

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/18/2012 12:31 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** River's Edge Academy Charter School (U282B120017)

**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	2
<b>Assessing Achievement</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	8
<b>Community Support</b>		
1. Community Support	8	6
<b>Parental and Community Involvement</b>		
1. Parental Involvement	3	3
<b>Quality of the Personnel</b>		
1. Quality of the Personnel	22	18
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	16	10
<b>Charter or Performance Contract</b>		
1. Performance Contract	15	15
<b>Degree of Flexibility</b>		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
<b>Total</b>	100	80

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel - 3: 84.282B

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

Applicant: River's Edge Academy Charter School (U282B120017)

## 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 provides some information about the Rivers Edge Academy Charter School Development Project. The charter school is designed to address the concerns of the group of parents and community members in the Rogue River School District. Concerns include high dropout rates and the lack of educational options. The Rogue River School District's community is likely to successfully address the issue of helping educationally at-risk students because the program-design is focused on increasing student achievement.

The applicant lists strategies and practices the Rivers Edge Academy Charter School will offer to students. A variety of curriculum and instructional practices that can meet the individual needs of high school students is provided by the applicant. The discussion about instructional and curriculum practices supports the importance of improving student achievement for students in grades K through 12.

The applicant presents information about the limitless academic strategies (options) for students in grades K through 12 that will address academic excellence, prevent dropouts, increase dropout retrieval, and promote choice in education (e 27). The applicant reasons that personalize learning will have a positive effect on student learning and the approach will enable all students to meet state and local student achievement standards. The importance of teacher training, pre-assessments, and planning sessions is discussed by the applicant. The applicant provides information that supports the conclusion that the efforts of the charter school will improve student achievement because the learning activities will be personalized.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

### Selection Criteria - Assisting Disadvantaged Students

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

**Strengths:**

(1) The applicant provides information about meeting the individual learning needs of students enrolled at the Rivers Edge Academy charter school. The applicant plans to target at risk youth currently enrolled in the school district as well as students who are currently homeschooling (page e28). The issue of students not meeting academic performance levels, as measured by state and local assessments, is widespread.

(2) The applicant discusses how teachers will gain intimate knowledge of students learning strengths and weaknesses. The availability of a variety of instructional practices to the teachers indicates that the applicant values monitoring student progress and making data-driven decisions (page e29). Highly qualified teachers and parental involvement are key components of the proposed academic program. This discussion supports the importance of using teacher judgment to select the instructional strategies that best meet the needs of students.

(3) The applicant provides information about its vision of using appropriate instructional practices on a typical day for elementary and high school students (pages e37to e40). The Rivers Edge Academy charter school program is designed to use community resources for learning and, in turn, make students more motivated to learn (page e33).

**Weaknesses:**

The Rivers Edge Academy Charter School plans to enroll 200 students grades K-12. Enrollment has been capped at 100 students by the chartering entity (page e52).The applicant provides inadequate information about the program design to meet Oregon Standards. The Oregon State content standards will be the foundation for implementing the educational program for both elementary and high school students, yet the applicant does not develop and communicate plans and policies that will impact middle level education at the Rivers Edge Academy Charter School.

**Reader's Score:**     **2**

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

(1) The applicant provides a description of School Objectives and Student Objectives (pages e46 to e51). The objectives are designed to manage processes that are related to establishing and maintaining a quality educational program. Objectives related to student achievement, professional development, technology, mentorship, outreach, and school culture are consistent with the development of educational programs designed to provide academic excellence. The discussion supports the importance of developing and articulating objectives that are consistent with stated goals.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides limited information about how it will judge whether it has achieved the prescribed objectives. For instance, Objective 3: Accreditation does not describe what is involved in accomplishing the task of meeting the accreditation standards and why the applicant thinks that it is important. The applicant presents three sets of objectives (pages e46 to e51, pages e56 two e64, and pages e137 to page e138). Each of the sets of objectives contains related concepts but the applicant does not present a clear description of which objectives it will implement. For instance, student objectives in the Selection Criteria pertain to State Assessments and meeting the National Technology Standards. In the Management Plan the applicant's objective is that 75% of the students at REACH will meet or exceed standards as measured by the Oregon State Assessment System within two years of entering REACH. The REACH Charter School Contract states that by June of each year, given state standards by grade level, 88% of students will perform annually in each of the academic areas tested, at or above the mean for all Oregon public schools upon completion of the respective program assigned to the grade as measured by the Oregon State Assessment System. The applicant does not provide a clear description of the objectives of the charter school program.

Reader's Score: 8

### Selection Criteria - Community Support

#### 1. The extent of community support for the application.

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be informed about the charter school and how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school.**

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

#### **Strengths:**

(1) The applicant provides information about the extent of community support for the Rivers Edge Academy Charter School. The list of media outlets and community agencies indicate that there will be a supportive response to the charter school program that will offer choice to the community (page e51). The wide range of information distribution networks will have a positive impact on informing the public of the new charter school.

(2) The applicant describes the enrollment procedures as an inclusive process that includes all students. Students are eligible for admission regardless of ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, economic level, or achievement level. Admission is by application and through an equitable blind lottery (page e 52). The discussion of the admission process indicates that the process is transparent and it emphasizes the importance of fairness and equal opportunity.

(3) The applicant provides two letters that show evidence of community support (pages e72 and e73). The desire for additional educational options and student support for innovative approaches to learning is a sign of the community's readiness to explore new approaches to learning process.

#### **Weaknesses:**

The purpose of describing the extent of community support for the application is to pull together available resources to communicate to the public and educational alternative that might address the specific educational needs of their child. The applicant does not provide a plan for how resources will be identified and used to the maximum extent. Furthermore, the applicant does not provide a description of the process that will determine the specifics of the messaging campaign.

Reader's Score: 6

### Selection Criteria - Parental and Community Involvement

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school.**

#### **Strengths:**

(1) The applicant describes the series of events and activities that explains how parents and other members of the community were involved in the development of the charter school. Specifically, in formal coffee klatches led to the formation of a development team. The development team led to the organization of the formal governing board. The development of the vision and framework, the application, and the charter application, emerged from the work of parents and community members (page e53). The applicant's plan is likely to be successful because the design and the instructional framework for the charter school began with parental and community involvement.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Personnel**

**1. Quality of project personnel.**

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

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

**Strengths:**

(1) The applicant provides a description of the efforts made to encourage applications for employment from underrepresented groups. The applicant plans to recruit to fill new position by placing advertisements in publications that focus on underrepresented groups and at colleges that have high percentages of students from underrepresented groups (page e56).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**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:**

(1) The applicant provides a description of the efforts made to encourage applications for employment from underrepresented groups. The applicant plans to recruit to fill new position by placing advertisements in publications that focus on underrepresented groups and at colleges that have high percentages of students from underrepresented groups (page e56).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

(2) The applicant provides the resume' of the Project Director/Director. It lists the qualifications of the leadership position at Rivers edge Academy charter school (page e78 and e79). The charter school requires a person that has the vision to lead in the development of an innovative school that is designed to improve the academic performance of at-risk students. The goal in hiring qualified key personnel is to recruit and hire an instructional leader who will inspire others to move as a team that actualizes the vision that the leader articulates. The current Project Director/Director has many of the necessary skills and experiences.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant fails to discuss the selection process that was used to fill the position of Project Director/Director.

**Reader's Score: 16**

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

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

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

**Strengths:**

(1) The applicant describes the essence of the 12 goal/objective assignments in the management plan. Within those goals/objectives are over 40 sub-tasks. The topic areas include Academic Achievement, Technology, Community Partnerships, and School Culture (pages e50 to e63). The issue of controlling the course of action, to accomplish specific tasks, is critical to improving the educational process for at risk students.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant presents several tasks and related activities for Year 1 and Year 2. The applicant does not account for how the task will be completed on time and what milestones will be reviewed. Additionally, the applicant does not clearly define who has responsibility. Given the sparseness of the information presented, it is not likely that the management plan will result in completion that is on time.

**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:**

(1) The applicant provides evidence that there is a contract between the Rogue River School district and River's Edge Academy Charter School (pages e80 to e112).

(2) The applicant explains that the Charter Contract stipulates the Evaluation of Student Performance & Procedures for Corrective Action. All learning goals must be aligned to the Common Core Standards, adopted by Oregon. REACH must participate in all statewide assessments required under No Child Left Behind. All students must be required to participate in State Assessments. REACH must pursue Adequate Yearly Progress as established by Oregon under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 & as measured by participation rates & scores on the Oregon Statewide Assessments, attendance & any other criteria used by the state to determine AYP for all public schools.

The applicant provides a list of 11 assessment strategies that will be used at the Rivers Edge Academy Charter School. The first entry is the use of all annual mandated state assessment tools (page e136). In Oregon, the statewide assessment system, Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, cannot be waived according to the charter schools statute. All students in a charter school must participate in state assessment in the same manner as those in traditional public schools.

(3) The issue of accountability is evident throughout both documents (page e90 and e91, pages e135 and e136). The measurement of student performance is important to the authorizing District and the parent-community. Specifically, academic standards for the charter school must be set at or above those of the District's students who meet or exceed the standard (pages e90 and e139). The Charter School Contract is appropriate and educationally sound because it spotlights student achievement as measured by Oregon Standards.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Selection Criteria - Degree of Flexibility**

- 1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a description of the flexibility afforded under its State's law in terms of establishing an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and in terms of whether charter schools are exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools.**

**The Secretary also encourages the applicant to include a description of the degree of autonomy the charter school will have over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel in accordance with its State's charter school law.**

**Strengths:**

(1) The applicant provides a description of the flexibility afforded the charter school under Oregon law (page e65 to e66). However, the REACH charter school has agreed to specific, and comprehensive, terms regarding the Educational Program (pages e82 to e89). The charter school has autonomy over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel, with certain parameters. For instance, under employment matters, criminal background checks, teacher licensure and registration requirement, HQ staff requirements, and building administrator expectations are agreed to (page e102 and e103).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:**     **3**

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**Status:**           Submitted  
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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/18/2012 03:53 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: River's Edge Academy Charter School (U282B120017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Curriculum</b>		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	13
<b>Assisting Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	3	2
<b>Assessing Achievement</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	9
<b>Community Support</b>		
1. Community Support	8	6
<b>Parental and Community Involvement</b>		
1. Parental Involvement	3	3
<b>Quality of the Personnel</b>		
1. Quality of the Personnel	22	19
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	16	14
<b>Charter or Performance Contract</b>		
1. Performance Contract	15	15
<b>Degree of Flexibility</b>		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
<b>Total</b>	100	84

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel - 3: 84.282B

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

Applicant: River's Edge Academy Charter School (U282B120017)

## 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 discusses various learning strategies that the school proposes to utilize. Specifically they discuss competency based personalized learning plans, targeted early interventions, place based learning, multiple intelligences and technology, community partnerships, mentoring/service learning, innovative assessment and small school setting. Additionally a list of curriculum choices are included on page 21 with an on-going process of adding new curriculum based on the students needs. The Oregon State Content standards will be the basis for the educational program, (page 7, charter application).

#### Weaknesses:

The school did not discuss academic results of other schools using same curriculums. This information is useful in that it demonstrates and supports the applicants desire to use best practices in helping to raise academic achievement.

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:

REACH plans include creation of an early intervention elementary level drop-out prevention program and utilize academic disengagement to target students who need preventive measures and interventions. These interventions will take place by implementing an assessment plan that will take place 3 times per year involving parent, student and teacher. The outcome will be goal setting for appropriate placement and support. Continued professional development will help to insure appropriate assessments take place (pages 1,2). On page 12 they emphasize individual personalized learning and remediation for all students and parental involvement with the goal of creating personalized education plans for each student every year. They also discuss the use of technology and community partnerships in helping to increase graduation rates in their district which are currently 67%. Page 14 states the Oregon Test of Knowledge and Skills will be used for mandated state assessments. Course outlines will be developed and aligned with Oregon standards by July 2013 (page 21). REACH will provide Individualized instruction tailored to the students' needs by using Response to Intervention, Skills Tutor and consultation services. The schools flexible non-traditional opportunities should allow students who learn differently to be successful (page 25, 26).

**Weaknesses:**

The application presents options to increase graduation rates however, it does not directly discuss the issue of meeting State academic content and achievement standards which is integral in eventually achieving high graduation rates.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Selection Criteria - Assessing Achievement**

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

**Strengths:**

Benchmark assessments (easyCBM) will be used to gather data on each student to help identify needs for a Personalized Learning Plan. Teachers will participate in professional development and weekly meetings will take place to evaluate each student's progress. Common Core Standards are the foundation of the educational program (page 22, 23) and a 4 tier program to help identify needs and raise academic achievement through early intervention and tutoring. Page 28 describes how the school will report accountability measures to stakeholders and financial reports to appropriate boards and the public. Rubrics will be used to measure achievement goals (page 29) and a student accountability plan will measure student achievement (pages 30-32).

**Weaknesses:**

Although objectives are listed to, "ensure organization, policies, procedures and involvement" along with professional development (bottom of page 6) and training (top of page 8) and accountability to finances and to the public (page 28), the application does not specifically describe the efforts to achieve the charter school's objectives through board training, board governance and charter school law. Nonetheless, they do describe time and efficiency measures by using technology but also include questionable goals such as (page 14) teachers meeting weekly with students and parents to review the educational plan. With 25 students per teacher, this reviewer worries that a teacher will not have 25 hours to hold meetings (Page 14).

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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 discusses various marketing techniques and outreach to community agencies. The outreach is also bilingual and targets at risk students. They included 2 letters of support and various articles supporting the school. The school currently has a waiting list. This provides assurances that the school is indeed making efforts to reach out to the

community.

**Weaknesses:**

The application needed to include letters of support from parents and specific plans on how they will contact, attract and serve at-risk students.

This demonstrates a true desire to serve at-risk students.

**Reader's Score: 6**

**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 charter plan and development, vision and framework were all designed by parents and community members. This is an on going goal of "Developing community partnerships/mentorships" (page 17). This demonstrates a true charter school community.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Personnel**

**1. Quality of project personnel.**

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

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

**Strengths:**

REACH has a strong school board that supports the school's mission and vision with a strong financial background, previous non-profit board experience, charter school development (although it does not mention which charter schools so this reviewer cannot tell if they were high achieving) and strong curriculum design. Outreach to applicants who are traditionally underrepresented will occur through advertisements in publications that that focus on underrepresented groups (Page 38). All teachers are highly qualified and receive professional development and diversity training. The school has a strong leader, Ms. Enright.

**Weaknesses:**

Ms. Enright appears to be an excellent leader but the school needs to make sure they have back-up leadership in the unfortunate situation that Ms. Enright might not be able to serve in this capacity. The will demonstrate a desire to make sure the school remains successful and that founders syndrome will not negatively affect the school.

**Reader's Score: 19**

**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:**

Outreach to applicants who are traditionally underrepresented will occur through advertisements in publications that focus on underrepresented groups (Page 38).

**Weaknesses:**

Outreach through job fairs, community events or universities would be helpful in furthering this goal of encouraging applicants from underrepresented groups.

**Reader's Score: 1**

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

**Strengths:**

REACH has a strong school board that supports the school's mission and vision with a strong financial background, previous non-profit board experience, charter school development (although it does not mention which charter schools so this reviewer cannot tell if they were high achieving) and strong curriculum design. All teachers are highly qualified and receive professional development and diversity training. The school has a strong leader, Ms. Enright.

**Weaknesses:**

Ms. Enright appears to be an excellent leader but the school needs to make sure they have back-up leadership in the unfortunate situation that Ms. Enright might not be able to serve in this capacity. This would demonstrate a desire to make sure the school remains successful and that founders syndrome will not negatively affect the school.

**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:**

Strong academic, financial, training, technology plans are evidenced in the application (pages 40-42). Also an aggressive outreach plan is presented (pages 43, 44). The governing board will oversee administration of the funds. A realistic time line was presented.

**Weaknesses:**

Too many responsibilities were simply stated as the responsibility of the Project Director. There needs to be more assistance in the delegation of responsibility.

**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:**

REACH is an approved district charter school and has included its approved charter and contract in the application. All learning goals must be aligned to the Common Core Standards and REACH must participate in all statewide assessments required under NCLB and pursue AYP. The district can terminate the charter if REACH fails to meet its growth target for 2 consecutive years. A full description of the relationship is included in the charter contract.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**Selection Criteria - Degree of Flexibility****1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.**

**Note:** The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a description of the flexibility afforded under its State's law in terms of establishing an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and in terms of whether charter schools are exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools.

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to include a description of the degree of autonomy the charter school will have over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel in accordance with its State's charter school law.

**Strengths:**

The school has full management, legal, academic and fiscal autonomy from the district. It is governed by a nonprofit board, the charter agreement with the LEA and adopted bylaws. This provides assurance that the school has the flexibility it needs to be successful.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted in this answer.

**Reader's Score:**     **3**

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**Status:**           Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/19/2012 09:19 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** River's Edge Academy Charter School (U282B120017)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Curriculum</b>		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	12
<b>Assisting Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Disadvantaged Students	3	2
<b>Assessing Achievement</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	10
<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	18
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	16	12
<b>Charter or Performance Contract</b>		
1. Performance Contract	15	15
<b>Degree of Flexibility</b>		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
<b>Total</b>	100	83

# Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Panel - 3: 84.282B

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

Applicant: River's Edge Academy Charter School (U282B120017)

## 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:

Pg. 9 explains the premise of REACH's educational program, which is to provide dropout alternatives from an elementary approach through personalized learning programs (PLP). The program describes comprehensive benchmark and learning style assessments to be used throughout the year to address student learning needs. Based on these formative and summative assessments the applicant will adjust the PLP's. On pg.11 REACH draws on the affirmations of Secretary Duncan and other research to support PLP's. REACH seeks to utilize resource libraries to provide multiple curriculum to teachers, also draws on proven effective curriculum such as Saxon Math, Step-up to writing, etc.

#### Weaknesses:

REACH seeks to offer classrooms without walls in a very broad sense without much supporting detail as to how it will be monitored. On pg. 28, the applicant's description of "Students taking part in any and all of these options at any given time," is ambiguous and difficult for the reader to discern how all of the options may be accessible by students.

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:

Educational specialists utilized to strengthen assessment of students needs, creation of PLPs and professional development. On pg. 113, REACH describes personalized learning plans at the crux of the school design, with specific reference to using RTI principles to provide four tiered levels of support. Applicant documents the high ELL population and will address those needs, materials will be distributed in English and Spanish and the director is bilingual. The applicant will offer ongoing assessments and analysis of student learning styles (Multiple Intelligences) will provide a basis for documenting student needs and administering appropriate educational methods.

**Weaknesses:**

Applicant doesn't clearly state how middle schoolers will be addressed. Nationwide there is a need for improvement in Middle School education and the applicant fails to mention specific interventions or strategies to reach this group.

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

REACH will develop an evaluation tool that is based on an accredited model in particular the NWA of Accredited Schools and The Common Core and NEIS Standards. These are clearly outlined goals to meet key areas of the school's charter including: self-evaluation, professional development, accreditation and outreach.

**Weaknesses:**

Overall the project plan seems to lack focus and clear direction for obtaining the goals and objectives of the charter. On pg. 28 the applicant notes these align with but are different than the Project Goals and Objectives listed in the selection criteria (vii) or should this be (vii)?

It is unclear to the reader why the student objectives for the state assessments on pg. 32 are not the same as those on pg. 39. Objective 4 on pg. 29 indicates that programs will be developed; however, it is unclear how far along in the process such plans are, and these goals are crucial to the school's mission.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**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:**

On pg. 43 it is noted that the school will make a concerted effort to reach targeted populations; information will be provided in dual languages. School will outreach to agencies serving the targeted populations. Also, on pg. 43 the applicant notes that the school will offer a structured volunteer mentoring option to allow parents to become more involved in the school.

**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 school will include a significant parental presence as it is a grassroots charter founded by community parents and offers open enrollment and participates in the lottery process.

The applicant stresses Place-Based Educational opportunities to enhance student readiness for the real-world and multiple modes of learning. The applicant intends to utilize the community as an educational resource

#### Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 3

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Personnel

### 1. Quality of project personnel.

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

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

#### Strengths:

The founding members have relevant experience in education, budgeting and non-profit board membership. Pg. 38: targeted recruitment efforts will be made to reach underrepresented populations, such as in specific publications and communities.

#### Weaknesses:

The directors resume does not show prior experience in school leadership which is crucial to any schools success. The project directors role is paramount and the resume does not show significant school leadership prior to this role.

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 notes that as a school with a large Hispanic population, they must employ bilingual, certified ESOL instructors as administrators. The founding members have relevant experience in education, budgeting and non-profit board membership. Pg. 38: targeted recruitment efforts will be made to reach underrepresented populations, such as in specific publications and communities.

## Sub Question

### **Weaknesses:**

The directors resume does not show prior experience in school leadership which is crucial to any schools success. The project directors role is paramount and the resume does not show significant school leadership prior to this role.

**Reader's Score:** 2

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

### **Strengths:**

The applicant notes that as a school with a large Hispanic population, they must employ bilingual, certified ESOL instructors as administrators. The founding members have relevant experience in education, budgeting and non-profit board membership. Pg. 38 of the application describes targeted recruitment efforts to be made to reach underrepresented populations, such as in specific publications and communities.

### **Weaknesses:**

The director's resume does not show prior experience in school leadership which is crucial to any school's success. The project director's role is paramount and the resume does not show significant school leadership prior to this role.

**Reader's Score:** 16

## **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 goals are clearly defined for creating various long term plans to support the educational program. The project director has the overall responsibility for all of the objectives but will incorporate the assistance of consultants and the charter council.

### **Weaknesses:**

Goal 1, Objective 1 for student achievement differs from those previously mentioned and it is unclear to the reader why these would be different. Given the scope of the many long-term goals for planning listed for year 1, the reader was unable to discern where the school is as far as the development of these plans. It is important that these key items be in progress during year 2 to ensure completion.

**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 charter contract, established in 2011, is attached. The educational program must meet or exceed the content standards established by the State. Pg. 83 states REACH will participate in all mandatory state assessments, as well as USED or other mandates to meet the requirements of NCLB. Pg. 137 sets forth the goals for student achievement in a clear and concise manner.

**Weaknesses:**

None Noted.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**Selection Criteria - Degree of Flexibility**

**1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school.**

**Note:** The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a description of the flexibility afforded under its State's law in terms of establishing an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency and in terms of whether charter schools are exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools.

The Secretary also encourages the applicant to include a description of the degree of autonomy the charter school will have over such matters as the charter school's budget, expenditures, daily operation, and personnel in accordance with its State's charter school law.

**Strengths:**

Pg. e151 outlines those statutes that REACH is not exempt from according to state and federal law. The school may apply to the SBE for a waiver of any provision of ORS Chapter 338, Oregon State Charter Law. Pg. 153 states that REACH is allowed distinctive internal flexibility to control costs, including teacher salary, student teacher ratio, etc.

**Weaknesses:**

None Noted.

**Reader's Score:** 3

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