

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/16/2013 01:45 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Arts & College Preparatory Academy (U282C130006)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Dissemination Activities	15	15
2. Charter Existence	1	1
3. Demonstration of Success	40	38
4. Dissemination Strategy	15	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Quality of Personnel	14	13
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	10
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority		
Competitive Priority 1		
1. Rural/SPED/ELL	4	4
Competitive Priority 2		
1. Promoting Diversity	2	2
Competitive Priority 3		
1. Military Families	3	0
Total	109	98

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 84.282C Dissemination - 1: 84.282C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Arts & College Preparatory Academy (U282C130006)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The quality of the proposed dissemination activities and the likelihood that those activities will improve student achievement.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the objectives for the proposed dissemination activities and the methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving those objectives

Strengths:

The applicant clearly illustrates the objectives for the proposed dissemination activities and the methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving those objectives. For example, the applicant states the proposed project's objectives are to provide an inspirational and rigorous high school experience, and to prepare students for a successful transition to adulthood, economic self-sufficiency and participation in the community. (p. 14) The methods of determining progress on objectives are: grades, credit accumulation, comparative standardized high school and college entrance exam scores, discipline statistics, completion of service learning hours, individualized career plan, college applications and financial aid forms, college acceptance, and student, staff and parent satisfaction surveys. (p. 14) ACPA (Arts & College Preparatory Academy) has become a reliable School of Excellence, defying the odds and narrowing the achievement gap with a racially, economically, and geographically diverse student body. One third of students identifying as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered or Questioning (LGBTQ) as taken from annual voluntary student surveys, and a population living in Medium to High Poverty. The applicant notes the charter school has consistently been at the top of the list of high performing community schools, and scores well above the state average under the criteria that determines the State Report Card. Addressing school climate can drastically improve student achievement. (p. 2)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

2. Existence of a charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency.

The existence of a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency and how the charter or performance contract requires student performance to be measured in the charter school pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school

Strengths:

The applicant provides a charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency. For example, the applicant states Arts & College Preparatory Academy (ACPA) has had a contract with the

authorizer, St. Aloysius Orphanage, for seven years (and with the previous authorizer for four years prior). (pp. 14, 22)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

- (1) Substantial progress in improving student academic achievement (25 points);
- (2) High levels of parent satisfaction (5 points); and
- (3) The management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school (10 points).

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

General:

The applicant does a very good job demonstrating student achievement. The area regarding high-levels of parent satisfaction needs to be strengthened.

Reader's Score: 38

Sub Question

1. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

- (1) Substantial progress in improving student academic achievement (25 points);

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates substantial progress in improving student academic achievement. For example, the applicant provides data illustrating students scoring Advanced or Accelerated on Statewide assessments at ACPA, Similar Schools, and Statewide. Data show ACPA students consistently outscore the students in both categories in every subject area. For instance, in 2012, the percentages in reading were 67%, 53%, and 30% for ACPA, the State, and similar schools respectively. In 2011, the reading rate for ACPA was 58%, the State's rate was 54%, and the rate for similar schools was 33%. ACPA outperforms others and demonstrates an increase in its' own performance over the years. (p. 25) The graduation rate for ACPA was higher than the rate for similar schools

Sub Question

and the State of Ohio in general for 2009, 2010, and 2011. Each year ACPA's graduation rate was at or above 90%, while the statewide rate was between 81%-85%. A total of 91% of ACPA's class of 2012 graduated in four years, as did 97% of students in the class of 2013. (p. 25)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

2. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

(2) High levels of parent satisfaction (5 points); and

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

Strengths:

The applicant provides some evidence of the levels of parent satisfaction. For example, the parent Association holds monthly meetings, parents volunteer throughout the year. Additionally, student retention and re-enrollment rates show parents continue to support the campus. For instance, enrollment figures for the 2013-14 school year show 93% of 9th graders will be returning as 10th graders, 86% of 10th graders will be returning as 11th graders and 91% of 11th graders will be returning as 12th graders, for an overall retention rate of 90%. (p. 28)

Weaknesses:

The applicant fails to provide qualitative assessment results or data from school report cards enabling the measurement of the views of parents in respect to the school's climate, the staff, school activities, environment, and school overall. Without this information it is difficult to determine if parents are truly satisfied with the campus. (2 points not awarded)

Reader's Score: 3

3. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

(3) The management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school (10 points).

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant clearly illustrates the school has the management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school. For example, the applicant indicates ACPA is audited annually by the auditor of State or a designee, and has never been cited for a Finding for Recovery. ACPA has consistently received commendations from the Auditor for their excellence in financial management. The school has \$700,000 in the bank, and is currently financing an expansion project, enabling the school to serve 100 additional students. (p. 30) ACPA has past experience successfully managing competitive federal grant awards and compliance with all rules and regulations regarding use of funds, achievement of project objectives, reporting, and compliance for federal awards including: Title I, Free & Reduced Lunch, Safe and Supportive Schools, 21st Century, Charter School Planning and Implementation, and Charter-District Collaboration. The current superintendent has over thirty years of administrative experience, the majority in high poverty, urban schools, and all principals have prior experience as classroom teachers. (pp. 30-31)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

4. Dissemination strategy.

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

The applicant comprehensively demonstrates how the proposed project will be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies. For example, the applicant states a website will be built to house and advertise all materials related to the program as well as serve as a "home base" for all social marketing. (p. 33) The website will feature a link and contact form to a monitored "help line" for teachers, administrators or anyone concerned about their school climate. Project partners will also house links to the website as well as advertise the school climate helpline. Materials will be made available at all conferences as well as through the professional development opportunities. Web traffic will be generated by state and national conference presentations, radio advertising, and through work with the Ohio Department of Education's office of Safe and Supportive Learning Environments. (p. 33)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

Quality of project personnel.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (3 points); and

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator (11 points).

General:

The applicant could strengthen this sub criteria #1 by providing a more detailed description regarding how it encourages applications for job vacancies from underrepresented groups.

Reader's Score: 13

Sub Question

1. Quality of project personnel.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (3 points); and

Strengths:

The applicant provides a limited description regarding their intention to encourage applications from underrepresented groups. For example, the applicant states ACPA works hard to seek out diverse staff. Outreach activities include collaborations with area universities including Ohio State University's School of Education, and through extensive community partnerships and outreach. (p. 34)

Weaknesses:

The applicant fails to clearly describe the ways in which they advertise position vacancies that encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. The applicant simply provides a breakdown of various ethnic subgroups of their current workforce (p. 34). Also, the applicant fails to detail why or how area universities including Ohio State University's School of Education, and other community partners would help to ensure the applicant has or attracts a diverse workforce. (p. 34) (1 point not awarded)

Reader's Score: 2

2. Quality of project personnel.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers--

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator (11 points).

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator for its Project Director. For example, the applicant states the Project Director founded and manages a grassroots community organization (Queer Behavior) for underrepresented and marginalized groups, has conducted fundraising for the Human Rights Campaign and Environment Ohio, and received training from national and state experts on safe schools. The Project Director has a Bachelor's of Arts in Sociology from the Ohio State University, has helped to develop many important school partnerships and has been instrumental in the design and implementation of many of the programs and educational experiences that strengthen the school culture of diversity and inclusiveness. He has also managed statewide campaigns, has experience presenting at Safe

Sub Question

Schools conferences. (pp. 34-35)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 11

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the management plan.

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

Strengths:

The applicant provides a timeline for the proposed project noting responsibilities, timeframes, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. For example, the applicant states quarterly meetings with the Project Team will be held to review progress on activities, adherence to timeframes and to budgets. A fiscal review will be held twice a year. (pp. 35-37)

Weaknesses:

The applicant's timeline is extremely vague, with the applicant illustrating wide-ranges timeframes for the completion of activities (e.g. 0-6 months into the project, 6-9 months into the project). It is difficult to pinpoint the anticipated progression of the project activities and progress toward objectives. (5 points not awarded)

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1--Improving Achievement and High School Graduation Rates [Rural Students, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners]

This priority is for 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 this notice) and college enrollment rates for students in rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice).
- (b) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for students with disabilities.
- (c) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for English Learners.

Note: This competitive preference priority encourages the applicant to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) to which it is well-suited to respond. Applicants will receive up to four points for how well they address priority areas (a) through (c). Applicants may choose to respond to one, two, or three of the priority areas but, in order to receive the maximum available points, it is not necessary for applicants to respond to more than one priority area.

Strengths:

(a) The applicant clearly illustrates a plan to accelerate learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates for students in rural local educational agencies. For example, the applicant states ACPA partners and collaborates with a variety of different types of LEAs, including districts and schools in rural areas, such as Wheelersburg, Ohio. The partnerships and collaboratives deals with rural students in Ohio being physically attacked because of their differences. (p. 6)

(b) The applicant does not compete for this Competitive Priority.

(c) The applicant does not compete for this Competitive Priority.

Weaknesses:

(a) No weaknesses noted.

(b) The applicant does not compete for this Competitive Priority.

(c) The applicant does not compete for this Competitive Priority.

Reader's Score: 4

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity.

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

Note: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project would help bring together students from different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body, or to avoid racial isolation.

Note: For information on permissible ways to address this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice entitled, *Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools* at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf>.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly illustrates a project that is designed to promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation. The school was founded to specifically address the issues of cultural, school climate, ethnic, racial, as well as students with sexual identity and sexual orientation issues which other schools are typically ill-equipped to address. (pp. 1-2, 8-9)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 3

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3--Support for Military Families.

This priority is for projects that are designed to address the needs of military-connected students (as defined in this notice).

Note: For purposes of this program, projects meeting this priority must target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. The applicant's recruitment and admissions policy must comply with its State charter school law and CSP program requirements (for information on admissions and the lottery under the CSP, see Charter Schools Program Nonregulatory Guidance at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html>).

Strengths:

The applicant does not compete for the Competitive Priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not compete for the Competitive Priority.

Reader's Score: 0

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Arts & College Preparatory Academy (U282C130006)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Dissemination Activities	15	15
2. Charter Existence	1	1
3. Demonstration of Success	40	39
4. Dissemination Strategy	15	15
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Quality of Personnel	14	13
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	7
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority		
Competitive Priority 1		
1. Rural/SPED/ELL	4	3
Competitive Priority 2		
1. Promoting Diversity	2	2
Competitive Priority 3		
1. Military Families	3	0
Total	109	95

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 84.282C Dissemination - 1: 84.282C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Arts & College Preparatory Academy (U282C130006)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The quality of the proposed dissemination activities and the likelihood that those activities will improve student achievement.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the objectives for the proposed dissemination activities and the methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving those objectives

Strengths:

ACPA has demonstrated academic success with their programs, both academic and social. Sharing these practices will likely impact the target schools achievement. The dissemination activities begin with documenting existing programs that have been identified as norms-changing. (p. 19) Curriculum and materials will be developed and aligned to the needs of partner schools (p. 20) Professional development will be available for schools and presentations at conferences are included in the planned activities. (p. 21) Objectives and methods for determining progress are included in the explanation and will increase the success of the project. (p.22)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

2. Existence of a charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency.

The existence of a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency and how the charter or performance contract requires student performance to be measured in the charter school pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school

Strengths:

ACPA has a contract with their authorizer. The school is held accountable for student performance on state assessments. The performance goals include measures beyond the assessments and include graduation rates, attendance and college acceptance rates. (p. 22) A certificate from the Ohio Secretary of State was included as evidence of good standing.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

3. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

- (1) Substantial progress in improving student academic achievement (25 points);
- (2) High levels of parent satisfaction (5 points); and
- (3) The management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school (10 points).

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

General:

ACPA has overcome the stumbling blocks often associated with start-up charter schools. Their students are showing academic achievement; there is consistent leadership and succession planning; the school has \$700,000 in reserve and clean audits. All of which are indicators of overall success.

Reader's Score: 39

Sub Question

1. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

- (1) Substantial progress in improving student academic achievement (25 points);

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

Strengths:

ACPA has progressed from "Academic Emergency" on their first rating to an "Excellent" rating in recent years. (p. 22) The percent proficient for all test areas exceeds the state average; in some areas by more than 30%. (p. 23) The comparison holds true for the similar schools as well. Extensive data was provided regarding achievement, graduation rates, and college enrollment; which are higher overall than the state. (p. 23 – 25)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

2. Demonstration of success

Sub Question

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

(2) High levels of parent satisfaction (5 points); and

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

Strengths:

The application provided student retention and re-enrollment rates as evidence of parent satisfaction. The rates are both above 85%. Additional support for satisfaction includes parent testimonials, high referral rates, and parents providing transportation to the school. (p. 28)

Weaknesses:

Specific evidence related to parent satisfaction was not included. The data provided requires inferences to be drawn.

Reader's Score: 4

3. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

(3) The management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school (10 points).

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

Strengths:

ACPA is independently operated, has strong financials, and consistent leadership. (p. 30) Evidence of the financial practices include clean annual audits and financial reserves. (p. 30) This is an indicator of their ability to overcome the financial challenges that cause a majority of charter schools to close. The board has paid attention to succession planning and development of their leadership.(p. 31) The school will be expanding to include additional students, demonstrating a demand and interest in the school.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

4. Dissemination strategy.

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the

proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

Overall the strategies are a blend between traditional dissemination strategies and innovative techniques. In addition to training and websites, social media - such as Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram, will be used to disseminate their materials. (p. 42) Their plan to have a "help line" for teachers and administrators on the web site is a unique idea for professional development, and will help personnel successfully implement the strategies when they return to their own schools. (p.33) Participation in state and national conferences will share the project beyond the target schools and personnel.

ACPA has already established partnerships with several schools and demonstrated leadership and success in the area of school climate illustrating the schools readiness to implement the project. (p. 32)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. Quality of project personnel.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (3 points); and

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator (11 points).

General:

The project personnel have strong credentials for overseeing the project. The leadership team has created a school that has wide diversity among the staff and reflects the vision for this project.

Reader's Score: 13

Sub Question

1. Quality of project personnel.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (3 points); and

Sub Question

Strengths:

Data related to the diversity of the staff was included. Methods for increasing diversity include community partnerships and work with universities. (p. 34) The school's commitment to diversity is illustrated through the variety of activities focusing on individuality, cultural differences, and identities. (p. 2)

Weaknesses:

Including an explanation of the hiring process and /or expectations for employees would demonstrate that the school "encourages applications" from underrepresented groups.

Reader's Score: 2

2. Quality of project personnel.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers--

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator (11 points).

Strengths:

The project director has experience overseeing Federal grants (Safe & Drug Free) developing curriculum, and developing community partnership. (p. 34, 37-38) The project team is identified and responsibilities are included for their roles. (pp. 37-38) Additional areas or expertise in the team include data collection and analysis, instructional methods, and project development. (p.38) Resumes were included for the director and the evaluator.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 11

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the management plan.

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

Strengths:

The activities listed in the plan (p. 22) align with the dissemination strategies narrative and the budget request. They are tied to the objectives listed in the dissemination activities section (p. 19-21)

Weaknesses:

Measures for the objectives were not included and would improve the quality of the plan. The time frames are general in nature (0-6 months). It is unclear when these activities will actually occur. The plan includes the "Project Director" and a "Program Director". The Project Director role is defined, however Program Director is not. It is unclear who is responsible for those activities. (pp. 36-37)

Reader's Score: 7

Priority Questions

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1--Improving Achievement and High School Graduation Rates [Rural Students, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners]

This priority is for 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 this notice) and college enrollment rates for students in rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice).

(b) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for students with disabilities.

(c) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for English Learners.

Note: This competitive preference priority encourages the applicant to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) to which it is well-suited to respond. Applicants will receive up to four points for how well they address priority areas (a) through (c). Applicants may choose to respond to one, two, or three of the priority areas but, in order to receive the maximum available points, it is not necessary for applicants to respond to more than one priority area.

Strengths:

ACPA currently partners with rural schools including Wheelsburg, OH and has stated the issues they will be addressing in their dissemination activities are issues in rural areas. (p.6) In addition to working with students that are disenfranchised the application states they will "specifically reach out to rural communities" where research shows there is a critical need.

Weaknesses:

Although the application clearly articulates that ACPA has worked with rural schools in the past it is not clear how ACPA is going above and beyond to specifically target partner schools in rural areas for this project.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity.

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

Note: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project would help bring together students from different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body, or to avoid racial isolation.

Note: For information on permissible ways to address this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice entitled, *Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools* at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf>.

Strengths:

Data demonstrating the diversity of ACPA, surrounding districts and the state is included. (p. 7) The project is specifically designed around promoting diversity and helping students appreciate diversity. (p. 8)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 3**1. Competitive Preference Priority 3--Support for Military Families.**

This priority is for projects that are designed to address the needs of military-connected students (as defined in this notice).

Note: For purposes of this program, projects meeting this priority must target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. The applicant's recruitment and admissions policy must comply with its State charter school law and CSP program requirements (for information on admissions and the lottery under the CSP, see Charter Schools Program Nonregulatory Guidance at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html>).

Strengths:

The applicant did not address this competitive priority.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this competitive priority.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/16/2013 01:06 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/20/2013 04:52 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Arts & College Preparatory Academy (U282C130006)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Dissemination Activities	15	15
2. Charter Existence	1	1
3. Demonstration of Success	40	38
4. Dissemination Strategy	15	12
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Quality of Personnel	14	12
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	8
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority		
Competitive Priority 1		
1. Rural/SPED/ELL	4	4
Competitive Priority 2		
1. Promoting Diversity	2	2
Competitive Priority 3		
1. Military Families	3	0
Total	109	92

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - 84.282C Dissemination - 1: 84.282C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Arts & College Preparatory Academy (U282C130006)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The quality of the proposed dissemination activities and the likelihood that those activities will improve student achievement.

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the objectives for the proposed dissemination activities and the methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving those objectives

Strengths:

They identified several existing and successful programs that would be disseminated and likely lead to improved student achievement - the Arts course that explores identity and community, the Care to Hope socio emotional bonding program, the Wednesday Workshops that integrate the arts into the curriculum within projects based units, among others (p. 19). They plan to develop lesson plans, strategies, and tips for educators to help them replicate this affective, positive climate changing curriculum (p. 20) and their curriculum will be available in both hard copy and electronic formats (p. 20). They include objectives and metrics for determining progress (p. 22) including surveys for measuring improved school climate and pre/post tests (p. 22). Their academic results are strong, as they outperform the state in reading, writing, and math (p. 23).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were identified.

Reader's Score: 15

2. Existence of a charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency.

The existence of a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency and how the charter or performance contract requires student performance to be measured in the charter school pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school

Strengths:

The school stated that they have an existing and appropriate contract with its authorizer for seven years, St. Aloysius Orphanage (p. 22). School performance goals as written into the contract where student performance is measured by state assessments, ongoing formative and benchmark assessments, and student/staff/parent satisfactions surveys. (p. 22)

Weaknesses:

No weakness was identified.

Reader's Score: 1

3. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

- (1) Substantial progress in improving student academic achievement (25 points);
- (2) High levels of parent satisfaction (5 points); and
- (3) The management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school (10 points).

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

General:

The school has impressive student achievement results, high retention rates, and has had consistent leadership.

Reader's Score: 38

Sub Question

1. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

- (1) Substantial progress in improving student academic achievement (25 points);

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

Strengths:

The applicant presented strong evidence included having high proficiency rates on state assessments in reading, writing, and math (p. 23-24), outperforming similar high poverty districts (p. 25), and having a higher graduation rate than statewide averages (p. 25). Also impressive was the fact that 76% of students in the graduating class of 2013 have been accepted to post secondary institutions. A high percentage of students took the ACT exam and their average score was higher than schools with similar populations (p. 27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were identified.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 25

2. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

(2) High levels of parent satisfaction (5 points); and

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

Strengths:

High retention rates speak to parent satisfaction. (p. 28) The provided a few positive testimonials. (p. 29)

Weaknesses:

No direct survey results on parent satisfaction were provided.

Reader's Score: 3

3. Demonstration of success

The extent to which the school has demonstrated overall success, including

(3) The management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school (10 points).

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide performance data (both school-wide and by subgroup) for the past three years on State assessments as compared to all students in other schools in the State at the same grade level, and as compared to other schools serving similar populations of students (while maintaining the appropriate standards that protect personally identifiable information).

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to provide its most recent State Report Card.

Strengths:

Their leadership has built a successful program, has extensive experience, and has been able to thrive financially by stating that they have a fund balance of over \$700,000. (p. 30) They are already expanding their facility to accommodate more students. (p. 30) Both the Principal and Assistant Principal were former teachers at the school speaking to commitment and continuity. (p. 31) The programs they already have developed that appear ready for dissemination speak to their viability and potential. (p. 31)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were identified.

Reader's Score: 10

4. Dissemination strategy.

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the

proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies.

Strengths:

The use of social media to get the word out about the resources and to disseminate resources should be effective. (p. 33) They also plan to do presentations at conferences (p. 33). They have already been disseminating their project to various schools and have become regionally recognized as a school climate leader. (p. 32)

Weaknesses:

The strategy for dissemination lacked details and possibly overly relies on social media and web technology. (p. 33) Their project plan speaks to hosting professional development opportunities but they did not provide further details about how these would occur. (p. 33)

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. Quality of project personnel.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (3 points); and

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator (11 points).

General:

Their staff consists of 43% of what would be considered underrepresented groups. (p. 34) Their commitment to diversity is evident throughout their application.

Reader's Score: 12

Sub Question

1. Quality of project personnel.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (3 points); and

Strengths:

Their staff consists of 43% of what would be considered underrepresented groups. (p. 34) Their commitment to tolerance and diversity is evident throughout their application.

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were identified.

Reader's Score: 3

2. Quality of project personnel.

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers--

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator (11 points).

Strengths:

The Grant Director has significant experience with the design and implementation of this program. He has been the principal since 2010. (p e7) The Project Director has been identified and has experience directing the Safe and Drug Free federal program and as a After School program director. (p. 34)

Weaknesses:

The Project Director has limited experience, only working at the school since August of 2012. (p. e6)

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the management plan.

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

Strengths:

The use of social media and the Web to market and disseminate project resources should be effective (p. 36). They included time frames and they also named the person responsible. (p. 35-37)

Weaknesses:

Significant in person professional development may be required beyond the multimedia website that will be created (p. 37) and there is a lack of detail anywhere in the application and management plan about how this will occur. They stated in their Project Plan that they would host frequent professional development opportunities but do not state topics and do not give any specific dates for these opportunities beyond stating that it would occur 12-24 months into the project (p. 37).

Reader's Score: 8

Priority Questions

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1--Improving Achievement and High School Graduation Rates [Rural Students, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners]

This priority is for 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 this notice) and college enrollment rates for students in rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice).

(b) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for students with disabilities.

(c) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for English Learners.

Note: This competitive preference priority encourages the applicant to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) to which it is well-suited to respond. Applicants will receive up to four points for how well they address priority areas (a) through (c). Applicants may choose to respond to one, two, or three of the priority areas but, in order to receive the maximum available points, it is not necessary for applicants to respond to more than one priority area.

Strengths:

Many rural LGBTQ students face isolation or worse (verbal or physical abuse) in rural communities and they intend to reach out to these students (p. 6) who often don't have access to LGBTQ clubs or shown positive representations of LGBTQ people, history and events. (p. 6)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were identified.

Reader's Score: 4

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity.

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

Note: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project would help bring together students from different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body, or to avoid racial isolation.

Note: For information on permissible ways to address this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice entitled, **Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools** at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf>.

Strengths:

Their project is specifically designed to promote diversity and build shared, common experiences (p. 8-9). They make efforts to make sure students of color have the opportunity to interact with more white students and more students from higher income, suburban and rural areas than if they had remained in their district school. (p. 7) They also weave underrepresented historical narratives into the curriculum which provides students from various backgrounds a historical identity which may promote civic participation. (p. 8-9)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were identified.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 3

1. Competitive Preference Priority 3--Support for Military Families.

This priority is for projects that are designed to address the needs of military-connected students (as defined in this notice).

Note: For purposes of this program, projects meeting this priority must target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. The applicant's recruitment and admissions policy must comply with its State charter school law and CSP program requirements (for information on admissions and the lottery under the CSP, see Charter Schools Program Nonregulatory Guidance at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html>).

Strengths:

No strengths were noted.

Weaknesses:

There was a lack of description of specific activities and support aimed at military families.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

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