

**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: St.. Louis Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090031)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Comments		
Summary Comments		
1. QUESTION 1	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Selection Criteria		
The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.		
1. QUESTION 2	20	18
The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.		
1. QUESTION 3	10	10
The extent of community support for the application.		
1. QUESTION 4	20	15
The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.		
1. QUESTION 5	10	8
The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.		
1. QUESTION 6	20	15
The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives ...		
1. QUESTION 7	10	7
The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.		
1. QUESTION 8	10	7
The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.		
1. QUESTION 9	10	7
The contribution the charter school will make ...		
1. QUESTION 10	20	15
Sub Total	130	102
Total	130	102

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Panel 2: 84.282B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: St.. Louis Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090031)

Questions

Summary Comments - Summary Comments

1. Summary Comments

General:

This planning grant application is for the St. Louis Collegiate. The charter school application is still being processed and as such, the authorizer/sponsor has not been identified yet. The charter school application is in response to a RFP issued through the Office of the Mayor. The school is proposed to open in August 2010.

The applicant, Ms. Rashed-Boone, is a Building Excellent Schools Fellow. Part of the fellowship requirement is that a fellow plan and submit a charter school application. She is the proposed Head of School.

The school will serve grades 5-12, beginning with a 5th grade. The school will target the neighborhoods of North St. Louis. It is not clear what the roll out is and if the school will be a full 5-12 within the 5 year charter period.

The school will act as own LEA for SpEd purposes.

Statements were made throughout the application but data and empirical evidence supporting those statements were not provided.

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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 curriculum is aligned to state and 'national' standards (national as in National Content Standards based on the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Council of Teacher of English, National Council for Social Studies, and the National Academies of Science, page e7).

The school will use the Missouri standards supplemented by the Massachusetts State standards. Grant funds will be used to develop content and performance standards.

The application states that all students will meet/exceed standards articulated by Missouri. Page e7

The school will use curriculum mapping (based on the Roxbury Prep model) tied to teacher-created assessments. Curriculum will be mapped to MO and MA standards to provide greater academic rigor.

More time on task is provided to core subjects; communication arts and math will have two classes each per day.

The application recognizes the population that school will serve and provides strategies of working with students that are academically behind (extended day; flex groupings; more time for CA and math; academic support classrooms; yr end remediation/acceleration; Saturday academies).

Weaknesses:

The application states that "our curriculum scope and sequence is modeled after those of the most successful and highest performing college-preparatory urban charter schools" page 13. No examples of the schools' scope and sequences are provided. Roxbury Prep and North Star Academy are mentioned (page e17) but specific detailed information on their programs is lacking.

It is unclear why the curriculum content from those schools will work with these students. No data is provided that substantiates these assumptions. In addition to naming the schools, their academic performance should have been provided.

It is unclear how a 'focus on mathematics allows for accelerated remediation of students who lack basic skills and preparation for a college-preparatory focus in high school" page e16. It is not explained how this will work.

The rollout of grades is ambiguous. If 12th grade will be served within the first charter period, graduation requirements should be stated.

Reader's Score: 18

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 quotes the law and statutes and clearly describes how the school will function under the charter law. Autonomy and flexibility are explained and understood.

The application clearly states board responsibilities and defines the differences between the board and Head of School. Proposed board resumes are attached.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses.

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 planning group has received nearly 200 signatures for school from prospective families and community members. Page e31

An extensive enrollment and recruitment policy is provided. The application procedures and lottery process are clearly described.

Weaknesses:

There are no letters of support or signatures provided. There is a lack of information on possible partner organizations and relationships with community based groups.

No data is provided on the intended population. There are several statements throughout the application about how poorly St. Louis students are doing (and it is assumed that they are) but no specific information is provided to support claims, especially in the targeted North St.Louis area.

Though the application has a detailed outreach and enrollment plan, with an older student population parents may become disengaged from their schooling. There were no strategies for outreach to these parents/families.

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:

There will be 100% in proficiency in the school. Page e41

Students will be proficient in ELA, math, and science. By or before year 5 of the school, 75% of students who have been enrolled in the school for two or more years will be proficient in ELA, math and science.

Non academic goals are also provided (org strength, enrollment and attendance).

The applicant clearly understands that population will be coming in at least 2 yrs below grade level.

Grant funds and other federal monies will be used to assist teachers through professional development training.

Weaknesses:

Though they may be realistic, the measured academic goals seem modest at 75% proficient in ELA, Math and Science. Academic goals fall short of the 100% proficient mandated by NCLB.

The school's mission is to prepare students for college. It is not clear how this is incorporated into goals.

The use of the grant funds and other federal dollars are explained but the only other program mentioned is Title 1. Title 1 funds must be applied for.

Non-academic goals are open ended and without any benchmarks.

No data is provided on the intended population or how they have performed under the District.

It is unclear of the grades to be served within the 5 year charter. If 9-12th grades will be served, high school objectives should have been included.

Reader's Score: 8

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 will use the MAP, NWEA MAP and teacher created assessments (tied to the curriculum map) to assess students.

The school planners provide detailed professional development support for teachers and emphasize the importance of teachers.

Weaknesses:

There is insufficient information on how often and when assessments will be administered and for what grades. It is assumed, but unclear, that all assessments and tests will be aligned to state standards.

There is little evidence that the school will continually evaluate the effectiveness of the academic program in response to student performance and will reallocate resources if necessary.

The non-academic goals are not really measureable or quantifiable.

It is unclear of the grades to be served within the 5 year charter. If 9-12th grades will be served, high school objectives should have been provided.

Reader's Score: 15

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:

There is a convincing likelihood that the school will improve the education results for students.

Given the intended student population, specifics on how to bring students to where they need to be addressed through extended time, year and remediation.

The school will support the development of teachers and will give teachers adequate planning time.

Weaknesses:

The focus of the academic objectives is only on middle school years. As the mission of the school is to prepare students for college, it is not clear how this will be done with the stated goals.

There is a lack of data/evidence to show how the Roxbury Prep and North Star Academy programs have fared. If St. Louis Collegiate adopts their programs and methodologies, a correlation between their student population and St. Louis Collegiate should be provided.

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 states that a data base of over 100 supporters has been created. Page 42

The school will seek partnerships and will conduct informational meetings with parents and community members.

The application realistically recognizes that it is more difficult to keep parents involved with older children. In order to foster involvement, the school will have academic advisor reach out to parents and provide parents with teacher phone extensions and emails. In addition, other means such as surveys, learning contract (not a condition of enrollment), family advisory council, will also be used to keep families engaged.

It is stated that 'community leaders, prospective families and business partners have been involved in our planning process from the inception of the school's idea". Page e 42

Weaknesses:

Though statements have been made of community/family support, there is no proof to substantiate these claims. There are no letters of support or petitions provided with the application. There is no indication that parents have been involved in the planning process.

A description of the community and the need for this school is lacking.

It is not clear if parents are welcomed and/or encouraged to become school board members.

Reader's Score: 7

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 is the proposed Head of School. She is a BES fellow with a TFA background. Ms. Rashed-Boone has experience as a teacher and has worked with students in St. Louis.

The Board resumes are provided and include local business leaders and educators.

The school will employ teachers who will be certified and highly qualified under NCLB.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear if Ms. Rashed-Boone has certification. Based on her resume, she is not trained in organizational leadership. As the HOS, it is unclear if she has enough pedagogical background to be flexible enough to deal with population.

No detailed job descriptions and qualifications are provided for the HOS, Dean of Academics, Business director, and staff.

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:

Language is included regarding Special Education students and ELL. The GEPA statement is clear and detailed. It is understood that the school's students will be below grade levels and educationally disadvantaged.

The application clearly describes the means and methodologies to be used in assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve to State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.

Weaknesses:

There was no data on the population to be served; it is assumed that as St. Louis students, the majority will be disadvantaged.

There is no substantive data provided on if this model will work with this population. No correlation is given between the populations of Roxbury Prep and St. Louis Collegiate.

Reader's Score: 15

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: St.. Louis Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090031)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Comments		
Summary Comments		
1. QUESTION 1	0	0
Sub Total	0	0
Selection Criteria		
The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices.		
1. QUESTION 2	20	17
The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.		
1. QUESTION 3	10	10
The extent of community support for the application.		
1. QUESTION 4	20	15
The ambitiousness of the objectives for the charter school.		
1. QUESTION 5	10	8
The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives.		
1. QUESTION 6	20	13
The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives ...		
1. QUESTION 7	10	6
The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement.		
1. QUESTION 8	10	7
The quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.		
1. QUESTION 9	10	7
The contribution the charter school will make ...		
1. QUESTION 10	20	15
Sub Total	130	98
Total	130	98

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - Panel 2: 84.282B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: St.. Louis Collegiate, Inc. (U282B090031)

Questions

Summary Comments - Summary Comments

1. Summary Comments

General:

A thoughtful and well written grant application. The application would have been stronger had it included more student, district and community demographic statistics to support the need and desire for the school.

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:

Although the curriculum has yet to be developed, the applicant provided content descriptions for four core academic areas and states that the rigorous curriculum will be aligned not only with state standards, but national standards. This standards based curriculum will guide instruction in all core areas. (page e7)

Instructional practices include a curriculum mapping process where teachers use state tests, state and district standards and national curricular resources to develop standards for each course. (page e12) Common board and daily lesson designs will also be used. (page e13)

Interim and year-end comprehensive assessments will be developed for each content area.

The applicant clearly described strategies for meeting the needs of all students. These strategies included flexible ability groupings, extended day, double periods of communication arts and math, daily academic support classrooms, year end remediation/enrichment and Saturday academies. (e20-23)

Weaknesses:

The applicant stated that the school will serve 5th-12th graders but did not describe how many students it intends to serve.

While stating that the school intends to meet the needs of some of St. Louis' most at-risk students, the applicant does not include any data to support this claim. There is no description of the student demographics or statistics for surrounding school districts.

Reader's Score: 17

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 demonstrates a thorough understanding of its state chartering law and recognizes that with flexibility and autonomy comes the requirement of higher accountability. (page e24)

The applicant is able to clearly articulate the agency/school relationship and provides detailed examples of the exemptions and waivers it will pursue once the charter is granted. (page e25-e26) The school will enjoy autonomy over all decisions pertaining to budgeting, curriculum and personnel. (page e26-e27)

Included in the application is a description of the applicant's organizational structure and clearly defined roles and responsibilities of the board and key personnel. (page e27-e29)

Weaknesses:

None

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 applicant clearly describes what it intends to do pertaining to student recruitment efforts, outreach programs and activities. These activities include maintaining student demographic data to ensure accurate accounting of racial and ethnic balance in enrollment, develop flyers and brochures in both English and Spanish for distribution in the community, organizing public relation efforts and visiting local elementary schools. (page e31-e32)

The applicant provided a clearly defined lottery, recruitment and admission policy on pages e20-e22 of the attachments.

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant states on page e31 that it has received over 200 signatures from prospective families and community members stating their belief in the need for the school, there were no letters of support from parents or community members to support this claim.

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:

The applicant provides three academic objectives, one organizational objective and one recruitment/enrollment objective for the planning, start-up and implementation of the school (page e35-e37)

A detailed budget narrative for year one grant funding is provided in the attachments.

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that in no way will grant funds supplant Title I funding that is projected to be available during operational years for funding a Title I reading and/or mathematics teacher or other federal entitlements that will provide funding for professional development post-startup. (page e36) Absent further explanation or description, it is not clear how the applicant intends to use grant funds in conjunction with other federal programs.

Reader's Score: 8

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 applicant provides a clearly defined strategy for assessing achievement of its enrollment and recruitment objective. (page e40)

The applicant demonstrates an understanding that the academic objectives will need to be adjusted and measured to meet current NCLB legislation, and Adequate Yearly Progress is dependent upon each sub-group meeting or exceeding the standards. (pages e39-e40)

Weaknesses:

Included in the academic objectives is the statement that students will be proficient and improved readers and writers, demonstrate proficiency and improvement of skills and content knowledge in mathematics and science. The applicant does not provide any data to support these objectives indicating at what level they anticipate students to arrive and what level of improvement will need to be shown to meet the objectives. It states that student scores will exceed the average percentage for District schools of similar demographic characteristics by at least 15%, but doesn't define what

demographic characteristics will be compared.

The applicant states it will be serving grades 5-12 yet only provides objectives, measurements and assessment information for its middle school years.

Objective D states the school will maintain organization strength by demonstrating fiduciary and financial responsibility. This will be measured by the school demonstrating sound allocation of resources and providing annual balanced budgets and consistent cash reserves. There is no description of a strategy for achieving this, nor any clearly defined indicators by which to measure success.

Reader's Score: 13

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 states that the ultimate goal is to prepare each of its students for success in college. (page e 41) The accountability objectives provided on pages e37-e40 are a starting point for improving the educational results of students and ultimately preparing students for success in college.

Weaknesses:

While the ultimate goal is to prepare each of its students for success in college, there is no discussion on what that preparation needs to be. The application lacks a description of what qualifications need to be met for college entrance, what characteristics students must possess to be successful in college, and how the school will successfully prepare each student.

The applicant does not include any discussion as to how it will continue to meet the objectives after the period of Federal financial assistance.

Reader's Score: 6

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 acknowledges that parental involvement declines during the school grades the applicant intends to serve and includes numerous strategies for engaging parents in their child's education. These strategies include a parent contract for excellence, a family advisory council and advisory programs and a description of each is included. (page e43-e44)

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that community outreach efforts have begun and that it has developed a database of over 100 supporters and that the school will seek partnerships to assist the Board of Trustees. There is no information provided as to who is included in the database or any letters of support offered.

It is also not clear to what extent parents and other members of the community have been involved in the planning and program design of the school, or what role they will play in its implementation.

Reader's Score: 7

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 clearly states its intention to hire staff with the appropriate state teaching certifications who are Highly Qualified in accordance with its state's NCLB requirements. It intends to make a consistent effort to diversify staff and actively encourage applications for employment from members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented. The applicant provides several strategies for reaching these groups. (page e46)

Weaknesses:

While the founding board chair and intended head of school has two years of teaching experience and one year as a project director for Teach for America, she has limited educational experience and no experience in school administration.

While the applicant recognizes its founding board to be a dedicated, diverse and entrepreneurial group of St. Louis professionals who are leaders in education, business and the community, no one on the board has an advanced degree in education, education management, curriculum, design, or special education. The most teaching experience among the group is two years in the Teach for America program.

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 applicant describes how it intends to comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613 (e)(1)(B) of IDEA and will assume all responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of IDEA are met. The applicant further describes the services to be provided, and a process for referring students. (page e4-e6 Project Narrative)

Weaknesses:

While the applicant recognizes it will be drawing from a heavily Hispanic population it does not describe how it will provide ELL services to its non-English speaking students.

There is no evidence that anyone working on the planning of this school possesses experience in working with a special needs population and has the educational background to provide guidance in this area.

There is no discussion of how the school intends to assist educationally disadvantaged students to achieve State academic content and achievement standards.

Reader's Score: 15

Status: Submitted

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