

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/01/2012 04:59 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: I-LEAD, Inc. (U282B120064)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Curriculum		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	14
Assisting Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	3	3
Assessing Achievement		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	14
Community Support		
1. Community Support	8	8
Parental and Community Involvement		
1. Parental Involvement	3	3
Quality of the Personnel		
1. Quality of the Personnel	22	18
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	16	12
Charter or Performance Contract		
1. Performance Contract	15	13
Degree of Flexibility		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	1
Sub Total	100	86
Total	100	86

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Panel - 5: 84.282B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: I-LEAD, Inc. (U282B120064)

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 clearly describes its target student population those who have dropped out of high school or are at-risk for doing so (e20, e26). Program staff will work to identify strengths and challenges faced by each student to identify an individualized plan of action for each student (e26). The applicants core principles, vision (e36-e37) and approach to curriculum design (e38) is consistent with the mission and vision. The school will engage learners through a variety of authentic structures and processes (e39). The curriculum is well described and is aligned to the Pennsylvania State Standards and/or Common Core Standards. Students will be assigned to the appropriate mathematics course based on an analysis of their PSSA math score. Through regular PSSA Benchmark Assessments, the applicant will track student progress and promote them to higher courses upon content mastery (e40). Literature will be chosen that is appropriate to individual student reading levels. Students will receive ongoing reading level assessments (e43). The core subjects and the leadership and entrepreneurial programs will be supported by weekly interdisciplinary seminars (e46).

Weaknesses:

Research identifying the successful use of the curricula or instructional practices for the targeted student body may have strengthened the application. The applicant indicates a two-year sequence of study (e39). It is unclear if incoming freshmen or sophomores will have the necessary graduation prerequisites under that framework.

Reader's Score: 14

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 project is designed to serve at-risk youth. Its initial baseline assessment indicated 79% of its students were reading below grade levels that the school serves. Approximately 20% of the students have an IEP; others remain undiagnosed (e20). Approximately 40% of the students are English language learners (e20). The applicant will integrate the use of World-Class Instructional Design Assessment (WIDA) to serve English language learners (e20-e21). The applicant will address social needs for educationally disadvantaged students to ensure those needs do not adversely impact the students academic success (e24). Recognizing that many of the applicants students have gaps in academic credits, the applicant will provide a credit recovery program that is aligned to Pennsylvania State Standards and Common Core

Standards (e26).

Weaknesses:

None found.

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 applicant has established academic and non-academic goals. Baseline data for some goals were obtained from the school district; others will be developed during the initial two years of operation. (e27-e33). Drawing upon its commitment to ongoing reflection, the applicant has a consistent process of self-evaluation which includes all stakeholders (e48). The annual assessment process is comprehensive and includes: learner achievement, leadership and citizenship, family participation, community participation, staff performance, school leadership and school leadership (e49). The process for the annual assessment is well described (e50). The Head of School convenes monthly meetings with the school council to present data analyses, compare it to school performance goals, determine how it should inform modifications to the curriculum or instructional program, when necessary, and define how it should impact the agenda for professional staff development activities (e63).

Weaknesses:

Each objective in the six academic goals is measured in five years. An intermediate academic target toward those objectives is not found in the application.

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 conducted wide range community outreach efforts (e35). All marketing materials were bilingual. Interactive sessions were held twice a month during the orientation period. The applicant obtained more than 500 sworn affidavits confirming the need for the school in the community. The applicant described its lottery process should interest exceed capacity (e52). The school opened in 2011 with 200 students and is expecting to serve twice that much this Fall (e26). The applicant provided numerous letters of support from various community agencies and officials (e78-e91). The applicant provided a petition and a list of individuals in support of the school (e92-e93).

Weaknesses:

None found.

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:

During the application process, community groups were invited to a planning and review session so that their input could be heard and considered prior to submitting the application. These meetings have continued on a quarterly basis during the first year of operation (e52). Parents are also able to be involved as members of the School Advisory Council or Parent and Family Council. Parents can also function in a variety of volunteer roles throughout the school (e54). Parents will be part of the annual assessment process to review progress toward goals (e50). Non-academic goal three is specific to parents actively engaged in the school and provides for three specific parent objectives (e32-e33).

Weaknesses:

None found.

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 will seek qualified candidates for employment which include gender and minority candidates representative of the student body (e57).

The founders have a collective experience in the areas of secondary and higher education, politics, business operations, facilities development and management, human resource management, financial and fiscal operations, and have legal expertise (e55). The Head of School and Dean of Academics have appropriate and relevant experience to lead the school (e56). Faculty are expected to nurture the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, civic leadership, and career potential of each learner while creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for learners (e56). This is consistent with the objectives of the applicant.

Weaknesses:

The applicant's GEPA Statement does not include equitable access provisions for adults (e10-e11). A description of the specific mechanism on how the applicant will seek qualified applicants from groups traditionally underrepresented would have strengthened the application.

The qualifications of the identified project director (e13) were not found. Information or qualifications on the Chief Financial Officer were not found (e58). An organizational chart demonstrating key project personnel would have been helpful.

Reader's Score: 18

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 seek qualified candidates for employment which include gender and minority candidates representative of the student body (e57).

Weaknesses:

The applicants GEPA Statement does not include equitable access provisions for adults (e10-e11). A description of the specific mechanism on how the applicant will seek qualified applicants from groups traditionally underrepresented would have strengthened the application.

Reader's Score: 1

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

Strengths:

The founders have a collective experience in the areas of secondary and higher education, politics, business operations, facilities development and management, human resource management, financial and fiscal operations, and have legal expertise (e55). The Head of School and Dean of Academics have appropriate and relevant experience to lead the school (e56). Faculty are expected to nurture the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, civic leadership, and career potential of each learner while creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for learners (e56). This is consistent with the objectives of the applicant.

Weaknesses:

The qualifications of the identified project director (e13) were not found. Information or qualifications on the Chief Financial Officer were not found (e58). An organizational chart demonstrating key project personnel would have been helpful.

Reader's Score: 17

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 Board of Trustees meet on a quarterly basis (e27, e57). Matters addressed by the Board of Trustees are those customary matters for a charter school governing board (e57). The Head of School functions as the Chief Education Officer. cursory responsibilities were provided for the Head of School and Dean of Academics (e27, e57). The project timeline includes a timeframe, task, and responsible party for execution (e60-e61). Professional development activities are

included for resources acquired (e61, e118, e120-e121).

Weaknesses:

A more comprehensive timeline would have included additional relevant tasks and specific milestones for accomplishing tasks.

Reader's Score: 12

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:

The applicant has a signed charter with its authorizer which recognizes it as an LEA (e33, e62). The applicant has operated for a full year (e15). The applicant fully describes academic and non-academic goals (e28-e33).

Weaknesses:

It is unclear if the goals identified are those which were mutually agreed upon by the applicant and its authorizer. Inclusion of the approved charter may have strengthened this application.

Reader's Score: 13

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 provides a brief explanation of personnel flexibility, such as at least 75% of the professional staff must hold appropriate teacher certification (e64).

Weaknesses:

An explanation on flexibility afforded to charter schools on such matters as the charter schools budget, expenditures, and daily operation would have been more comprehensive.

Reader's Score: 1

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: I-LEAD, Inc. (U282B120064)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Curriculum		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	13
Assisting Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	3	3
Assessing Achievement		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	12
Community Support		
1. Community Support	8	8
Parental and Community Involvement		
1. Parental Involvement	3	2
Quality of the Personnel		
1. Quality of the Personnel	22	16
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	16	12
Charter or Performance Contract		
1. Performance Contract	15	13
Degree of Flexibility		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	1
Sub Total	100	80
Total	100	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Panel - 5: 84.282B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: I-LEAD, Inc. (U282B120064)

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:

I-LEAD charter school is a high school serving students whom have dropped out of traditional high school or whom are at risk. The applicant projects the schools enrollment and its plan to offer credit recovery aligned with the state standards. The applicant provides a detailed curriculum methodology based on CPM, GlenCoe Science, Government Alive and others. The applicant explains how the curricular was selected, pg. 26 and how field experiences are utilized to further the instructional program.

Weaknesses:

Curriculum only details 2 years worth of work

Reader's Score: 13

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 demonstrates in the said application that the program by design is constructed to meet the needs of disadvantaged students.

Weaknesses:

None seen

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 applicant clearly identifies performance indicators and long-term goals (5 years). The applicant details effective measurement tools to monitor success and has provided a comprehensive list of academic and non-academic goals pgs. 14 - 16. The goals provided are applicable to a variety of areas within the school including parent participation and volunteerism. The applicant details the annual assessment process, pg. 33 to ensure effectiveness.

Weaknesses:

Applicant loosely identifies measurement tools to be used in this process.

Reader's Score: 12

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 sufficiently identifies how the student body will be reached to generate enrollment, the meetings that have been held, the support letters gathered etc. Adequate marketing strategies are employed, families are notified and students are enrolled. Pg e 45

Weaknesses:

None

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 identifies their expectations with regard to parental involvement via School Advisory Council including parental input. Pg. E 54

Weaknesses:

Applicant does not demonstrate how they will use technology or other means to reach families on an ongoing basis. Applicant lacks details on how school data will be communicated to the parents, community and broader audiences. Applicant lacks detail on partnering with families and communities.

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:

The applicant has submitted bios of their school visionaries, whom are highly qualified. The applicant has discussed the support mechanisms in place for the school employees as well as a vision of collaboration with the community.

Weaknesses:

The application loosely contains information on talent acquisition, and adult learning. The applicant does not discuss data on faculty satisfaction, retention etc.

Reader's Score: 16

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 has submitted bios of their school visionaries, whom are highly qualified. The applicant has discussed the support mechanisms in place for the school employees as well as a vision of collaboration with the community.

Weaknesses:

The application loosely contains information on talent acquisition, and adult learning. The applicant does not discuss data on faculty satisfaction, retention etc.

Reader's Score: 1

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

Strengths:

The applicant has submitted bios of their school visionaries, whom are highly qualified. The applicant has discussed the support mechanisms in place for the school employees as well as a vision of collaboration with the community.

Weaknesses:

The application loosely contains information on talent acquisition, and adult learning. The applicant does not discuss data on faculty satisfaction, retention etc.

Reader's Score: 15

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 applicant identifies a timeline of appropriate tasks and the responsibilities for carrying such tasks out. Tasks are applicable to the person directed to carry out responsibility. Tasks are easy to read, broad and accurate

Weaknesses:

Timeline lacks detailed information.

Reader's Score: 12

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:

Applicant has clearly identified the state language in the establishment of charter schools and the guidelines of operation therein. Pg. 47

Weaknesses:

Lacks detail

Reader's Score: 13

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:

Applicant discusses flexibility on pg. e64

Weaknesses:

No contract included

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: I-LEAD, Inc. (U282B120064)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Curriculum		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	12
Assisting Disadvantaged Students		
1. Disadvantaged Students	3	3
Assessing Achievement		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	12
Community Support		
1. Community Support	8	8
Parental and Community Involvement		
1. Parental Involvement	3	2
Quality of the Personnel		
1. Quality of the Personnel	22	14
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	16	11
Charter or Performance Contract		
1. Performance Contract	15	8
Degree of Flexibility		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	2
Sub Total	100	72
Total	100	72

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - Panel - 5: 84.282B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: I-LEAD, Inc. (U282B120064)

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 proposes to implement a program aimed to increase the high school graduation rate in a poverty stricken area. Through programs that are relevant to students and are provided at the instructional level needed, students will progress through the integrated curriculum towards high school graduation. Pg. e38

The program will reach out to 9 12 grade students, many of whom are high school dropouts. The proposed program will assist students in meeting the state standards by identifying what background knowledge the students are lacking and then placing the student in the proper class so that academic progress can be made. Through continual monitoring, the charter school will determine if academic needs are being met and when it is appropriate for the student to advance to the next level. Pg. e40

The applicant has chosen curriculum that is aligned to state standards and that will help reinforce the charter school goal of making learning relate to real-life. Pg. e39-45

Weaknesses:

The discussion of the instructional practices is fairly vague. A more in-depth description of how the students will be instructed would be helpful and would have made the application stronger.

Reader's Score: 12

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 project is targeted toward students who have either dropped out of high school or are at risk of dropping out. This charter school is located in an area that has the highest poverty rate in America, where only 60% of high school student actually graduate. The described project is designed precisely to help these students meet state achievement standards.

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 narrative provides indicators that will be used to determine if broad goals are met based on a wide variety of data. Processes are in place to gather data from different sources to determine school effectiveness on these indicators. Pg. e49 - 50

The applicant presents both academic and non-academic goals with long range targets. These targets indicate increasing participation and performance as each year progresses. Pg. e28 - 33

Weaknesses:

There is not a sense of how this target specific data will be collected or how it will be used. Each of these areas is an important piece of assessment and should be discussed.

Reader's Score: 12

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:

Through bilingual outreach materials, public information sessions and contact with community groups, parents and community members were educated about the new charter school. Pg. e52

The narrative indicates there will be no discrimination practices in the enrollment of students. Pg. e53

Many letters of support were provided from a variety of educational organizations and individuals. In addition, the applicant presented a petition signed by many supporters of the project. Appendix

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 indicates that during the planning phase of this project, community members were invited to review the proposal and provide feedback before it was submitted. Additionally, these meetings have continued on a quarterly basis during the initial year of the charter schools operation. Pg. e52

Weaknesses:

There is not specific language relative to parents being involved in the planning/design of the charter school.

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:

The narrative states the applicant will seek out and recruit candidates that will match the minority make up of the student body. Pg. e57

Both individuals chosen as administrators of the charter school have qualifications and experiences that will be beneficial to the operation of the charter school. Resume

Job responsibilities are listed for the two administrative positions at the charter school. Pg. e27

Weaknesses:

There is no discussion about the qualifications of the Chief Financial Officer nor is there a comprehensive list of responsibilities relative to this position.

There is a lack of experience in the non-profit and financial sector on the Board of Directors.

While the Board of Directors had individuals that are experienced in higher education, there is a significant lack of

educational experience and school management experience.

There is no indication that the Board of Directors will receive any relevant training.

Reader's Score: 14

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 narrative states the applicant will seek out and recruit candidates that will match the minority make up of the student body. Pg. e57

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

Both individuals chosen as administrators of the charter school have qualifications and experiences that will be beneficial to the operation of the charter school. Resume

Job responsibilities are listed for the two administrative positions at the charter school. Pg. e27

Weaknesses:

There is no discussion about the qualifications of the Chief Financial Officer nor is there a comprehensive list of responsibilities relative to this position.

There is a lack of experience in the non-profit and financial sector on the Board of Directors.

While the Board of Directors had individuals that are experienced in higher education, there is a significant lack of educational experience and school management experience.

There is no indication that the Board of Directors will receive any relevant training.

Reader's Score: 12

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 narrative indicates products/services that will be purchased for this project using grant funds. The budget narrative supports these items. Pg. e59

There is a timeline presented for procurement of the necessary products/services as indicated in the narrative. Pg. e60-62

Weaknesses:

It is unclear why some of the professional development activities listed in the budget narrative are necessary for both years of the project (i.e. Smart board training and Cultural Competency professional development).

The timeline as presented does not have any milestones to measure whether or not each task is on the way to completion.

The management plan as presented is loosely worded. More definitive roles/responsibilities along with more specificity regarding the tasks within the project would have been helpful.

Reader's Score: 11

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:

The application indicates a charter agreement was signed on January 5, 2011. Included in this agreement is the method (s) in which the charter school will measure students achievement towards meeting the state standards. Pg. e33

Weaknesses:

Since the charter agreement is signed, the applicant should have included a copy of that in the application so the specifics of the agreement could have been determined.

Reader's Score: 8

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:

As indicated in the narrative the charter school is treated as an LEA that has the ability to collectively bargain with teachers.

The law allows teachers to transfer to a charter school without losing employee rights, such as retirement, right to return and tenure.

Weaknesses:

There is no discussion as to whether or not the charter school has autonomy over budget items and daily operations of the charter school. An assumption can be made about these activities, but it would be better if these were discussed in the narrative.

Reader's Score: 2

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