

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/18/2012 12:36 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Christopher House (U282B120032)

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

|   | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Questions</b>                          |                 |               |
| <b>Selection Criteria</b>                 |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of Curriculum</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Quality of Curriculum                  | 15              | 15            |
| <b>Assisting Disadvantaged Students</b>   |                 |               |
| 1. Disadvantaged Students                 | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Assessing Achievement</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Assessing Achievement                  | 15              | 15            |
| <b>Community Support</b>                  |                 |               |
| 1. Community Support                      | 8               | 8             |
| <b>Parental and Community Involvement</b> |                 |               |
| 1. Parental Involvement                   | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Quality of the Personnel</b>           |                 |               |
| 1. Quality of the Personnel               | 22              | 22            |
| <b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>     |                 |               |
| 1. Management Plan                        | 16              | 16            |
| <b>Charter or Performance Contract</b>    |                 |               |
| 1. Performance Contract                   | 15              | 12            |
| <b>Degree of Flexibility</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Degree of Flexibility                  | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Total</b>                              | 100             | 97            |

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel - 3: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Christopher House (U282B120032)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Curriculum

#### 1. Quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the quality of 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. If the curriculum and instructional practices have been successfully used in other schools operated or managed by the applicant, the Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the implementation of such practices and the academic results achieved.**

#### Strengths:

(1) The applicant provides information about the characteristics of the curriculum and instructional practices that are planned for the proposed project, the Christopher House Charter School. The student population will be placed in two sections. The elementary section will contain grades kindergarten through fourth grade and in the intermediate section, grades five through eight. The applicant provides a clear description of the programs/approaches in core subject areas and other curriculum related areas (page e 28). In the applicant's proposed plan, teachers will have the flexibility to decide what works best for the student. The applicant has a focused and sound approach to reading/language arts, mathematics, and other core subjects that is likely to result in students meeting performance expectations as measured by Illinois achievement standards.

(2) The applicant provides a detailed explanation of the school calendar/schedule. A timeframe for instruction in reading/language arts, math, and other subject areas are displayed (page e 37 to e38). The timeframe designation reflects the positive focus that the Christopher House Charter School leadership team has on teaching and improving student achievement.

(3) The concern that all students will not progress at the same pace, that there are students who have disabilities, language barriers, behavior aberrations, and other characteristics, is at the forefront of the Christopher House Charter School program. A description of the plans for remediation, accelerated learning, taking care of the needs of specialized populations, and the school climate/culture is presented by the applicant (pages e 38 to e45). The explanation is educationally sound and likely to be successful because it incorporates recent research-based approaches.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

### Selection Criteria - Assisting Disadvantaged Students

#### 1. The extent to which the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.

**Strengths:**

(1) The applicant provides information about the proposed project's plan to help economically disadvantaged students meet the Illinois academic content and academic achievement standards. The applicant is aware of the needs of the targeted student population. To address the challenges, the applicant provides an adequate explanation of the plans which include implementing early intervention and support services. Additionally, flexible classroom groupings, judicious allocation of time for teaching, and individualized learning strategies are included (page e46). The applicant explains that the Christopher House Charter School has provided early childhood education programs and developed a rapport and history with the families. This will give the proposed program a unique opportunity to impact to have a positive impact on students' academic achievement (page e47). In summary, the proposed project will be successful because the applicant has the ability to effectively increase parents and family involvement.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Selection Criteria - Assessing Achievement****1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of the charter school's objectives.****Strengths:**

(1) The applicant provides adequate information about the strategies the Christopher House Charter School will use to determine how well the team is achieving its objectives. The applicant's plan is composed of a particular sequence of activities. They are as follows: 1) ensure that the common core standards are met; 2) meet the testing requirements for Chicago's Selective Enrollment Elementary Schools (SEES) ; and 3) ensure that the charter school students receive an education consistent with the top-performing elementary schools in Chicago (page e48). A major component of support for implementing the strategy includes the following: 1.) determine whether the student needs support services; 2) follow the steps outlined in the applicants plan to use assessment tools to monitor academic achievement progress; 3) use assessment results to read evaluate and adjust; and 4) implement Response to Intervention ( RTI) interventions and instructional support to address areas of student weaknesses (pages e49 to e53). The strategies proposed by the applicant are likely to succeed because they focus on incorporating objective student data.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Community Support****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.**

**The applicant is also encouraged to describe and provide evidence of community support for the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

(1) The applicant provides a clear description of the process used to gain community support for the Christopher House Charter School. The charter school will be located in the largely Latino, low income community that faces many challenges. The enrollment in the charter school is likely to be 90% Latino. After holding focus groups, surveying parents at various community events, and conducting hours of discussions with community partners, information was learned about the educational needs of the community. The applicant also earned community support by building on the successes of two other community-based organizations it operates in the Chicago community (pages e53 and e54). The applicant has executed a successful plan to gain support from the community.

(2) The applicant has provided some evidence of the community support for the proposed project. Included for review is a letters from numerous community-based organizations and parents/participants at Christopher House (pages e69 to e85). The Christopher House Charter School has significant community support because of the grass roots approach taken and the applicant's positive response to the voice of the community's population.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Selection Criteria - Parental and Community Involvement**

**1. The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community 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:**

(1) The applicant describes the process used involve parents and others members of the community in the planning phase of the Christopher House Charter School. The applicants will engage in the following activities: 1.) Schedule informational meetings with parents and document teachers conversations with students family members; 2.) continue the partnership with Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education; 3.) Develop a community garden on Christopher houses property; 4.) organize community members and agencies to promote opportunities for low income families; and 5.) provide literacy classes, food pantry access, emergency financial assistance to parents (pages e54 to e55).

(2) The applicant indicates that the role of community members will include leadership positions, advisory groups, volunteering, participation on the Governing Board and an advisory council (page e56). The applicant's efforts to encourage the involvement of parents and other members of the community are very broad based. This approach is likely to be successful because the Christopher House has established itself as a contributing member of the community. The proposed Christopher House Charter School will benefit from the trust that has been developed in the community.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Personnel

### 1. Quality of project personnel.

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

**Note: The applicant is encouraged to provide evidence of its skills and experience in the following areas: successfully launching a high-quality charter school; developing an innovative school design; relevant nonprofit organization management and leadership; sound board governance; effective curriculum development and implementation; and strong fiscal management.**

#### **Strengths:**

(1) The applicant provides adequate information about the persons who will serve on the design team for the proposed project. A summary of the general expertise of the team indicates that various persons have experience with school design development, teaching experience, curriculum development, and fiscal management (pages e56 and e57).

Additional specific information about persons involved with the design team is provided by the applicant. The staff is grouped into four clusters and a descriptive statement is given concerning their expertise (pages e57 to e59).

(2) The applicant discusses the qualifications that the school leader is expected to have. It is preferred that the candidate have 7 to 10 years of experience working with a population of students similar to the projected that student body of the Christopher House Charter School. Additionally, it is preferred that the candidate be bi-literate in Spanish and English (pages e60 to e62 and pages e107 to e108).

The applicant provides information about the recruitment process for the teaching staff. The applicant will post teaching position announcements at traditional job search locations and at locations and job fairs that attract underrepresented populations such as the website nemnet.com (minority recruiting) and universities that attract diverse student population (page e62).

The applicant provides evidence that the recruitment process will lead to the employment of qualified staff.

#### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 22

#### Sub Question

### **1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability**

#### **Strengths:**

(2) The applicant discusses the qualifications that the school leader is expected to have. It is preferred that the candidate have 7 to 10 years of experience working with a population of students similar to the projected that student body of the Christopher House Charter School. Additionally, it is preferred that the candidate be bi-literate in Spanish and English (pages e60 to e62 and pages e107 to e108).

The applicant provides information about the recruitment process for the teaching staff. The applicant will post teaching position announcements at traditional job search locations and at locations and job fairs that attract underrepresented populations such as the website nemnet.com (minority recruiting) and universities that attract diverse student population (page e62).

## Sub Question

The applicant provides evidence that the recruitment process will lead to the employment of qualified staff.

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

## 2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel

### Strengths:

(1) The applicant provides adequate information about the persons who will serve on the design team for the proposed project. A summary of the general expertise of the team indicates that various persons have experience with school design development, teaching experience, curriculum development, and fiscal management (pages e56 and e57). Additional specific information about persons involved with the design team is provided by the applicant. The staff is grouped into four clusters and a descriptive statement is given concerning their expertise (pages e57 to e59).

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

### 1. Quality of the management plan.

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

### Strengths:

(1) The applicant provides detailed background information about the successful track record that Christopher House has experienced in managing contracts that total over \$7 million (pages e60 to e65). The applicant has vast experience with managing contracts.

(2) The applicant provides detailed information about the plan to manage the proposed project. The Management Plan is presented in a table format that lists the following columns: Design Area; Sub-category; Test/Activity; Owner; Start Date; and Due Date. The Design Areas column of the table includes about 130 entries. The columns headed Start Date and Due Date range from January 2012 to July 2013 (pages e109 to e113). An examination of the Task/Activity column reveals a list that reflects the various actions that will be completed in order to implement the proposed project. Item number 11 on page e110, indicates that at monthly leadership meetings, the team will review data and commit to course corrections.

The management plan is quite comprehensive and it will guide the project to on time implementation. This will be the result because the responsibilities are assigned (owned by) to specific staff persons, the tasks/activities are clearly written, and monthly meetings will examine progress made or implementation corrections and/or adjustments.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 16

**Selection Criteria - Charter or Performance Contract**

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

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

**Note:** The Secretary encourages the applicant to discuss whether its proposed project has been denied a charter from its authorizing agency and, if so, how the applicant plans to revise its charter application before resubmitting its charter application to the authorizing agency. The applicant is also encouraged to submit a copy of its approved charter contract, if applicable.

**Strengths:**

(1) The applicant provides documentation that the Christopher House Charter School was authorized to open by the Chicago Public Schools Board of Education on Wednesday, December 14, 2011 (page e114) .

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant fails to describe how student performance will be measured in the Christopher House Charter School pursuant to Illinois State Law. The applicant does not provide evidence of a Performance Contract.

**Reader's Score:** 12

**Selection Criteria - Degree of Flexibility**

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 the flexibility afforded under its State's law in terms of establishing an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and in terms of whether charter schools are exempt 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:**

(1) The applicant provides a brief description of the flexibility and autonomy afforded to the proposed charter school. The applicant explains that based on the flexibility and autonomy given, the proposed project will: 1) extended school-day and

school year; 2) utilize flexible staffing plans; 3) make significant financial investment into arts and health and wellness; and 4) share back-office support with our agency operations (page e66). The decisions made reflect the proposed charter school's goal to improve student achievement.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**     **3**

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**Status:**           Submitted

**Last Updated:**   07/18/2012 12:36 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/18/2012 03:58 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Christopher House (U282B120032)

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

|   | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Questions</b>                          |                 |               |
| <b>Selection Criteria</b>                 |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of Curriculum</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Quality of Curriculum                  | 15              | 15            |
| <b>Assisting Disadvantaged Students</b>   |                 |               |
| 1. Disadvantaged Students                 | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Assessing Achievement</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Assessing Achievement                  | 15              | 15            |
| <b>Community Support</b>                  |                 |               |
| 1. Community Support                      | 8               | 8             |
| <b>Parental and Community Involvement</b> |                 |               |
| 1. Parental Involvement                   | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Quality of the Personnel</b>           |                 |               |
| 1. Quality of the Personnel               | 22              | 22            |
| <b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>     |                 |               |
| 1. Management Plan                        | 16              | 16            |
| <b>Charter or Performance Contract</b>    |                 |               |
| 1. Performance Contract                   | 15              | 15            |
| <b>Degree of Flexibility</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Degree of Flexibility                  | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Total</b>                              | 100             | 100           |

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel - 3: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Christopher House (U282B120032)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Curriculum

#### 1. Quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the quality of 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. If the curriculum and instructional practices have been successfully used in other schools operated or managed by the applicant, the Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the implementation of such practices and the academic results achieved.**

#### **Strengths:**

The application provides a detailed description of the proposed curriculum, the grade levels utilizing it and the how the curriculum will meet state academic standards (page 22). This comprehensive list and their successes (pages 17-21) demonstrate a quality curriculum.

#### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted on this answer.

Reader's Score: 15

### Selection Criteria - Assisting Disadvantaged Students

#### 1. The extent to which the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant details early screening through robust RTI processes to ensure early intervention. Also flexible groupings, individualized learning and dedicated time will promote success in meeting benchmarks. Family support will include literacy classes, counseling and early childhood education programs. The proposed program provides a strong investment in family involvement to ensure engagement from parents. All these efforts will be of great assistance to educationally disadvantaged students in meeting academic content and achievement standards.

#### **Weaknesses:**

Applicant addressed the problem of "economically" rather than "educationally" disadvantaged students, which comprises 95% of their estimated student population.

**Reader's Score:** 3

### **Selection Criteria - Assessing Achievement**

#### **1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of the charter school's objectives.**

##### **Strengths:**

CHCS has been part of a collaborative that shares best practices and analyze data to implement data based programs. Because of this they have been recognized as a leader in their community by many distinguished agencies (Page 31) They have clear objections of meeting Common Core, meeting city testing requirements, and being on par with top performing elementary schools. They use multiple assessment tools that are represented in the application. They will use checkpoints throughout the year to make sure they are on track with their objectives. The applicant also documented their assessment tool schedule and purpose as evidence to their commitment to the Common Core (Page 32) This is an excellent strategy for assessing achievement and objectives.

##### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were apparent in this answer.

**Reader's Score:** 15

### **Selection Criteria - Community Support**

#### **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.**

**The applicant is also encouraged to describe and provide evidence of community support for the proposed project.**

##### **Strengths:**

From the onset, CHCS invited parents to be a part of their organizational plan by creating a focus group and gathering survey information of the community's educational needs. This information was used to organize the CHCS design. For over 7 years CH has created community relationships with assistance from community leaders in the high need community of Belmont Cragin. A number of support letters are included in the application including parents, students, non-profit community agencies and the State Charter School Association, INCS. This describes a strong community support for this application.

##### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score:** 8

### **Selection Criteria - Parental and Community Involvement**

#### **1. The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community 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:**

CHCS has a successful model of parent involvement and has hired a Director who has experience organizing community members to promote opportunities for low income families. They also have leadership, education classes, advisory board and governing board positions and volunteer opportunities that include community projects, such as a community garden. They also provide assistance to low income families, including but not limited to a food pantry, financial assistance and literacy classes (pages 28-40). This focused program is evidence of strong parental and community involvement.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Personnel**

**1. Quality of project personnel.**

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

**Note: The applicant is encouraged to provide evidence of its skills and experience in the following areas: successfully launching a high-quality charter school; developing an innovative school design; relevant nonprofit organization management and leadership; sound board governance; effective curriculum development and implementation; and strong fiscal management.**

**Strengths:**

The personnel that make up the team at CHCS represent a well balanced group of experts in every needed aspect for charter school development including but not limited to experience in charter school start up and administration, high academic achievement with at risk populations, knowledge and experience with charter school law and community partnerships, real estate development, innovation and fundraising (Page 40). The team members and their expertise and resumes are included in the application.

The application also provided convincing evidence of the school's action plan to attract applicants from underrepresented populations through universities, job fairs and websites that attract these populations (Page 46).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score: 22**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The application provided convincing evidence of the school's action plan to attract applicants from underrepresented populations through universities, job fairs and websites that attract these populations (Page 46).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel**

**Strengths:**

The personnel that make up the team at CHCS represent a well balanced group of experts in every needed aspect for charter school development including but not limited to experience in charter school start up and administration, high academic achievement with at risk populations, knowledge and experience with charter school law and community partnerships, real estate development, innovation and fundraising (Page 40). The team members and their expertise and resumes are included in the application.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

**1. Quality of the management plan.**

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

**Strengths:**

The strength of the management plan for CHCS is their past experience and immaculate track record of the CH agency. The agency has been a shining example for others with its successful work with low-income families originating in the 1950s. Through Head Start, teen pregnancy, college and career readiness, early childhood education turn around programs they have shown innovation in solving community problems. They excel in quality education and community involvement as evidenced by their funders and increased opportunities. A clear and detailed management plan was included that evidenced knowledge of the extensive task they are undertaking.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score: 16**

**Selection Criteria - Charter or Performance Contract**

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

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to discuss whether its proposed project has been denied a charter from its authorizing agency and, if so, how the applicant plans to revise its charter application before resubmitting its charter application to the authorizing agency. The applicant is also encouraged to submit a copy of its approved charter contract, if applicable.**

**Strengths:**

CHCS charter has been approved with the Chicago Public Schools Board. A copy of the agreement was included in the application however the charter contract will not be available until the fall of 2012. The schools performance metrics are included in the approved application (top of page 50).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Degree of Flexibility**

- 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 the flexibility afforded under its State's law in terms of establishing an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and in terms of whether charter schools are exempt 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 degree of flexibility and the limits of the autonomy and what the autonomy will enable the school to perform (flexibility) was described on page 50. This is outlined in the Illinois School Code 105 ILCS 5/Art.27A and is sufficient information.

**Weaknesses:**

No weakness was noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 07/18/2012 03:58 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/17/2012 02:48 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Christopher House (U282B120032)

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

|   | Points Possible | Points Scored |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Questions</b>                          |                 |               |
| <b>Selection Criteria</b>                 |                 |               |
| <b>Quality of Curriculum</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Quality of Curriculum                  | 15              | 15            |
| <b>Assisting Disadvantaged Students</b>   |                 |               |
| 1. Disadvantaged Students                 | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Assessing Achievement</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Assessing Achievement                  | 15              | 15            |
| <b>Community Support</b>                  |                 |               |
| 1. Community Support                      | 8               | 8             |
| <b>Parental and Community Involvement</b> |                 |               |
| 1. Parental Involvement                   | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Quality of the Personnel</b>           |                 |               |
| 1. Quality of the Personnel               | 22              | 22            |
| <b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>     |                 |               |
| 1. Management Plan                        | 16              | 16            |
| <b>Charter or Performance Contract</b>    |                 |               |
| 1. Performance Contract                   | 15              | 15            |
| <b>Degree of Flexibility</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Degree of Flexibility                  | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Total</b>                              | 100             | 100           |

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel - 3: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Christopher House (U282B120032)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Curriculum

#### 1. Quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the quality of 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. If the curriculum and instructional practices have been successfully used in other schools operated or managed by the applicant, the Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the implementation of such practices and the academic results achieved.**

#### Strengths:

The applicant uses highly regarded programs for instruction; such as, Everyday Mathematics and the Readers/Writers workshop by Lucy Caulkin. These methods chosen have been proven in other urban cities with similar populations to those in the community surrounding Christopher House. The school seeks to transition its existing pre-K program into the Charter School, which will be grades K-8 to provide a continuum of services to develop 21st century skilled and academically successful students. The applicant focuses on the importance of small groups, hands-on instruction and differentiated instruction afforded by these models. Also the applicant infuses the daily curriculum with the arts and technology to allow for a variety of learning modes.

#### Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 15

### Selection Criteria - Assisting Disadvantaged Students

#### 1. The extent to which the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.

#### Strengths:

The program will be located in an area with a large ELL and economically / educationally disadvantaged population. Through its research-based programming, the school will launch universal assessments at its inception to target student needs. The school will also develop a Pupil Personnel Team and utilize RTI to assess and assist students in meeting standards. Educationally disadvantaged students will be afforded an opportunity to learn in a variety of ways using technology, art, and hands-on experiences to succeed.

#### Weaknesses:

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

### **Selection Criteria - Assessing Achievement**

**1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of the charter school's objectives.**

**Strengths:**

The chart included demonstrates a detailed, data-based plan for assessing school achievement. The applicant uses a variety of assessments to document student success, monitors attendance monthly and includes the vital parent element in assuring the school meets its outlined objectives.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

### **Selection Criteria - Community Support**

**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.**

**The applicant is also encouraged to describe and provide evidence of community support for the proposed project.**

**Strengths:**

The organization shares space with a social service agency and is currently deeply entrenched in the community. The organization has strong bonds with community leaders, has partnered with community agencies for programming and offers education opportunities to parents in the community. The support shown demonstrates a high level of community commitment to the agency. On pg. 11, the applicant states that a lottery method, consistent with Chicago charter school requirements will be implemented to allow equal access to all students.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 8**

### **Selection Criteria - Parental and Community Involvement**

**1. The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community 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 has a strategic plan for parental involvement including parent leadership organizations, parent education programs and parent volunteering. They seek to build on the strong foundation established by the agency as well as nurture the relationships with parents in the pre-K program to essentially create a pipeline for enrollment into the school. On pg. 40, the applicant notes that there will be a concerted effort to include members of the community on the Governing Board of the school, which allows for the school to be continuously tied to its origins and community-focused.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Personnel****1. Quality of project personnel.**

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

**Note: The applicant is encouraged to provide evidence of its skills and experience in the following areas: successfully launching a high-quality charter school; developing an innovative school design; relevant nonprofit organization management and leadership; sound board governance; effective curriculum development and implementation; and strong fiscal management.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant demonstrates a diverse range of highly skilled personnel to represent key components of planning and design of the charter. Specifically, there is ample representation from academia, legal, financial and leadership familiar with the population served.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 22**

**Sub Question****1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability****Strengths:**

Given the nature of the community demographics, the applicant will seek to hire diverse, multilingual staff.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**

## Sub Question

### 2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel

#### Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates a diverse range of highly skilled personnel to represent key components of planning and design of the charter. Specifically, there is ample representation from academia, legal, financial and leadership familiar with the population served.

#### Weaknesses:

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 20**

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

### 1. Quality of the management plan.

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

#### Strengths:

The application includes a clearly structured, detail-oriented plan for the proposed project. The roles and responsibilities are clearly spelled out in the chart included in the program and there are specific deadlines for each task. Key personnel will work closely with school leadership to ensure all goals and objectives are met in conjunction with the deadlines set forth.

#### Weaknesses:

None noted.

**Reader's Score: 16**

## Selection Criteria - Charter or Performance Contract

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

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to discuss whether its proposed project has been denied a charter from its authorizing agency and, if so, how the applicant plans to revise its charter application before resubmitting its charter application to the authorizing agency. The applicant is also encouraged to submit a copy of its approved charter contract, if applicable.**

#### Strengths:

On pg. 49, the applicant notes that the charter school was authorized to open by the Chicago Public Schools Board of Directors on Wednesday, December 14, 2011 and attached the written agreement stating this approval. The formal contract has not been issued at this time and is expected in the fall of 2012.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**Selection Criteria - Degree of Flexibility**

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 the flexibility afforded under its State's law in terms of establishing an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and in terms of whether charter schools are exempt 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:**

On pg. 50, it states that the school has autonomy over key areas in school management including curriculum choice, budgeting, the school calendar and staffing. The applicant exercises this autonomy by developing a significantly longer school day, differentiating pay scales and significant investments in curriculum areas traditionally under-funded in traditional public schools.

These items are outlined in the charter contract that is included with the application.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:** 3

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**Status:** Submitted

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