

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/30/2012 10:14 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Lighthouse Academies of Tulsa, Inc. (U282B120007)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Curriculum		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	15
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	2
Quality of the Personnel		
1. Quality of the Personnel	22	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	16	14
Charter or Performance Contract		
1. Performance Contract	15	15
Degree of Flexibility		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	2
Total	100	93

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.282B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Lighthouse Academies of Tulsa, Inc. (U282B120007)

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:

Belonging to a nationwide network of charter schools, TLCS has the advantage of being able to adopt an educational model which has been well tried and found to have been successful. The core element is an arts infusion program [1.2] designed to enhance academic performance across the curriculum. Beyond that, the curriculum is broad and offers great promise of enriching both the experiences and achievements of children who have been underserved previously [e152 bottom]. The instructional design incorporates highly respected programs based on reliable and well-documented research. Opening initially with younger grades only [e 141], TLCS will enroll eventually PreK-12 focusing on high school graduation and college entry. To ensure that the educational goals targets are met, the carefully selected instructional program will be supported by a range of academic and non-academic initiatives including the teaching of social education [3] and the introduction of innovative teaching methods [e146]. The entire effort will be underpinned by a complex program of baseline testing, data driven teaching strategies and formative assessment which will enable students to meet the rigorous standards of the Oklahoma state testing program [e113].

Weaknesses:

No weakness

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 anticipated population of TLCS is expected to comprise principally educationally disadvantaged children [7]. The response of the founders has been to adopt the Lighthouse Academies Educational Model which focuses all aspects of the educational design on Meeting the needs of the at-risk student. As illustration, these include elements of the curriculum such as the arts infusion program [12] to encourage participation in learning and a

development of confidence; the introduction of a strong social curriculum [13] designed to create a school culture that prioritizes learning; a standards-driven, research based program [13] and a sophisticated English language support strategy [30]. This criterion is addressed directly, thoroughly and convincingly throughout the application.

Weaknesses:

No weakness

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 Lighthouse Academies Network Goal represents one expression of the schools objectives [e209]. The key targets all lend themselves to objective measurement. For example academic achievement is assessed by scores on state standardized tests; college acceptance is determined by independent admission officers; making AYP is judged by the state department of public instruction. The fact that all items within the goal can be measured statistically confirms that the founders have adopted a thoughtful, high quality and appropriately balanced strategy for assessing achievement consistently at crucial stages of the program. In addition, there is a clearly defined plan for assessing achievement during the progress of students through the school. This begins with baseline testing conducted soon after entry and continues with a battery of highly specific procedures conducted at regular intervals [33 - 35]. This provides administrators and faculty with the data which allow instruction to be modified or additional support services to be implemented when it appears that a child is underachieving in relation to the high expectations set.

This proposal allocates insufficient attention to testing in the later years and a lack of clarity in the performance measures.

Weaknesses:

This proposal allocates insufficient attention to testing in the later years and a lack of clarity in the performance measures.

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 schools commitment to equal opportunity (40.2) is reflected in the creation of a board with safeguards to ensure that it will be always multi-ethnic (36.2). The TLCS plan to reach all subgroups with information designed to promote a policy of open access is comprehensive, operating at levels of both media publicity and person to person contact (38.2). The depth of concern to include children with special challenges is addressed by sound measures such as offering documents in translation and making foreign language interpreters available. Reasonable evidence of community support is provided in the form of letters from officers of community organizations (e91- e103) and copious signatures from members of the general public (e277 - e385). In the event of oversubscription, the school will operate a lottery. The operational details[49] confirm that the allocation of lottery based places will be fair and equitable.

Weaknesses:

No weakness

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 composition of the founding group and succeeding board (36.2) will ensure that representatives of local community groups and parents will have key roles in guiding all aspects of TLCS policy and procedure. The firm belief in parental involvement is demonstrated in the creation of an annual survey of parental satisfaction which will provide data for purposes of school and principal evaluation.

Weaknesses:

Because TLCS will be managed by a company with a nationwide network, limits will be set to the extent of local involvement, particularly during the early stages. For example, TLCS will adopt the Lighthouse Academics Educational Model and no evidence is visible to suggest that local interests have been consulted with respect to modification in response to local circumstances.

Beyond the phase of implementation, the oversight role assigned to the Regional Vice President will dictate that many aspects of the schools academic and fiscal operations will be aligned primarily with the mission of the parent company with no explicit evidence that there will be opportunity to modify these in response to local concern.

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 personnel have the appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out the project

Weaknesses:

Weakness lies only in the lack of explicit commitment to encourage applications for employment from traditionally underserved groups.

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:

No strength in relation to the criterion

Weaknesses:

Weakness is recognized in the absence of any explicit policy or procedure designed to ensure the hiring of high quality personnel from groups underrepresented traditionally.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

The application provides ample evidence that the school possesses the detailed procedures to ensure the assembly of a high quality project team. High quality is assured by the schools observing the detailed descriptions of personnel qualifications (45.2) and hiring policies and procedures (45.3). These give clear and strong guidance to those responsible for recruitment. They address directly the general level of qualification and experience required to pursue the mission of TLCS and document the procedures for ensuring that appropriate persons are appointed (46). Job specifications for the administrative team are both exhaustive and sound. Resumes (287) (299) for personnel appointed to date confirm the early effectiveness of the hiring policy and procedures.

Weaknesses:

No weakness

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 school gains significant initial benefit from its contracted partnership with Lighthouse Academies. TLCS will adopt completely many of the tried and successful materials, policies and procedures developed by its institutional partner (48 middle). These are described in detail in the formal agreement (e314 e360). The separate powers of the board are identified precisely and definitively (47 bottom) (e361 e369). The structure of management is tight and the definitions of responsibility clear and precise. Assuming that recruitment matches the job and person specifications, TLCS will have highly effective and efficient management. The application includes a two-year budget summary [e386] supported by a breakdown of expenditure [e382] and a finely detailed timeline of start-up activities [e375].

Weaknesses:

The only matter of concern relates to the degree of autonomy that will be given to the principal. Given that the school must follow the mission of the management company, the principal needs to have clear guidelines regarding the degree to which she/he can advocate local concerns when there may be conflict between local and company preferences.

Reader's Score: 14

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:

In a charter school contract signed 17 January, 2012 between Lighthouse Academies Inc and The Independent School District No 1 of Tulsa County, OK, the management company commits definitively to compliance with all terms of the contract (e 105). Thus TLCS is committed to meet all the requirements of the states School Testing Program Act (e 113) and to supply data as needed to the State Office of Accountability as the primary route to measuring student performance. Thus, the school will be subject to the same performance measurement criteria as regular public schools locally.

Weaknesses:

No weakness

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 application documents unequivocally [50] that TLCS will enjoy substantial flexibility in its operation. Fundamentally, the state will allow TLCS to adopt completely the policies and procedures of Lighthouse Academies. As a result, the school will enjoy maximum freedom in fiscal management, handbook content and curriculum design for example. It will be exempt from state compensation standards for teachers and other personnel.

Weaknesses:

While the text states that TLCS will have freedom from control and much flexibility it is not made clear to what degree this means that it will be free of state regulation but still subject to limitations imposed by the management company.

Reader's Score: 2

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Lighthouse Academies of Tulsa, Inc. (U282B120007)

Reader #1: *****

	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	15
Community Support		
1. Community Support	8	4
Parental and Community Involvement		
1. Parental Involvement	3	2
Quality of the Personnel		
1. Quality of the Personnel	22	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	16	10
Charter or Performance Contract		
1. Performance Contract	15	0
Degree of Flexibility		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	1
Total	100	67

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.282B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Lighthouse Academies of Tulsa, Inc. (U282B120007)

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 a logical curriculum design for the proposed pre k-4th grade school scheduled to open in August 2012. The intent to create an arts-infusion school with a focus on looping, a longer-school day and school year will likely support the program's intent to impact student achievement and graduation rates. Engaging students in reading activities for 2 hours daily (p17), the use of learning centers (p17) and the use of established curriculum components (p16) will also likely support school goals.

Weaknesses:

The narrative does not clearly state how the curriculum will focus on college awareness or preparation (p 4, 11) in the lower grades. Beyond stating that classrooms will be named after colleges and universities, it is not clear how the curriculum will include college awareness in grades Pre-K-6. More detail is needed in the area of college awareness. The applicant also notes that each student will learn a musical instrument (p20-21). However, the only instrument indicated is the recorder. Consideration of other instruments beyond the recorder would have strengthened the proposal.

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 applicant provides clear documentation that the proposed charter will likely serve educationally disadvantaged students. Data from the school previously closed by the district indicate that students zoned for the school underperformed in math, social studies, writing and science, when compared to the state (p7-8). The use of an arts-infused curriculum, longer school day and year (p16), looping (p24), RTI (p25), and purposefully selected curriculum resources will likely assist students needing assistance to meet academic and state 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 clearly addresses six goals involving college acceptance (p3), graduation rate (p4), student academic performance (p31-32). The goals establish a target for student performance and will increase the likelihood that teachers and administrators maintain a focus on student achievement. The narrative also indicates a focus on using data-based decision making through various formative assessments, including MAP, DIBELS, and network assessments (p33-34). The variety of assessments and staggered administrations will ensure that teachers and administrators have a detailed picture of student academic mastery and deficiencies.

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 narrative provides evidence of community support in the narrative. The applicant provides a petition signed by persons or time-stamped indicating support for opening the proposed charter school. Letters of support from the Arts and Humanities Council, the Chamber, Antioch Baptist Church and three other community organizations indicate knowledge of the proposed charter and support for the school's opening (appendix). The participation of the Arts and Humanities Council is particularly noteworthy in that the school intends to establish an arts infused curriculum (p e91, e93). The narrative states that the applicant has designed a recruitment policy that gives students, especially ESOL and special needs students, every opportunity to enroll (p40). The narrative also clearly describes the school's lottery process if the school receives more applications than allotted spaces (p40).

Weaknesses:

The petition included, as support for the charter school, does not clearly indicate what information was shared to garner signatures or if persons indicated are parents interested in enrolling their students in the charter school (p e277-e284). While general support for the school is important, documentation showing that actual parents, potential teachers or interested community members expressed interest in the model would have strengthened assertions that the school has support among potential stakeholders. No date reference is provided for handwritten signatures (p e280-e284), the inclusion of which would have indicated recent support for the proposal. Also, several letters of support included used parallel verbiage (p e91-e96, e99-e103), and did not indicate how each organization would support school offerings or program development.

Reader's Score: 4

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 a list of strategies to encourage student and parent interest (p38). The use of flyers and notices in newspapers, supermarkets and community centers will likely inform parents of the school and the enrollment activities. A parent resource center, possible volunteer opportunities and parent engagement in student academic progress are clearly stated. A strength of the proposal is the intent to hire a Family coordinator that will serve as a ombudsman between parents and the school (p44).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly discuss how parents will be involved beyond parents serving on the Board (p37), an annual family survey (p39), and possible volunteer opportunities (p44). There is no clear indication that the Lighthouse Academies will engage parents in implementation or program development. The narrative also does not clearly indicate if current members of the board (p37) or any of the indicated Teach for America teachers (p39) are parents of potential students. The inclusion of routine, structured strategies to engage parents in student academic progress and school development would have strengthened the proposal.

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:

See strength comment below

Weaknesses:

See weakness comment below

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

Sub Question

Strengths:

None noted

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not specifically address strategies for recruiting personnel from underrepresented groups. While the narrative notes that the Lighthouse Academies hiring team will facilitate hiring (p46), there is no clear discussion on how the team will encourage applications from members of underrepresented groups.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

The resumes of the Regional Vice-President and school principal are included in appendix E and F. Both have work experiences in education and school management organizations. Job descriptions and expectations are clearly defined for the regional Vice President, the principal and the director of instruction (appendix). The management organization will also likely provide appropriate supports for local leaders from members of the national leadership team, major organizational donors, and a partnership with Teach for America (p3).

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 applicant presents a logical management plan. Duties of the board are delineated and address major components of school operation. The Board has entered a contract with Lighthouse Academies and references responsibilities delegated to the management company throughout the narrative. An organizational chart is provided in the appendix (p e286). The decision to contract with Lighthouse Academies is supported in the narrative (p11) and implies a thoughtful process to school design. A detailed timeline is provided in the appendix (p e375) and notes that many initial planning activities have been completed. The presence of the detailed timeline will likely facilitate school planning and school opening. The budget is detailed and delineates costs for instructional materials and furniture.

Weaknesses:

The narrative projects a management plan heavily directed by the Lighthouse Academies and not clearly driven by the school's board. While statements of intense Board oversight are made in narrative (p47), it is not demonstrated in the narrative. For instance, the management company will hire the principal's supervisor (regional vice president-p41), and be heavily involved in the selection of the principal (p41,48) and staff (p43). Also, the management company, through the regional vice-president, will coach the principal and oversee the daily operations of the school. While the management company is hired to facilitate operations, the development of the school should routinely include the board to ensure the Board maintains autonomy and an arm's length agreement with the management company. Problems may arise in that

the principal is not evaluated by the Board and the narrative does not clearly state the principal's involvement with the Board. Problems may also arise in that Lighthouse Academies will provide consultation to the board on all contracts over \$5000 (p48), presumably to include the Lighthouse Academies contract. Also, the management company is not included on the organizational chart (p e286) and its inclusion may have provided additional details. Clarity of intent regarding how the Board will exercise ultimate authority over the charter school and its development is needed.

Reader's Score: 10

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 does not provide evidence of an approved charter in the proposal packet.

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 clearly states that the charter school will maintain control over operational and educational matters. As noted in the narrative, school budget, curriculum, policy, student affairs and human resources will be under the purview of the school.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly address provisions of flexibility as defined in Oklahoma law. While the charter school contract in the appendix references adhering to the law (p. e104), there is no clear indication of what the law establishes regarding flexibility. A summary of provisions established in legislation or a summary of Oklahoma Department of Education policy granting flexibility to charter schools would have provided necessary support.

Reader's Score: 1

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Lighthouse Academies of Tulsa, Inc. (U282B120007)

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	13
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	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	16	10
Charter or Performance Contract		
1. Performance Contract	15	0
Degree of Flexibility		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	1
Total	100	70

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.282B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Lighthouse Academies of Tulsa, Inc. (U282B120007)

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 proposes challenging curriculum to be implemented in the charter school serving students PreK to 4th grade with the plan of adding one grade level per year until it reaches 8th grade. The curriculum is aligned with its mission and supported by instructional methodology which is proven, research-based, and reflective of best practices such as Imagine it!, FOSS Kits, Saxon Math, and Core Knowledge.

The proposed charter school believes that Arts Infusion approach is a positive way to increase student engagement and will help develop a deeper understanding of core concepts, ultimately leading to increased student achievement. (pp. e26) Combined, the challenging academic curriculum and arts infusion model help students achieve proficiency on state and federal standards.

The implementation process is systematic addressing the needs of all students. (pp. e22) The core elements of the proposed charter school education model are college focus, arts infusion, standards-driven programs, social curriculum and SHINE, data driven instruction, professional development, and more time on instruction with a longer day and school year. (pp. e26) The application has provided a detailed description of how each core element of education model would be implemented in the charter school.

Weaknesses:

Though Arts Infusion approach is one of the strength areas of the curriculum, the application lacks a structured implementation process to incorporate Arts into all core subject areas.

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 application proposes research-based instructional methodology and programs to meet the needs of all students especially the disadvantaged students as an evident in TLCs recruitment and admissions policies. (pp. e42) The proposed programs to assist the target student population are RTI for At-Risk students and Student Support Team. .

Weaknesses:

No weakness 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 application proposes an assessment system aligned with the curriculum and instructional methodology. The system provides multiple measures to be administered on a regular basis to assess student performance. It is evident that the charter school proposes established procedures to measure student learning using a variety of innovative forms of data collection through MAP, weekly curricular assessments, regular review of authentic student work using unified rubrics, locally developed writing assessment, DIBELS, and End of Course Assessment. The collected data are to be used to guide the instruction and decision. (pp. e47)

The charter school proposes specific instructional goals which are related to the overall goals of LHA such as 75% or more of students who enter the charter school no later grade 4 and have been at TLCS for at least three full years will score proficient/passing or higher on their state-specific assessments.

Weaknesses:

The application proposes college readiness, however the assessment lacks rigor. It would be more aligned with its mission if a national standardized assessment were to be included in the assessment system such as Stanford 10. Furthermore, for a long range planning to maintain its sustainability towards its mission of college awareness, a college readiness assessment such as Explore (Pre-ACT) could be an addition mechanism to measure the charter schools objective.

Reader's Score: 13

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 application proposes a series of strategies to inform the community about the charter school to recruit students and provide means to meet the needs of all students to be enrolled. The proposed charter school has established partnership with various local community groups to support its mission such as TFA, George Kaiser Family Foundation. Letters of support are presented in the application. (pp. e94)

The lottery process is evident in the application. Such process enables all students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school.

Weaknesses:

No weakness 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 application proposes means to involve parents such as conducting open house outreach activities. An annual parent survey is to be conducted to solicit feedback from the parents. The charter school proposes a position of Family Coordinator to collaborate and partner with parents for developing and fostering ongoing family communication. (pp. e59) A seat is reserved for the parent representative in the board as evidence to encourage parental involvement.

Weaknesses:

The charter school could explore more opportunities and outreach to the community at large to solicit involvement and support.

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 charter school has provided a detailed description of roles and responsibilities of key school personnel. Hiring policies and procedures are evident in the application.

Based on the provided qualifications of key project personnel and experiences they have, the charter school has sound board governance and assembled a leadership team to launch a successful charter school. (pp. e229)

The application proposes an organizational structure to oversee the daily operation of the school and its effectiveness towards achieving the charter schools goals.

Weaknesses:

It is not evident that the applications for employment from traditionally underrepresented groups are encouraged.

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:

No strengths

Weaknesses:

It is not evident that the applications for employment from traditionally underrepresented groups are encouraged.

Reader's Score: 0

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

Strengths:

The charter school has provided a detailed description of roles and responsibilities of key school personnel. Hiring policies and procedures are evident in the application.

Based on the provided qualifications of key project personnel and experiences they have, the charter school has sound board governance and assembled a leadership team to launch a successful charter school. (pp. e229)

The application proposes an organizational structure to oversee the daily operation of the school and its effectiveness towards achieving the charter schools goals.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses

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 charter school proposes a management and governance model detailed with roles and responsibilities of each member (pp. e62).

The application includes a detailed Start Up Management Plan (pp. e375) including the timeline and milestone to assess the accomplishment of the tasks. Some of activities listed are pre-planning, organizational planning, facilities, staffing, students, education, and school operations.

An itemized budget summary for the first two project years is evident in the application (pp. e382). The summary provides the timeline and cost of each proposed purchase towards meeting the objectives of the charter school.

Weaknesses:

The management plan lacks sustainable strategic planning as proposing only to contract the management organization to operate. A succession plan needs to be developed to sustain its mission and vision.

Reader's Score: 10

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:

No strength noted.

Weaknesses:

The authorized charter contract is not evident.

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 application proposes autonomy in operating the school such as allocating budgetary resources including setting base and incentive compensation levels for teachers to increase the retention rate of the best teachers.

The school also has flexibility to enter into contracts such as facility leases.

The outlined plan is evident in the application. (pp. e65)

Weaknesses:

The proposal lacks specific description of the degree of autonomy over budget, expenditures, daily operations, and personnel in accordance with its State's charter school law.

The application does not provide any evidence of the flexibility afforded by the SEA nor any explanation of the law

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

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