

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

Status: Submitted

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

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Henderson Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090027)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
1. QUESTION 1	0	0
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.</b>		
1. QUESTION 2	20	12
<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	18
<b>The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.</b>		
1. QUESTION 5	10	10
<b>The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.</b>		
1. QUESTION 6	20	20
<b>The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives ...</b>		
1. QUESTION 7	10	8
<b>The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.</b>		
1. QUESTION 8	10	8
<b>The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.</b>		
1. QUESTION 9	10	10
<b>The contribution the charter school will make ...</b>		
1. QUESTION 10	20	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>111</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel 3: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Henderson Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090027)

## Questions

### Summary Comments - Summary Comments

#### 1. Summary Comments

##### General:

This is a well thought out school led by a founding board with strong and varied skills and by educators who have met such ambitious goals before. Applicant is aware of additional federal programs that can be leveraged to help the school achieve its goals. It is supported by a group of parents who have already chosen the school that this one is modeled after and who hope to end a 50 mile commute for their children.]

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:

Applicant offers extensive information on instructional practices (extended day, differentiated instruction and intervention and on planned implementation of Effective Schools strategies.

Applicant will meet state standards and teach the state curriculum (pg 1)

Applicant expands on curriculum by identifying academic products that require students to use multiple skills.

Grade level projects (pg 23) give evidence of rigor demanded of students.

##### Weaknesses:

Applicant offers a greater explanation of tutorials, interventions, and assessments than of the actual curricula.

Applicant fails to describe the state's curriculum, assuming it is a curriculum and not just standards. State curricula are usually designed for a wider population than just college bound students and the applicant fails to explain how the North Carolina curriculum will be made college preparatory.

Applicant indicates teachers will select texts for the lessons they will create. Applicant does not indicate how the school will address issues of alignment, sequencing, spiraling, etc. if teachers do not select the same text series.

Reader's Score: 12

**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:**

School board will delegate authority to school leader

Applicant explains the law and notes that the authorizer usually takes a helpful rather than punitive approach to problems. (pg 25)

Applicant is aware of reporting requirements, including to the students? home districts. (pg 29)

**Weaknesses:**

The school board is beginning as an operational board and the transition to a policy board is not discussed. The board is quite large so until it delegates authority to the school leader, making operational decisions could become cumbersome and slow.

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:**

Parents are on the board and serve on committees for planning, design, and implementation.

Planned messages and a list of outreach activities (pg 38-39) show applicant will continue to reach out to the community.

Local parents attending a distant similar school spoke in favor of the school at a state board of education hearing. (pg 45)

**Weaknesses:**

Outline on page 39 is topical and the applicant would benefit by giving more detail such as what partnerships will be leveraged, what civic groups will be addressed, and what information will be gathered and how will it be used or followed up on when canvassing neighborhoods.

Reader's Score: 18

**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:**

Academic goals (pg 22-23) to exceed both local and national averages show that the applicant plans to prepare students to enter arenas beyond their local community.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 10

**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:**

Applicant identifies assessments and frequency for grade level benchmarking within intervention programs (pg12)  
Applicant links specific assessments to specific goals and will use nationally recognized assessments as well as internally developed ones to track student progress. (pg 23)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 20

**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:**

Five year budget shows financial viability.  
Applicant understands its reporting requirements and will train all staff on compliance issues (pg 32).  
Founders' resumes show experience with successfully completing such projects and meeting goals.  
Applicant describes an detailed intervention program to catch academic problems before they become major stumbling blocks to student achievement.

**Weaknesses:**

Teachers have freedom to choose text books (pg 35). Applicant fails to address the possibility that individual teachers may select different text series and that could affect alignment and sequencing.

Applicant describes an expensive program but fails to give adequate description of how to continue affording things like summer school and extended day after the grant is complete.

Reaching a 95% passing rate for 8th graders on Algebra 1 may be a challenge to the maturity levels of some students. Applicant does not discuss the issue of student maturity in reaching this goal. Applicant does not discuss how the school might address the problem with its authorizer if, despite the plans for intervention, student maturity levels prevented the school from reaching this goal.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**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:**

Applicant will involve parents in the school once it opens (board members, parent association, committees), (pg 26) and has a strong plan for continued contact with parents (pg 27)

Parents can be presumed to have participated in the planning and design of the school since 50 of them advocated for the school at the state board of education.

**Weaknesses:**

Applicant gives scant information on how the school will reach out to parents other than the ones who are dissatisfied with the long commute to the KIPP school in a distant town, before school opens.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**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:**

Founding board brings a breadth of experience (pg 18) that the school can draw on for success. (attorney with a focus on social services, CPS with construction experience, teacher with literacy expertise, doctor with MBA, business person with community contacts, school administrator with curriculum expertise and start-up experience, etc.)

The Project Director demonstrated previous success with this type of clientele.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

**Reader's Score:** 10

**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:**

Applicant offers an extended explanation of tools, techniques, and daily schedule to help all student needing help. Applicant clearly describes the planned special education services. (pg 41-43)

**Weaknesses:**

Applicant indicates marketing tools will describe the school's capacity (pg 40)for serving special needs students. That could be interpreted to mean that there are aspects of special education that the school will not be able to serve in which case the school might state that it understands it would be required to pay for services from another source.

Applicant states the school does not expect many students to need to need special education services that can not be delivered through an inclusionary model, but fails to indicate what the school will do for those students who are not successful in a totally inclusionary model.

**Reader's Score:** 17

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Henderson Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090027)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
1. QUESTION 1	0	0
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.</b>		
1. QUESTION 2	20	9
<b>The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.</b>		
1. QUESTION 3	10	7
<b>The extent of community support for the application.</b>		
1. QUESTION 4	20	16
<b>The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.</b>		
1. QUESTION 5	10	9
<b>The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.</b>		
1. QUESTION 6	20	16
<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	8
<b>The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.</b>		
1. QUESTION 9	10	10
<b>The contribution the charter school will make ...</b>		
1. QUESTION 10	20	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>97</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel 3: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Henderson Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090027)

## Questions

### Summary Comments - Summary Comments

#### 1. Summary Comments

##### General:

This school has been approved to begin planning and expects to open in next year with 100 students in grade 4, then add a grade each year until it reaches grades 4-8. The application includes an explanation of the need for the school (a history of parents transporting their students to a KIPP school 50 miles away, a district 50% graduation rate, 80% free and reduced lunch) and a need for the funds (the state does not provide start up or planning funds). The application could be strengthened by assigning a qualified Project Director and being more specific about what the curriculum is, how the school day will be structured and what grant funds will purchase.

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:

English Language Proficiency Standards will be used for ELL students. The curriculum is described as demanding, college prep, and directed toward standards. The chart of pages 6-8 (Best Practice to Rationale to Henderson Collegiate) is an effective way to show how research will be put into practice to increase the probability of success.

##### Weaknesses:

A detailed description of the plans for the 9 hour day should be included. What students at or above grade level will be doing during the reading and math intervention time or the No Excuses Tutorial Program is not stated. No details are provided as to what the curriculum will actually be. A statement is made on page 35 that "teachers will have the autonomy to choose the textbooks they feel will best support the lessons they create". There are some conflicting statements regarding the basic organization of the school. Page 2 of the narrative states that students will be served in the regular classroom, page 9 states that interdisciplinary core courses will be taken by all students in heterogeneous groups, yet page 13 states that "students will be groups by reading levels" and page 14 "students will be groups by skills". If the grouping varies during the day for specific purposes, that should be stated. A typical daily schedule might clear up this confusion.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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 applicants appear to have a good understanding of their relationship to the authorizer, who has already approved their planning year and their reporting requirements. The applicants have initial approval and if they receive final approval, it will be for a period of 10 years with review each 5 years.

**Weaknesses:**

It would help to know what is required for the final approval in March 2010. The statement is made that the school has "complete flexibility" other than a few mentioned items (page 25), but then goes on to mention other things, such as employment, and refers to state laws without specificity, so it is not evident that they have a full understanding of their responsibilities.

**Reader's Score: 7**

**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:**

A 10 member board is already in place and reflects the ethnic makeup of the community. The recruiting plan (page 39) is comprehensive and designed to reach a wide variety of community members. The plan to use current student data beginning with the recruitment of students beyond the planning year is excellent.

**Weaknesses:**

There is no timeline or a delineation of who will be responsible for each activity on the recruitment plan (page 39).

**Reader's Score: 16**

**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 include intermediate steps, are stated in terms of increasing achievement each year in relation to students in the district, state, and nation. Cohorts are measured as well as individual students. Grade level projects are included as well as attendance and participation.

**Weaknesses:**

The expected outcomes for students are very high (ultimate measures on page 24) but do not address the students who are not in the school for all 4 years.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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:**

2.5 hours will be set aside every Friday for professional development and data analysis to assist in meeting the needs of students. A variety of measurements will be used to determine student academic achievement, including state tests, nationally normed tests, and projects. Both attendance and participation will be measured.

**Weaknesses:**

Because the curriculum is not clearly defined, the relationship between assessment and success in the curriculum is hard to determine. Parent participation will not be measured.

**Reader's Score: 16**

**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 board seems very well established, with planned staggered terms, a comprehensive list of planned committees, and policies related to Conflict of Interest, open meetings and public records laws, and a clear set of things the board will be empowered to do. A five year enrollment budget is referred to on page 29.

**Weaknesses:**

State general and categorical funding is not explained, just referred to as being sufficient. The budget is not well explained, for instance, on page 33 \$180,495 is requested for equipment, but very little detail is provided other than to state that a well equipped office staff pays huge dividends and teachers will be equipped with the necessary tools such as computer centers, LCD projectors, etc.

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:**

The chart of pages 27-28 presents a convincing and comprehensive plan for parent participation based on best practices. Specific plans are in place to work with families whose first language is not English, and all materials will be provided in Spanish as needed.

**Weaknesses:**

The statements on page 26 are not strong or specific, such as "encourage parents to participate as board members, "encourage parents to organize a Parents Association and are not aligned with the following chart. Parents do not appear to have been involved in the planning.

Reader's Score: 8

**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 organization chart on page 17 and the modified plan for the first year are both well thought out. The current board reflects both high quality and excellent diversity. The School Leader is well qualified for his position..

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 10

**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 description of the community establishes the need for a model such as this (page 1 of narrative), with high school graduation rate of less than 50%

The plan for ELL students is appropriate and is reflected throughout the design. Interventions are planned to meet the needs of students who are educationally disadvantaged, such as differentiation in the regular classroom, extended school hours, summer sessions, accelerated reading and math programs, and specific LEP instructional strategies. LEP strategies include those for socialization and native language levels. The philosophy of analysis rather than blame for student failure (page 6) increases the chances for success of all students.

**Weaknesses:**

The plan for special education has the feel of a separate system, and should use existing data that is available on all students, through the intake process and the multiple forms of evaluation that will be done as a part of the school structure. Most individual assessments are not valid if an interpreter is used (page 41). A team approach needs to be emphasized in the assessment and identification process and the development of the IEP, which includes the parent and the regular education teachers. It is not clear who will teach the special education students, as teaching is not listed among the coordinators' responsibilities, and related services do not include teaching.

**Reader's Score:** 15

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**Status:** Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Henderson Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090027)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
<b>Summary Comments</b>		
1. QUESTION 1	0	0
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.</b>		
1. QUESTION 2	20	10
<b>The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.</b>		
1. QUESTION 3	10	10
<b>The extent of community support for the application.</b>		
1. QUESTION 4	20	19
<b>The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.</b>		
1. QUESTION 5	10	9
<b>The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.</b>		
1. QUESTION 6	20	16
<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	10
<b>The contribution the charter school will make ...</b>		
1. QUESTION 10	20	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>105</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel 3: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Henderson Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090027)

## Questions

### Summary Comments - Summary Comments

#### 1. Summary Comments

##### General:

The application is largely quite good, but is significantly marred by confusing and contradictory curriculum explanations, and the probability that such curricula will lead to increased student achievement. In addition, while parental involvement is robust, it seems clear that parents were not involved directly in the planning process.

However, the application is particularly strong in ensuring that instructional practices address the specific and special needs of educationally disadvantaged students, and has in place a very good set of objectives and means for assessing those objectives.]

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 application provides information regarding a number of instructional practices and curricula to be used by the charter school. Using the North Carolina End of Grade Exams as an ultimate target for success (p. 4), the charter will utilize a number of successful pedagogies designed to provide focused and sequential instruction to significant numbers of at-risk students (p. 5). All incoming students will be given a diagnostic evaluation to learn their strengths and weaknesses (p. 12). The proposal provides a cross-walk of its instructional practices, matching "best practices" to "rationale" to the actions to be used at the charter school (pp. 6-8). Its curriculum is designed to be a college preparatory curriculum, and will offer additional advantages including an Extended Day schedule (p. p. 10-11), summer sessions (p. 11), tutorial programs (p. 11) and reading and math intervention programs such as Fountas & Pinnell and Accelerated Math (pp. 11-14). The school will also utilize programs to assist English Language Learner students (pp. 14-16).

##### Weaknesses:

The application would benefit from stronger and more highly refined curriculum descriptions, including a greater explanation of scope and sequence (pp. 11-16). An explanation of the programs selected needs to be less confusing. For example, while bowing in the direction of the National Reading Panel's recommendations for five critical areas in reading instruction, the application's explanation of the Fountas & Pinnell program to be utilized ignores the two critical areas of Phonemic awareness and phonics (pp. 12-14). The Accelerated Math program is a useful math intervention computer program (p. 14), but is no substitute for a coherent curriculum. Teachers will be permitted to choose their own

textbooks, which can make it hard to sustain excellence across the board

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 application correctly describes the flexibility afforded it, including automatic waivers from most regulations, fiscal autonomy, and personnel autonomy. The school is not an LEA and must report a variety of basic statistics to the State (p. 25).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 application has significant grass-roots community support, including support from parents who currently bus their children to a KIPP Charter school in a neighboring county (p. 45). The applicant intends to recruit supporters to engage in door-to-door recruiting, leverage partnerships with community-based organizations and speak at civic organizations. Additional actions include publication of brochures, advertisements, and radio and TV public relations (pp. 38-39). The application includes a detailed description of the lottery process, demonstrating a complete understanding of the law (pp. 20-23).

**Weaknesses:**

The application would benefit from a better elaboration of responsibility and follow up in the school's marketing plan.

**Reader's Score:** 19

**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 application proposes that educationally at-risk students in grades 4-8 will exceed the average statewide test results, including completion of courses such as Algebra I and Spanish I (p. 45). The academic objectives are quantifiable and rigorous, with ongoing improvement by each cohort of students attending the school (pp.22-23). The proposal also includes non-academic attendance and participation objectives (pp. 23-4).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant needs to better define the student cohort and the length of time utilized in the objective.

**Reader's Score:** 9

**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 school proposes to utilize assessment tests such as North Carolina's End of Grade tests and the Stanford 10, as well as portfolio assessments such as research papers and lab reports (p. 46). The assessment tests will measure passing gains by students, including the percentage who meet or exceed standards from fourth through eighth grade (p. 23). Improvement in the student cohort's national percentile ranking in reading, math, science and social studies will also be measured (p. 23). Average attendance and homework completion is also included as a measurement (p. 24).

**Weaknesses:**

The proposal would benefit from a clear flow chart to demonstrate the expected annual improvements for each student cohort. The application would benefit from utilizing a benchmark comparison against students of similar demographics, rather than the state-wide average (pp. 22-24).

**Reader's Score:** 16

**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 proposal's instructional methods are designed to meet the needs of the expected educationally at-risk student population (pp. 4-16), and the application demonstrates a clear understanding of the challenges and special demands

involved in educating an at-risk student population (pp. 22-24).

**Weaknesses:**

There is no indication in the budget that the school has properly budgeted for an extended day/summer session schedule, which will require funds beyond its ADM budget (budget). The curriculum remains unclear and the supplemental material (Fountas & Pinnell) is described in a contradictory fashion (pp. 11-14).

**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:**

The application has a robust schedule for involving parents in the school, including a cross-walk demonstrating best practices, the rationale for those practices and the intended fulfillment of those practices at the proposed charter (pp. 27-28). The school will create a Parents Association, with parents from each grade level to provide formal and informal feedback to the School Leader (p. 26).

**Weaknesses:**

There is no evidence that parents have been formally involved in the planning, program design and implementation of the charter school (pp. 26-28).

**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 applicant Board has a stellar range of experience, including significant experience in education, legal, financial and facilities necessary to organize a successful charter school (p. 18, Appendix). The Board's demographics are varied, reflecting the community, and it is committed to establishing hiring practices that encourage employment from traditionally underrepresented groups (pp. 46-47). The Project Director has significant educational experience, including experience at a charter school and with Teach for America (Appendix).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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 students from which the applicant charter school will draw currently have a high school graduation rate of less than 50 percent (p. 47). The target student population is overwhelming low income and is severely educationally disadvantaged (p. 3). The school's instructional methods and special programs are all aimed at assisting those students achieve to state academic standards (pp. 4-16).

**Weaknesses:**

The plan for special education should be part of the initial evaluation process (p. 18). Conducting assessments with an interpreter may not be permissible (p. 41).

**Reader's Score: 18**

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