

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



# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel 1: 84.282B

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

Applicant: The Greene School (U282B090006)

## Questions

### Summary Comments - Summary Comments

#### 1. Summary Comments

Reader's Score:

**Selection Criteria - The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.**

#### 1. The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the educational program to be implemented by the proposed charter school, including how the program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards, the grade levels or ages of students to be served, and the curriculum and instructional practices to be used.**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant proposes a charter high school that will open with eighty-four, 9th and 10th grade students and expand to serve 210 high school students with an Environmental Sciences, Leadership, and Technology curriculum. Scientific inquiry in environmental science will be used to teach all subjects and state content standards in an integrated way. The school will contract with Expeditionary Learning Schools for help with developing coursework and hands on experiential learning activities. Formative assessments will be used to develop Individual Learning Plans. (pp. 4-5)

The school year will be organized into trimester sessions. Intensive courses held between trimesters. (p. 12)

Students will be grouped heterogeneously. (p. 12)

#### **Weaknesses:**

Little detail has been given to indicate that the educational program is well developed. Much of the program information that has been supplied appears quite ambitious but not well developed. The scope of what the school hopes to implement is quite broad without much indication of a practical plan.

There are conflicting statements regarding the math curriculum. First the applicant states that it is to be developed, then that the school will work with the publisher, indicating that it will be purchased. (p. 15)

The applicant describes what Expeditionary Learning Schools offer, but does not describe how it will be incorporated into this school's educational program.

There is no time allotted for direct instruction of subjects such as reading. More specific detail is needed about curriculum for reading, writing, and math.

The applicant does not describe the specific needs of the targeted population and how this curriculum is designed to meet those needs.

Little detail is offered about the research base of this design.

There is too little detail provided about the way the virtual component will be integrated into the curriculum.

**Reader's Score:** 13

**Selection Criteria - The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.**

**1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.**

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

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

**Strengths:**

The authorizer oversees operation of the charter school. The charter schools in the state operate with autonomy from public school districts and have the authority to structure the school's curriculum, personnel policies, and other policies. Local rules relating to the operation of schools do not apply. Teachers are not members of the bargaining units. State regulations are able to be waived under the application process. Charter schools have autonomy over their budget and expenditures. (pp. 15-16)

If the district does not deliver per pupil funds in a timely manner, the charter schools have the protection of being able to receive funding directly from the state.

**Weaknesses:**

The charter is granted for 5 years which does not allow for long term contract negotiations for facilities. (cp. 14)

The relationship between the authorizer and the charter school is not adequately explored. Too little information is provided about the manner in which the authorizer oversees and affects the operations of the school.

**Reader's Score:** 9

**Selection Criteria - The extent of community support for the application.**

**1. The extent of community support for the application.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be informed about the charter school, and how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school.**

**Strengths:**

Parents, community members, public officials, and representatives of environmental organizations all spoke in support of the charter school during public hearings. Marketing materials have been distributed at environmental gatherings, area libraries, and a K-8 charter school. Print media and the Internet have been used to announce the school. Marketing materials will be translated into Spanish, French, and Portuguese. (p. 17)

The school will attempt to attract a student population which is more diverse than the district. (p. 20)

If more applications are received than available seats, a lottery will be held to ensure that all applicants have an equal opportunity to attend. (p. 20)

**Weaknesses:**

Although the school plans to be deeply involved in the community, there is no clear indication that the town leaders have expressed the same level of commitment to working with the school.

The applicant states that an urban high school has expressed interest in collaborating, but there is no evidence of that interest or level of commitment. (p. 19)

The school plans to be involved in ongoing dialogue about the future of education in the state, but this does not appear to be accompanied by any specific plan of action. (p. 19)

Much of the responsibility for ongoing community outreach will be placed upon the students. (p. 19)

Little information is given about the likelihood of finding a corporate sponsor for the alternative fuel shuttle the school proposes. (p. 20)

There is no indication of a commitment to link the environmental education program with the district as described. (e.21)

The applicant does not include letters of support. These would have been helpful as evidence of the extent of support for this charter school.

**Reader's Score: 12**

**Selection Criteria - The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.****1. The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the objectives for the charter school and how these grant funds will be used, including how these funds will be used in conjunction with other Federal programs administered by the Secretary, in meeting these objectives.**

**Strengths:**

The school is committed to increasing minority enrollment and to interact with at least one urban high school.

The applicant has set an ambitious goals that 100% of students will be academically proficient by 2014 and 20% of students will participate in advanced classes.

**Weaknesses:**

The objectives for the school appear to be based upon idealistic assumptions rather than practical application. For example, the applicant states that "Whenever students are engaged in projects that they know have real value to people.....their motivation to produce.....is very high." The applicant does not offer a research-based justification of this statement. (p. 23)

The academic goal is too long-term. There is no indication of ongoing assessment which will determine progress towards objectives, which will not be measured for 2 years in the case of incoming 9th grade students. (pp. 23-25)

Students will have to raise their own funding in order to participate in advanced or experiential classes. (pp. 27-28)

The objectives of the goal are broadly written and vague. They are not clearly measurable.

In objective #2, there is no information provided about the targeted population for which this school will expand educational opportunities.

The virtual technology component is not linked to the curriculum.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.****1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.****Strengths:**

Enrollment data will be used to determine minority enrollment. (p.26)

In the third year of the school, 20% of the junior class will participate in experiential, Outward Bound, or college level course. (p.28)

**Weaknesses:**

Little information is given about the details of the academic assessment plan. (pp. 23-24)

It is unclear what the measurement will be of the mentorship relationship with the middle school. Little detail is given about the nature of the relationship. (e.27)

The strategies for assessing the objectives are not clearly measurable or an indication of having met the objective. The third objective is that students will participate in an experiential class. The measurements include hosting symposia to introduce the availability of opportunities and writing grant proposals to fund the opportunities. Neither of these activities are a measure of assessing the objective. (e.28)

Objective #2 either is accomplished or it is not. There is no qualitative measure involved in the assessment.

There is a lot of information needed to determine the path toward achievement of the academic objectives. There is little indication that the applicant will use formative assessment to inform instruction.

It is unclear how the applicant intends to attract minority students.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Selection Criteria - The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives ...**

**1. The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives and improve educational results for students during and after the period of Federal financial assistance.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant shows some evidence of having the capacity to meet the objectives. The partnerships are key for the success of this school. If the school is able to leverage the partnerships appropriately and if it rigorously pursues the goals, it has potential to be successful in improving educational results.

A portion of grant money will be used to purchase equipment which will be used to implement the educational program. Additional grant funds will be used for professional development.

The applicant appears to be getting the program in place so that the school will be able to meet the objectives.

**Weaknesses:**

It is difficult to determine if the school will improve educational results because too little information is provided about the educational program. It is difficult to assess if a school will successfully meet objectives which are vague and not always measurable.

Programmatic elements have not been sufficiently explored. It is unclear how the technology activities will be integrated into the program to improve educational results.

Little information is provided about additional grants the school will be seeking. There is no specific information provided.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.**

**1. The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant states that parents and community members have agreed to be Director of the Physical Resources Committee, participate on the fundraising committee, and create a newsletter. Parents will be encouraged to volunteer and a Parent/Teacher Association will be established. (pp. 28-29)

Parents will be involved in students' educational program. The teachers will do a lot to learn about each student's family and life outside of school, in order to be able to best work with the child in school.

**Weaknesses:**

It appears that there will be a heavy reliance on the PTA for fundraising, enrichment programs, and event planning. (p. 29)

Although parents have volunteered for jobs, there is no indication that they have been involved in the planning or program design of the school.

There appears to be a heavy reliance upon parents to chair and participate on the board committees. (p. 31)

Without information about the demographics of the targeted population, it is unclear that this level of parent involvement is a reasonable parental involvement plan for his school.

Parental involvement is one-sided in this school. There are expectations that parents have to come and take responsibility for operational activities, which takes the emphasis off the student and academic work, as well as, the parent-teacher relationship.

There is little discussion about number of interested individuals. It is unclear how many people have been involved in the planning and program design process.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.**

- 1. The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director; and 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.**

**Strengths:**

The board has varied expertise, experience, and training which are relevant to opening and operating a charter school.

The school will seek out individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups to apply for employment in the school.

The applicant provided a list of qualifications for the Head of School. (p. 34)

**Weaknesses:**

There are conflicting criteria for the Head of School stated on page 33. In one place the person "must" have Principal certification. In another place it is not required.

It is unclear who the director will be for this project. There is little evidence of any experience in the start-up, curriculum development, or operation of a charter school.

More information is needed about the role of, and the personnel from, Expeditionary Learning Schools.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - The contribution the charter school will make ...**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant indicates an understanding of the need to serve special education students, as well as to remediate students who are struggling. The 2-week period between trimesters will provide an opportunity for one on one instruction for struggling students. (pp. 37-42)

The applicant indicates an awareness of the responsibility to accommodate the needs of special education students. The applicant provides a discussion of the process for addressing the needs of educationally disadvantaged students.

The school will be located on a college campus and indicates a partnership with the Audubon Society.

**Weaknesses:**

It is difficult to determine what contribution this school will make in assisting students to achieve academic standards. The plan is vague and very broad. Too little information is offered about the specifics of the educational plan and the strategies that will be used to implement it.

The anticipated needs of the targeted population are not addressed.

The school will use an inclusion model for special needs students. There is little information provided about options which will be made available for whom inclusion in a regular education program is inappropriate.

The proposal lacks sufficient information to support the credibility of the educational plan. More detail is needed to determine the contribution this school will make in assisting students to achieve academic achievement standards.

**Reader's Score: 12**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Greene School (U282B090006)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
1. QUESTION 1	0	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	0	0
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.</b>		
1. QUESTION 2	20	15
<b>The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.</b>		
1. QUESTION 3	10	8
<b>The extent of community support for the application.</b>		
1. QUESTION 4	20	17
<b>The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.</b>		
1. QUESTION 5	10	6
<b>The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.</b>		
1. QUESTION 6	20	11
<b>The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives ...</b>		
1. QUESTION 7	10	7
<b>The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.</b>		
1. QUESTION 8	10	6
<b>The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.</b>		
1. QUESTION 9	10	7
<b>The contribution the charter school will make ...</b>		
1. QUESTION 10	20	14
<b>Sub Total</b>	130	91
<b>Total</b>	130	91

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel 1: 84.282B

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

Applicant: The Greene School (U282B090006)

## Questions

### Summary Comments - Summary Comments

#### 1. Summary Comments

##### General:

The applicant proposes a hand on environmental science model for students in high school. The charter school will work in conjunction with a local university and the Audubon Society to provide students with real life experiences and training. Small learning communities will be utilized to help meet the needs of all students.]

Reader's Score: 0

### Selection Criteria - The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.

#### 1. The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the educational program to be implemented by the proposed charter school, including how the program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards, the grade levels or ages of students to be served, and the curriculum and instructional practices to be used.**

##### Strengths:

The applicant will provide high school students with a scientific inquiry approach utilizing an integrated curriculum designed around environmental science issues. Pg. 1

Through an educational service provider, the applicant will work to develop the curriculum based on state requirements and grade span expectations. Pg. 2

The curriculum will be an integrated approach to solving environmental problems. The examples cited in the narrative have grade span expectations from all major subjects included in the plans. Pg. 2-6

The schedule proposed by the applicant utilizing trimesters with time in between each trimester for enrichment or remediation will provide much needed support for students who are struggling. Pg. 12

The small heterogeneous groups that the students will be assigned will be beneficial to meeting the prescribed state requirements.

##### Weaknesses:

It would have been helpful if the applicant would have addressed the inclusion of a time for direct instruction in specific subject areas. The curriculum, as outlined in the narrative, does not appear to have that time or delivery system available. This could be troublesome because the reading and writing grade span expectations will probably need some very specific instructional time.

More specificity relating to the curriculum that will be used would make the application stronger. There is also no specific mention of social studies nor any specific curriculum, just a promise to work with the consultant to develop inquiry based curricula.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.**

**1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.**

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

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant is sponsored by the state department of education and has complete autonomy for school operations including fiscal responsibilities. Pg. 15-16

The state law provides flexibility from many of the state statutes through waivers in the application process. Once the school is operation, additional flexibility can be obtained through the amendment process. Pg. 15-16

While the state department of education recommends the approval of a charter application, the actual oversight of the charter is through the Board of Regents. Pg. 14-15

According to the narrative, the charter school is not bound by any contracts or decisions made by the local school district relative to services or supplies. Pg. 17

**Weaknesses:**

The state law only provides for the granting of a five year charter. This limited time period is difficult for the charter school when attempting to obtain permanent facilities. Pg. 14

Because the funding for this charter school will come through the local school district, the charter school with be charged a 5% fee for indirect support. If the funding came directly from the state, the charter school would save that 5% fee. pg. 17

**Reader's Score: 8**

## **Selection Criteria - The extent of community support for the application.**

### **1. The extent of community support for the application.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be informed about the charter school, and how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school.**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant has distributed pamphlets to area libraries and at various community gatherings. In addition, the applicant has an active website and listserv for the dissemination of information. The applicant has plans to provide the printed literature in languages other than English, as appropriate to the population. Pg. 18

By visiting the local middle and high schools, the applicant will attempt to encourage students from all different backgrounds to attend the charter school. Pg. 20

The applicant states that parent nights, information breakfasts, and coffee hours will be hosted to further inform parents of the opportunities at the charter school. Pg. 30

#### **Weaknesses:**

While the application discusses community support from the university and the Audubon Society, there are no letters of support provided. Because the charter school will be located on the university campus, a letter of support would have been an added strength.

**Reader's Score: 17**

## **Selection Criteria - The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.**

### **1. The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the objectives for the charter school and how these grant funds will be used, including how these funds will be used in conjunction with other Federal programs administered by the Secretary, in meeting these objectives.**

#### **Strengths:**

The objectives listed in the narrative are ambitious. The applicant wishes to utilize the NCLB targeted proficiency levels of 100% proficiency by 2014. This is especially ambitious given the fact that the applicant understands the placement of special needs students and their limited abilities with regard to curriculum. While utilizing small learning communities and Individualized Learning Plans the charter school hopes to make this goal attainable. Pg. 23

The objective indicating 20% of the student population will participate in advanced classes by the third year of operation is very respectable. The applicant states throughout the narrative that students will be encouraged to achieve their best and this is a way to demonstrate that students are indeed reaching for the highest possible goals. pg. 28

The applicant has good strategies for use of the grant funds that include professional development opportunities as well as acquisition of equipment. In addition, the applicant has awareness of other federally funded programs that are available. Pg. 27

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant demonstrates awareness of additional federal programs, there is not evidence of an understanding of how those programs will mesh with this grant. Pg. 27

It is unclear how technology described in the narrative is related to the curriculum.

**Reader's Score: 6**

**Selection Criteria - The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.****1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.****Strengths:**

The strategies outlined in the narrative give well thought out benchmarks in which to judge achievement of the objectives. Methods described, including small learning communities and the use of ILPs, lend themselves to successful completion of the objectives. Pg. 23-29

Benchmarks indicate the percentage of students that will participate in advanced programs by the third year of the charter school's operation. This will be an easy target to assess. Pg. 29

The assessment of objectives is based on annual measures from the state testing program and from other indicators such as minority enrollment and student enrollment in advanced classes.

**Weaknesses:**

It is unclear how the use of computer software for video conferencing will help attract minority students. While this feature will certainly open the world to the students attending the charter school, there is not sufficient justification that this will increase minority group enrollment. Pg. 27

It would be beneficial to have some assessment throughout the year to assist in monitoring progress towards the goals. The applicant should not rely solely on information received from the state department and other reporting devices to monitor success. Adjustments should be made during each school year as students master or fail to master the given objectives.

**Reader's Score: 11**

**Selection Criteria - The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives ...****1. The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives and improve educational results for students during and after the period of Federal financial assistance.****Strengths:**

The applicant will use a portion of the grant monies to purchase equipment that will be in use long after the grant period ends. Once these purchases are made, the equipment will not need to be replaced for quite a few years. This will allow the applicant to use state provided money to continue the program. Pg. 28

A portion of the grant will be used for professional development of the teaching staff. This will ensure that as the grant period ends the school will have individuals in place that understand the mission of the charter school and are able to pass that knowledge on to newcomers. Pg. 26

**Weaknesses:**

The narrative states that additional grants will be used after the federal grant period ends. It would be beneficial to have specific information on what types of grant programs will be considered and in what way they will enhance the program.  
Pg. 26

**Reader's Score:** 7

**Selection Criteria - The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.**

**1. The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school.**

**Strengths:**

Several parents and/or community members have stepped up during the planning phase to work with specific areas of the charter school. One individual will direct the physical resources committee, several have volunteered for the fundraising committee, and another will produce a newsletter. Pg. 29-30

**Weaknesses:**

While the applicant states they are continually networking to find additional people to help with the planning and design of the charter school, there is not definitive information about the actual number of interested individuals involved. It would be helpful to know how many individuals have been and will be assisting with the planning of this charter school.

**Reader's Score:** 6

**Selection Criteria - The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.**

**1. The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director; and 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.**

**Strengths:**

The board members have a variety of pertinent experiences that will help assure the many different areas of operations are covered well by people who are knowledgeable in these areas. Pg. 31-33

The narrative states that individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups will be encouraged to apply for positions within the charter school. The charter school will make a concerted effort to reach out to these individuals through targeted advertising. Pg. 34

Although a school leader is not named specifically, there is a comprehensive list of qualifications provided. These qualifications are appropriate for the job as described in the narrative. Pg. 34-35

**Weaknesses:**

It is evident that the Expeditionary Learning group will have a significant impact on the charter school. Since this company will assist the charter school in selecting the principal and faculty, it would have been advantageous to have more information about Expeditionary Learning; how the educational pedagogy relates to the objectives of the charter school, how much experience the company has had working with charter schools. Pg. 2

**Reader's Score:** 7

**Selection Criteria - The contribution the charter school will make ...**

- 1. The contribution the charter school will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve to State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.**

**Strengths:**

The very nature of the charter school design lends itself to positive assistance for educationally disadvantaged students, whether they are special education students, English Language Learners or slow learners. By offering small group instruction and a flexible curriculum, students of all ability levels can have their educational needs met. Pg. 38

A portion of the grant funds will be utilized to train staff members as to how to use the inclusion model in order to assist students that are educationally disadvantaged. Pg. 39

The applicant will offer intervention courses during the two week break between trimesters to allow students who are struggling to enroll in remediation classes to help them catch up on their skills.

**Weaknesses:**

While the charter schools hopes to educate students using the inclusion model, there is not sufficient discussion surrounding the other options that will be utilized, if necessary, in the event that inclusion is not enough.

**Reader's Score:** 14

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Greene School (U282B090006)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
1. QUESTION 1	0	
<b>Sub Total</b>	0	
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.</b>		
1. QUESTION 2	20	14
<b>The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.</b>		
1. QUESTION 3	10	9
<b>The extent of community support for the application.</b>		
1. QUESTION 4	20	15
<b>The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.</b>		
1. QUESTION 5	10	7
<b>The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.</b>		
1. QUESTION 6	20	10
<b>The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives ...</b>		
1. QUESTION 7	10	7
<b>The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.</b>		
1. QUESTION 8	10	6
<b>The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.</b>		
1. QUESTION 9	10	6
<b>The contribution the charter school will make ...</b>		
1. QUESTION 10	20	13
<b>Sub Total</b>	130	87
<b>Total</b>	130	87

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel 1: 84.282B

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

Applicant: The Greene School (U282B090006)

## Questions

### Summary Comments - Summary Comments

#### 1. Summary Comments

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.

#### 1. The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the educational program to be implemented by the proposed charter school, including how the program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards, the grade levels or ages of students to be served, and the curriculum and instructional practices to be used.**

#### Strengths:

The curriculum design is clearly specified and described with detail. The curriculum is clearly linked to state-level content standards. Teaching and learning practices and their linkages back to the curriculum are explored, providing a clear indication of how students will be learning in the school.

Curriculum and instructional practices are clearly linked to the overall goals of the school. Innovative practices are used to deliver quality learning experiences that are well suited to the age group being served.

#### Weaknesses:

It would have been helpful if the applicant had included details about how the curriculum was designed with the needs of the targeted student population in mind. It would have also been helpful if the applicant had included more information about the research base underlying the adoption of the curriculum.

More detail is needed to help answer the question of why this approach has been developed and how it is suited to the students to be served.

Reader's Score: 14

**Selection Criteria - The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.**

**1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.**

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

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

**Strengths:**

The school is its own LEA (page 15) and has significant autonomy over its own budget and operations. The school will operate independently of the local school district and staff are not members of school district bargaining units (page 15).

Infrastructure needs such as transportation and special education services can be accessed.

Waivers and flexibility under areas of state law exist for the charter school. Protections are built in to ensure timely flow of funds from the state to the school.

**Weaknesses:**

The term of the charter is five years (page 14), which could inhibit the school's flexibility to operate with complete and unfettered autonomy. Additional conditions of the charter itself were not discussed, making it difficult to determine any contractual obligations that could interfere with school autonomy. In addition, the school's relationship with its authorizer was not explored in any detail.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Selection Criteria - The extent of community support for the application.**

**1. The extent of community support for the application.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be informed about the charter school, and how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school.**

**Strengths:**

Specific data about community support was provided. Dozens of community members and parents participated in public hearings, along with nine environmental organization representatives (page 18). 100 names were included in a petition supporting the school (page 18).

Ongoing information in the form of print and web communications is being conducted. Plans have been developed for involving the community in the future life and work of the school (page 20).

A partnership with the Audubon Society is in place.

**Weaknesses:**

No letters of support for the grant were provided. Could you elaborate why this would have been helpful especially since it was not a required component of the application?

More specific information about parental demand for the school would have been helpful. Although strong community resources have been contributed to the project, specific enrollment projections have not been provided or preliminarily assessed through specific parent opinion surveys or focus group work.

It would be of benefit to have parents involved in the specific design of the school's curriculum and vision, rather than simply involving them in fundraising and outreach. There is little information about the student population to be served, and it is not clear if the parents that are involved are representative of the demographic makeup of that population.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**Selection Criteria - The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.****1. The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the objectives for the charter school and how these grant funds will be used, including how these funds will be used in conjunction with other Federal programs administered by the Secretary, in meeting these objectives.**

**Strengths:**

An ambitious student performance objective that is clearly related to NCLB requirements has been provided (page 23). This objective is particularly rigorous given the challenges facing secondary schools and, if attained, will serve as an interesting model.

Advanced and experiential coursework for pupils and objectives related to diversity of student population are included, introducing a virtual/technological component to the school's work.

**Weaknesses:**

It is not clear why or how Objective #2 related to diversity (beginning on page 26) has been developed. No information about the anticipated characteristics of the student population has been provided, so it is impossible to determine the ambitiousness of the objective. In addition, the use of virtual/technology components were not clearly described in the earlier curriculum sections of the proposal, raising questions about how they will be woven into proposed teaching and learning practices.

Objective #3 (beginning on page 28) is also difficult to assess as no information about anticipated student population has been offered. At first glance, having only 20% of students participating in this type of advanced and experiential programming seems low. On the surface, this objective lacks ambition.

**Reader's Score:** 7

**Selection Criteria - The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.**

## 1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.

### Strengths:

Objective #1 uses standardized state assessments and includes some notion of interim benchmarks. Portfolio work is also included, along with senior exhibitions.

Objective #2 includes the use of objective data regarding demographic composition.

Objective #3 includes symposia, grant proposals/essays, and advanced/experiential learning outcomes.

### Weaknesses:

Objective #1 does not sufficiently include formative assessment in supporting students to attain goals. Multiple measures might also be used to assess growth toward this very ambitious objective.

Objective #2 does not assess the quality of the interactive curriculum programs or mentoring relationships. In addition, these programmatic components have not been effectively linked back to the curriculum described in this proposal.

Objective #3 does not address the quality of the activities that have occurred or link them back to the core components of the school's proposed curriculum. It merely checks that these activities have occurred without assigning or assessing their relative value.

**Reader's Score:** 10

## Selection Criteria - The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives ...

### 1. The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives and improve educational results for students during and after the period of Federal financial assistance.

#### Strengths:

The school appears to have the capacity - both internally and through external partnerships - to deliver a high quality program that can serve as a model. The rigorous pursuit of high-quality educational programming at the secondary level is a laudable and ambitious goal, and the curricular and programmatic components described, done well, are promising.

The use of funds for equipment purchases and professional development are promising.

#### Weaknesses:

The school appears to be including programmatic components that are not central to curriculum and instructional delivery. Attention to diversity, while laudable, should not lead to the inclusion of elements that will potentially diminish the experiences of children in the classroom. The virtual/technology components have not been sufficiently explored to demonstrate that they will add value and lead to the results described in Objective #1.

**Reader's Score:** 7

**Selection Criteria - The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.**

**1. The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school.**

**Strengths:**

Parental involvement activities are clearly articulated and demonstrate high levels of involvement. Teachers will use effective strategies such as enrollment interviews, surveys and portfolio conferences to learn about parent needs (page 30). Involvement in student work is an important and innovative concept that appears very credible and positive.

Parents have strongly supported fundraising and outreach efforts to date.

**Weaknesses:**

Given the lack of information about the demographics of the student population, it is difficult to assess the appropriateness of these strategies. Different outreach mechanisms are needed for individuals in various socioeconomic groups, and it is not clear that this has been fully addressed.

There is a limited attention paid to teacher/parent communications about student performance and behavior issues. This is a one-sided equation. The student should be at the core, with teachers connecting with parents on student issues instead of the parent simply being tapped as a volunteer.

**Reader's Score: 6**

**Selection Criteria - The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.**

**1. The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director; and 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.**

**Strengths:**

A strong board of directors is described, with a corollary committee structure that should prove effective. Credentials of board members appear strong and sufficient to allow for success.

Criteria for the Head of School are clearly presented and appropriate (beginning on page 34). Attention to diversity is noted.

**Weaknesses:**

The role, responsibilities, and relationship with respect to ELS is not explored. This is a significant gap.

The expectations for the Head of School are inconsistent; in one place, principal certification is required, but in another it is not. This could be a cutting and pasting error, which raises some questions about intent and capacity.

It is not clear who is directing the project right now.

**Reader's Score:** 6

**Selection Criteria - The contribution the charter school will make ...**

- 1. The contribution the charter school will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve to State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.**

**Strengths:**

The proposal indicates a high degree of awareness of the school's responsibilities to special education and at-risk pupils. A discussion of processes for addressing educationally disadvantaged students is included and appears both systematic and effective.

School leaders are sensitive and respectful of student differences.

**Weaknesses:**

Information about the anticipated needs and backgrounds of the student population to be served are not provided.

The inclusion model as described does not account for severe disabilities. If a student with significant impairments enrolls in the school, more extensive options are required.

The overall contribution this school will make to academic achievement appears positive, but more realistic, defined plans need to be included to demonstrate whether or not these ideas are likely to come to fruition. Specific information about community partnerships, letters of commitment, and full management information is required to show how anticipated results can be achieved.

**Reader's Score:** 13

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**Status:** Submitted  
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