rates will be higher than 2011. 2013 growth rates will be higher than 2012.	SGP data for charter school students in ELA and mathematics on MCAS exams (The data submitted to USED via ED Facts)	Basic descriptive statistics will be used to aggregate the total number of proficient charter school students.	To the extent allowed by the data, an effort will be made to specifically analyze changes in growth rates. This analysis will be performed each fall after the state testing data has been finalized. Low performance automatically triggers an accountability site visit.
Project Objective (4): Increase the number of charter high school graduates and college enrollment especially for high needs students. High needs is defined by students with disabilities, English Learners and low income students.			
<i>Performance Measure (A): By July 2014, the charter school high school graduation rate will increase by 15 percent for high needs groups.</i>			

Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
Annually, the high school graduation rate will increase by about 5 percent for all students including high needs.	The ESE collects charter school high school graduation cohort rates.	Basic descriptive statistics will be used to aggregate the total number of high need high school graduates.	An effort will be made to analyze the changes in graduation rates among these groups to determine the indicators (i.e. MCAS scores, Massscore completion rates) that predict higher levels of high school graduation rates.
<i>Performance Measure (B): By July 2014, the charter graduate college enrollment ate will increase by 15 percent for high needs groups.</i>			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
Annually, the college enrollment rate for charter high school graduates will increase by about 5 percent for all students including high needs.	The ESE collects charter school high school graduate plans for after high school.	Basic descriptive statistics will be used to aggregate the total number of high need high school graduates who enroll in college each year.	An effort will be made to analyze the changes in college enrollment rates among these groups to determine the indicators (i.e. percent taking SATs, MCAS scores, MassCore completion rates) that predict higher levels of college enrollment.
<i>Performance Measure (C): By July 2014, increase the number of high needs third grade charter school students scoring Advanced and Proficient on the MCAS ELA.</i>			

Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
2011 scores will be higher than 2010; 2012 will be higher than 2011; 2013 will be higher than 2012.	The number of students who are scoring at the Advanced or Proficient levels in English Language Arts on MCAS tests (The data submitted to USED via ED Facts).	Basic descriptive statistics will be used to aggregate the total number of advanced or proficient charter school students from the high needs subgroups.	To the extent allowed by the data, an effort will be made to specifically analyze changes in advanced levels depending on the age of the charter school. This analysis will be performed each fall after the state testing data have been finalized.
<i>Performance Measure (D): By July 2014, increase the number of high needs eighth grade charter school students scoring Advanced and Proficient on the MCAS mathematics.</i>			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reporting
2011 scores will be higher than 2010; 2012 will be higher than 2011; 2013 will be higher than 2012.	Advanced and Proficient levels of charter schools students in Math on MCAS tests (The data submitted to USED via the ED Facts).	Basic descriptive statistics will be used to aggregate the total number of Advanced and Proficient charter school students from the high needs subgroups.	To the extent allowed by the data, an effort will be made to specifically analyze changes in advanced and proficiency levels depending on the age of the charter school. This analysis will be performed each fall after the state testing data have been finalized.

All of the information collected through this evaluation plan will be used to formatively assess and monitor the progress of this CSP project and to inform potential changes to the activities proposed. Progress toward the overall project objective of improving student achievement in Massachusetts charter schools will ultimately provide information about what strategies are successful and should be replicated and encouraged by the BESE in its authorizing capacity.

Project Narrative

Other Narrative

Attachment 1:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1238-jlaghetto__resume_Account_&_Grant_Special Resume.pdf**

Attachment 2:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1239-MCPSA letter of support for CSP proposal.pdf**

Attachment 3:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1240-MDFA-letter of support for CSP proposal.pdf**

Attachment 4:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1241-B_Barnett A. Director Resume.pdf**

Attachment 5:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1242-R_Hersh New Schools Coor Resume.pdf**



10 Tremont St, 6th floor, Boston, MA
02108, 617-523-0881

132 Main St, Haydenville, MA 01039
413-268-3361

info@masscharterschools.org ~ www.masscharterschools.org

February 15, 2011

Dear Secretary Duncan,

I am writing on behalf of the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association to express our full support of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's current application for continued funding through the federal Charter School Program for the next three years.

In our experience working with charter schools through the state of Massachusetts, it is clear federal start-up funding provided to charter schools through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has been a crucial element to their success. Specifically, the planning and implementation funds provided to new schools have assisted charter founding groups to focus their efforts on developing and refining their unique educational programs, rather than the need to work other jobs to support themselves during the planning periods or to fundraise for basic start-up needs (books, desks, chairs, etc.) of all schools.

In addition, the dissemination efforts of some of Massachusetts' best charter schools have been greatly furthered by the availability of federal dissemination funds provided through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Massachusetts Charter Public School Association works with charter schools to assist them in meeting the terms of their charters. Continued federal funding through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is crucial to ensure the continued growth and health of the Massachusetts charter school initiative.

Sincerely,

Marc Kenen
Executive Director

The Massachusetts Charter Public School Association's mission is "to serve, support, and advocate for Massachusetts charter schools as they strive to achieve the goals of their charters."



MASSDEVELOPMENT

160 Federal Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02110

Tel: 617-330-2000
800-445-8030

Fax: 617-330-2001

www.massdevelopment.com

February 22, 2011

Dear Secretary Duncan:

The members of MassDevelopment's Charter School Advisory Committee are pleased to offer our full support of the Massachusetts Department of Education's current application for continued funding through the federal Charter School Program for the next three years. In our experience working with charter schools through the state of Massachusetts, it is clear federal start-up funding provided to charter schools through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has been a crucial element to their success. Specifically, the planning and implementation funds provided to new schools have assisted charter founding groups to focus their efforts on developing and refining their unique educational programs, rather than the need to work other jobs to support themselves during the planning periods or to fundraise for basic start-up needs of all schools.

MassDevelopment's Charter School Loan Guarantee Fund works specifically with charter schools to guarantee loans from banks and other lenders, so the charter schools can purchase or improve the real estate that they occupy.

DEVAL PATRICK
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

GREGORY P. BIALECKI
Chairman

ROBERT L. CULVER
President/CEO

Sincerely,

Rebecca A. Sullivan
Project Director
Massachusetts Charter School Guarantee Fund

Cc: Scott Pearson, Associate Assistant Deputy Secretary

Budget Narrative

Budget Narrative

Attachment 1:

Title: Pages: Uploaded File: **1237-MADESE_84.282A_FY11_App_BudgetNarrative_03.18.11.pdf**

**Massachusetts Department of Education
 FY2007 Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program
 (CFDA Number: 84.282A)
 Budget Narrative**

***Budget Narrative Instructions:** Provide an itemized budget breakdown narrative, by project year, for each budget category listed in Sections A and B of the ED 524 form. If applicable to this program, provide the rate and base on which fringe benefits are calculated. If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, this information is to be completed by your Business Office. Specify the estimated amount of the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied and the total indirect expense. Please indicate which costs are included and which costs are excluded from the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied. Provide other budget explanations or comments deemed necessary.*

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requests **\$12,125,950** over a three-year period from the federal Charter School Program. Table 1 describes our budget request by project year for each budget category.

Table 1: MADOE Budget Request, August 1, 2011 through July 31, 2014

ED524 Budget Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Description of Costs
1. Personnel	\$93,750	\$96,563	\$99,460	\$289,773	Costs for grant personnel detailed below: a total of 1.3FTE each year with a 3% Cost-of-Living-Adjustment each year.
	\$70,000	\$72,100	\$74,263	\$216,363	<i>Coordinator of Research and Finance (CSP Project Director) @ 1.0 FTE</i>
	\$17,500	\$18,025	\$18,566	\$54,091	<i>New Schools Development Specialist @ 0.25 FTE</i>
	\$6,250	\$6,438	\$6,631	\$19,319	<i>State Director of Charter Schools @ 0.05 FTE</i>

ED524 Budget Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Description of Costs
2. Fringe Benefits	\$31,622	\$32,571	\$33,548	\$97,740	Fringe benefits for above listed personnel, based on the MADESE's current fringe benefits rate of 33.73%.
3. Travel	\$9,000	\$9,540	\$10,113	\$28,653	Total costs for planned travel detailed below.
	<i>\$3,000</i>	<i>\$3,180</i>	<i>\$3,371</i>	<i>\$9,551</i>	<i>Required CSP Project Directors Meetings.</i>
	<i>\$6,000</i>	<i>\$6,360</i>	<i>\$6,742</i>	<i>\$19,102</i>	<i>Representation at regional/national charter school conferences (e.g., NACSA); travel in-state for visits to schools.</i>
4. Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	No costs budgeted.
5. Supplies	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$5,000	Costs for basic administrative office supplies to support grant administration.
6. Contractual	\$16,000	\$76,320	\$16,657	\$108,977	Costs for contracts detailed below.
	<i>\$10,000</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>	<i>Required external evaluation consultants.</i>
	<i>\$2,000</i>	<i>\$2,120</i>	<i>\$2,247</i>	<i>\$6,367</i>	<i>School Trainings (Accountability Plans, Annual Meetings, Opening Procedures, etc.)</i>
	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$60,000</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$60,000</i>	<i>MA Charter School Harvard University Lottery Study</i>
	<i>\$4,000</i>	<i>\$4,200</i>	<i>\$4,410</i>	<i>\$12,610</i>	<i>Annual NACSA Membership assuming 5% inflation.</i>
7. Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	No costs budgeted.

ED524 Budget Categories	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Description of Costs
8. Other	\$3,035,000	\$5,140,000	\$3,350,000	\$11,525,000	Subgrant costs detailed below are based on estimated average award sizes; see Budget Note 3 for additional details.
	\$550,000	\$510,000	\$385,000	\$1,445,000	<i>Post-Charter Planning Grants: 3 grants in Year One, 3 grants in Year Two, and 2 grants in Year Three at an average of \$180K each.</i>
	\$2,085,000	\$2,325,000	\$840,000	\$5,250,000	<i>Year 1 Implementation Grants: 7 grants in Year One, 8 grants in Year Two, and 3 grants in Year Three at an average of \$290K each.</i>
	\$0	\$1,905,000	\$1,725,000	\$3,630,000	<i>Year 2 Implementation Grants: 0 grants in Year One, 9 grants in Year Two, and 8 grants in Year Three at average of \$214K each.</i>
	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$1,200,000	<i>Dissemination Grants: Grant award distribution will vary across the 3 years depending on individual project proposals; we estimate an average of 2-3 awards per year at an average grant size of \$150K each.</i>
9. Total Direct Costs	\$3,187,372	\$5,356,494	\$3,511,277	\$12,055,143	Lines 1 - 8.
10. Indirect Costs	\$21,789	\$25,954	\$23,063	\$70,806	Total indirect costs based on the MADESE's approved indirect cost rate with USED of 14.3%, applied to Lines 1 - 3 and 5 - 6 (in Yr 2, 35K deducted from line 6 to account for paying indirect costs on first 25k of a contract.
11. Training Stipends	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	No costs budgeted.
Total Costs	\$3,209,161	\$5,382,448	\$3,534,341	\$12,125,950	Lines 9 - 11
<i>Planning/Implementation Grant Totals (in Line 8)</i>				<i>\$10,325,000</i>	<i>85%</i>
<i>Dissemination Grant Totals (in Line 8)</i>				<i>\$1,200,000</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Administrative Set-Aside Total (Lines 1 - 7, 10)</i>				<i>\$600,950</i>	<i>5%</i>

Budget Note 1: New vs. existing grant awards

The proposed three-year budget detailed above in Table 1 is for **new** project activities that are **not** funded by the existing balance for the MADESE's current award (Grant #: U282A070002).

Budget Note 2: Fiscal year assumptions

Year 1 represents an anticipated CSP grant fiscal year of August 1, 2011 through July 31, 2012.

Year 2 represents an anticipated CSP grant fiscal year of August 1, 2012 through July 31, 2013.

Year 3 represents an anticipated CSP grant fiscal year of August 1, 2013 through July 31, 2014.

Budget Note 3: Justification for Personnel

Massachusetts' goal is to open twenty-two new charter schools in the next three years all of which will be subgrant recipients. Nine will open in September 2011, seven charters have already been awarded for September 2012 opening, and six other charters plan on being awarded between 2012 and 2014. In order to monitor the subgrantees at the level required by the US Department of Education and outlined in their Massachusetts Monitoring Report, a full time Project Director is required. The Project Director will also be charged with strengthening the Dissemination Grant portion of the program and will work closely with the subgrantees to ensure effective learning outcomes will result from their projects. The New School Development Specialists are needed as they coordinate Massachusetts' annual charter school application cycle, which determines which charter founding groups will be recommended to the

MABESE to receive a public school charter as well as CSP funding and the State Director of Charter Schools will serve as the Massachusetts Charter School's Office authority for the USED CSP.

Budget Note 4: Justification for Subgrant Amounts

Over the past several years, the MADESE has provided approximately \$650,000 to new charter schools for planning and implementation over a 36-month period. In developing the budget proposal and subgrant requirements for the next three-year grant period, the MADOE attempted the difficult task of determining an appropriate amount of start-up assistance funding to establish high-quality charter schools in Massachusetts, balancing adequate support to set-up effective systems without creating over-dependence on federal funding. As part of this effort, three main factors were considered.

There are a number of sources that point to the much higher cost of public school education in Massachusetts when compared to other states. According to the table, State Expenditures per Pupil (<http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/expressTables.aspx>), prepared by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), Massachusetts was one of the states with the highest total and current expenditures (ranking 11th and 9th respectively) per pupil in public elementary and secondary education and the 5th highest average teacher salaries. According to Council for Community and Economic research, in 2010, Massachusetts ranked 11th in the cost of living comparison.

As more fully described in *Selection Criteria (i)* of the Project Narrative, through significant subgrant amount differentials, the MADESE will greatly incentivize the priorities to establish charters schools that located in areas with the most educational need that

provide educational programs through high school graduation. Proposed subgrant amounts also provide for a different amount of start-up costs (books, desks, chairs, etc.) that are proportional to student body size.

Finally, the MADESE considered historical inflation over the past several years. Utilizing inflation figures from the U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis, \$690,400 in 2011 has the same purchasing power as \$650,000 in 2007.

Based on these considerations, the MADESE requests funding to support planning and implementation subgrants at the levels described in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Proposed Subgrant Funding Levels

Grant Stage	Post-charter Planning	Year 1 Implementation	Year 2 Implementation	Potential Maximum Totals
Grant Period	6 to 18 mo.	12 mo.	6 to 12 mo.	36 mo.
Base Amount	100,000	150,000	75,000	325,000
More than 100 students	NA	25,000	25,000	50,000
1. High Poverty Area	65,000	65,000	65,000	195,000
2. HS Grad rate Focus	25,000	25,000	25,000	75,000
3. College Enrollment Rate Focus	25,000	25,000	25,000	75,000
4. Diverse Population	15,000	15,000	15,000	45,000
Total	230,000	305,000	215,000	765,000

