

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/16/2012 04:18 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Idaho STEM Academy, Inc. (U282B120069)

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               | 1             |
| <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               | 1             |
| <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              | 0             |
| <b>Degree of Flexibility</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Degree of Flexibility                  | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                          | 100             | 81            |
| <b>Total</b>                              | 100             | 81            |

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel - 4: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Idaho STEM Academy, Inc. (U282B120069)

## 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:

It is projected that ISA will serve 400 students in grades 9-12. This is based on data presented from three operational charter schools within the district that it anticipates will serve as feeder schools. ISA will operate as a secondary STEM school that will also follow the Idaho State Board of Education's Thoroughness Standards. The applicant has provided a subject specific overview of the course work to be offered (p.10-12). Specific instructional practices include: hands on engagement and practical tasks, computer assisted learning, and cross curricular connections (p.7) in addition to traditional methodologies. Two strengths in this section that specifically address the ability of students to meet challenging standard are as follows: external program audits that will allow for on-going assessment of the curriculum's effectiveness and the ability to retool if necessary and the four day school week with the fifth day devoted to professional development. The recognition that teaching techniques need ongoing review and enhancement is best practices and a protocol that allows for review, retool, and reteach, should have a positive result in helping students to be successful in meeting State standards.

#### 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 applicant identifies a series of strategies to identify the needs of high risk-high poverty students to assist them in meeting content standards. Based on presented data (p.17), the school will provide academic and career counseling, parent workshops, multiple learning strategies and an environment of college expectation (p.18). These elements should work in tandem to assist students in meeting State academic content standards.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant should reconsider the narrow definition of educationally disadvantaged when addressing this criteria. Students with IEPs and 504 plans, in addition to English language learners, should also be considered under the umbrella of educationally disadvantaged and appropriate strategies for their success should be included in this criteria to full meet this standard. The reader notes that these subgroups are mentioned on p.e29-e32; however, their needs are addressed within the narrow confines of the law and not through strategies of success.

**Reader's Score:** 1

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

Perhaps the greatest strength in meeting this criteria is the utilization of an external evaluation firm who will collect data every five weeks and provide analysis not only of the overall program, but by AYP specific subgroups (p.10). This level of transparency should provide the progress monitoring data needed to determine if both the school and students are on course to achieve the objectives quantified in the proposal. The review by the principal, Superintendent and counselor, should result in affirmations of a sound curriculum with effective instructional practices or a road map to improve techniques to garner a positive end result. Further, in addition to the external evaluation, teaching staff will assess student progress toward the objectives through traditional methods such as quizzes and tests in addition to performance demonstration. This will result in immediate recognition of strengths and weaknesses and adjustments as needed.

**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:**

Two particular strengths define the applicant's fulfillment of this criteria. The applicant provides a copy of the petition (p. 70-75) submitted by community members in support of the creation of the charter. Second, community members have offered to donate five portable classrooms for the charter demonstrating a significant financial investment in the school's mission (p.24).

Further, recruitment strategies include direct mailing, marketing articles in both Spanish and English, public forums and postings throughout the community (p.25).

**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 provides examples of involvement that will be available to parents such as serving as members of the Board and the Parent Activity Committee (p.27).

**Weaknesses:**

Support in the form of a petition and donated facilities is clearly one aspect of community and parental support; however, these indicators are more external than internal. The applicant identifies more future involvement (p.27-28) than grassroots involvement in the planning and design. Given the applicant's reference to the presence of a science research site nearby and the overwhelming support of the three feeder schools, the reader would have expected evidence that stakeholders were involved in the planning and design of the charter which would clearly feed into further support once the school got to the implementation stage.

**Reader's Score:** 1

**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 provides biographical summaries (p. 30-32) and full resumes in the appendices. The qualifications of the founders represent experiences within the charter school community as well as the skill sets needed for a successful Board. Budgetary oversight, marketing, grant writing, legal expertise and particularly non profit sector experience are in evidence. Further, while a principal is not currently in place, a substantive job description is presented on p.102 that if followed, should produce a highly qualified administrator.

**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:**

The applicant will use venues such as online advertisements as well as advertisements at colleges and in local newspapers. The particular strength in this section is the applicant's commitment to advertise in both English and Spanish (p.29). That should be a positive step in attracting applications for employment from underrepresented groups.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

Reader's Score: 2

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides biographical summaries (p. 30-32) and full resumes in the appendices. The qualifications of the founders represent experiences within the charter school community as well as the skill sets needed for a successful Board. Budgetary oversight , marketing, grant writing, legal expertise and particularly non profit sector experience are in evidence. Further, while a principal is not currently in place, a substantive job description is presented on p.102 that if followed, should produce a highly qualified administrator.

**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:**

In addition to the structure of the Board and the diversity of skills it possesses within and outside of the charter school arena, the applicant has presented a comprehensive chart that outlines objectives, tasks, milestones and responsible persons (p.33-35). Further, the principal's responsibilities detailed on pages 36-38 should more that adequately supplement the gaps on the organizational chart.

**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:**

None noted

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant has submitted an application for review (p.38) however; a performance contract is not expected to be approved until September 2012.

Reader's Score: 0

#### 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 applicant outlines the flexible options afforded to the charter. This includes setting the calendar, educational strategies, and scheduling (p.39). Germane to ISA, the school intends to reserve the right to hire non certified staff who will work under certified staff supervision when deemed in the best interest of the school (p.30-40).

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

Reader's Score: 3

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 07/16/2012 04:18 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/13/2012 02:41 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Idaho STEM Academy, Inc. (U282B120069)

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              | 14            |
| <b>Community Support</b>                  |                 |               |
| 1. Community Support                      | 8               | 8             |
| <b>Parental and Community Involvement</b> |                 |               |
| 1. Parental Involvement                   | 3               | 2             |
| <b>Quality of the Personnel</b>           |                 |               |
| 1. Quality of the Personnel               | 22              | 20            |
| <b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>     |                 |               |
| 1. Management Plan                        | 16              | 16            |
| <b>Charter or Performance Contract</b>    |                 |               |
| 1. Performance Contract                   | 15              | 0             |
| <b>Degree of Flexibility</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Degree of Flexibility                  | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                          | 100             | 81            |
| <b>Total</b>                              | 100             | 81            |

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel - 4: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Idaho STEM Academy, Inc. (U282B120069)

## 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 demonstrates that the program has been carefully designed to meet the needs of all students in the particular communities the applicant plans to serve. e18-23.

The curricular philosophy underlying the program design is explained. e22-23.

The format of classrooms and the pedagogy to be employed are detailed (including dual enrollment, computer labs, individualized learning). e23-24.

The professional development to ensure teachers know and implement the proposed instructional practices are outlined. e25.

Subject area outlines are provided, with the intended outcomes for the overall program. e25-28.

The applicant addresses how the curriculum will be modified to align with the state's implementation of Common Core Standards, the texts to be used have been considered, and plans for meeting the needs of students with varying special needs are described. e28-32

#### Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

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 clearly articulates the extent of educational disadvantages among the communities it intends to serve, highlight special needs, language challenges and other at-risk indicators (such as regional isolation and lack of interaction with college going adults). e17-19.

The applicant's program is designed to and will be staffed to meet those needs in a specific way (including completion of 18 post-secondary credits upon graduation). e17, 21-32.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses in this section.

**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 application explains who will conduct evaluation of the school's progress (outside evaluators), who will review the evaluations (administrators, parents, students and community volunteers), and how often. e34.

The application lists what will be measured and the indicators that will be used, for course grades, post-secondary credits (that are also tracked by year to reach the school's overall goal of students earning 18 hours by graduation), and proficiency on state tests. e35-37.

The applicant also contemplates operational and financial sustainability as indicators of success. e39.

**Weaknesses:**

Specific measures of operational and financial sustainability were lacking. e39.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**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:**

Community support for the application was demonstrated through parent surveys indicating a desire for the proposed program. e39.

A letter of support were provided. e210.

An anonymous donor's willingness to provide portable classroom also demonstrates community support. e39.

The applicant's detailed plan to invite applicants to the school (including translation services and targeted outreach) demonstrate that students will have an equal opportunity to attend the charter school. e41-42.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses in this section.

**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:

Parental involvement in the design of the school is manifest in the plans for parents serving on the board of directors, completing surveys regarding current operations, and serving on curriculum and parent committees. e42-43.

Parental involvement in the implementation of the school is demonstrated through the applicant's plans for parents to serve on governing bodies and to volunteer for projects. e42.

The applicant highlights community involvement opportunities such as volunteering, community service, serving on the board, facilitating job shadowing and sharing job specific details to help make the curriculum relevant.

#### Weaknesses:

The application does not articulate how parents may have had an opportunity to help with the initial design of the school (prior to submission of this grant application).

**Reader's Score: 2**

## 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:

Strengths and weaknesses are listed in the subsections.

#### Weaknesses:

Strengths and weaknesses are listed in the subsections.

**Reader's Score: 20**

#### 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 applicant provides a plan for recruiting a diverse staff and members of the governing body. e10.

The applicant's proposed curricular program and operational needs (such as translation services for recruiting materials, e41-42) are also likely to attract applicants from underrepresented groups.

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 2

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

### Strengths:

The application describes the tasks to be performed by key project personnel, e44, and then describes their relevant training and experience.

The application demonstrates that key personnel have fiscal management skills, charter school advocacy and operational experience, marketing and local government backgrounds, and significant experience in the kinds of dual enrollment programs that will be key to this school's success. e45-48.

Resumes of the key personnel are included. e62-68.

### Weaknesses:

The application does not show whether any of the founding personnel have experience with special education.

Reader's Score: 18

## 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 clearly outlines a timeline with objectives, tasks and milestones, and assigns those tasks to specific personnel. e48-50.

The application shows how responsibilities will change for key personnel such as the school director, as the school moves from the first to second year of operation. e51-53. These defined responsibilities and milestones, along with the detailed budget and budget narrative, are sufficient to demonstrate the applicant's ability to accomplish tasks on time and within budget. e48-53, e213-222.

### Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

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:**

There are no strengths in this section.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not yet have an approved charter.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**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 applicant briefly outlines the flexibility afforded the charter school, and describes how it will use some of that flexibility in its hiring of personnel for initial implementation. e54-55.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no weaknesses in this section.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 07/13/2012 02:41 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/23/2012 10:27 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Idaho STEM Academy, Inc. (U282B120069)

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              | 14            |
| <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              | 0             |
| <b>Degree of Flexibility</b>              |                 |               |
| 1. Degree of Flexibility                  | 3               | 3             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                          | 100             | 84            |
| <b>Total</b>                              | 100             | 84            |

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel - 4: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Idaho STEM Academy, Inc. (U282B120069)

## 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:

This reviewer found the applicants discussion of its proposed curriculum and instructional practices on pages 6-17 to be thorough. This reviewer was impressed particularly by the applicants commitment to providing students with the opportunity to make significant progress toward a college degree or professional-technical certificate. Given the nations emphasis on improving competitiveness in the innovation sectors, the applicants proposed curriculum focused on STEM education combined with a maintaining learning in traditional subjects is praiseworthy.

#### Weaknesses:

This reviewer noted no weaknesses for this criterion.

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 application evidenced a commitment to recruiting in the English and Spanish languages. The applicants GEPA statement and statements on applicant pages 3-4 provide lend additional support to this reviewers opinion that the project would assist educationally disadvantaged students in a potentially transformative way.

#### Weaknesses:

This reviewer noted no weaknesses for this criterion.

Reader's Score: 3

### Selection Criteria - Assessing Achievement

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

**Strengths:**

This reviewer found the discussion on applicant pages 19-24 thorough and indicative of the applicants overall strength of the proposed school design. Inclusion of metrics for assessing success is a plus factor in this reviewer's consideration of this application.

**Weaknesses:**

The idea of an external evaluation firm providing an evaluation of the school's progress is intriguing. Without the name of that firm, it is difficult to ascertain whether the evaluation firm would have the necessary objectivity.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**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 applicant not only provided evidence of market demand (applicant page 24) but also strategies (applicant page 25) for capturing a financially sustainable portion of the addressable demand. Spanish and English marketing materials are demand appropriate and reasonably calculated to capitalize on the existing demand for a viable public charter high school option for existing charter enrolled elementary and middle school students.

**Weaknesses:**

This reviewer noted no weaknesses for this criterion.

**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 presence of monthly parent workshops and ongoing opportunities for parents to play multiple roles within Idaho STEM Academy demonstrated to this reviewer that the proposed school would encourage parental and community involvement.

**Weaknesses:**

This reviewer noted no weaknesses for this criterion.

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:**

Please see subsequent discussions for this reviewer's evaluation of strengths of the applicant's response to this criterion.

#### **Weaknesses:**

Please see subsequent discussions for this reviewer's evaluation of weaknesses of the applicant's response to this criterion.

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:**

In this reviewer's opinion, the applicant's sensitivity to diversity is demonstrated by the school's plan to continue use of bilingual recruitment materials as well as on-line/off-line recruitment of instructional and administrative personnel.

#### **Weaknesses:**

This reviewer noted no weaknesses for this criterion.

Reader's Score: 2

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

#### **Strengths:**

As with other aspects of this application, this reviewer was impressed with the applicant team's deep experiences as parts of multiple founding teams of successful public charter school teams. The collective experiences of the founding team provided coverage of all the major functional areas necessary in order to minimize execution risk for a new school as well as create a dynamic environment for student engagement and learning.

#### **Weaknesses:**

This reviewer noted no weaknesses for this criterion.

**Sub Question**

**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:**

Applicant pages 33-38 demonstrate an impressive grasp of the required execution milestones for the successful opening of Idaho STEM Academy. The timeline discussing the initial implementation phase is reasonable and well considered. The subsequent breakout of the project plan once the school director and board of director have been selected, is equally impressive, especially the objective, tasks/milestones and responsible party categorization on applicant pages 33-35.

**Weaknesses:**

This reviewer noted no weaknesses for this criterion.

**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:**

This reviewer noted no strengths for this criterion.

**Weaknesses:**

Consistent with this reviewers scoring of similar applications that did not have a signed charter contract, this absence of this contract, while understandable, could not prevent the applicant from receiving deduction of the full point value.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**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 applicant pages 39-40, the applicant has provided a listing of the waivers that have been requested. If granted, the requested waivers will have a direct, anticipated favorable impact on student learning occurring within the school.

**Weaknesses:**

This reviewer noted no weaknesses for this criterion.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 07/23/2012 10:27 PM