

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/16/2013 01:52 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Chicago Collegiate, Inc. (U282B130022)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	15
2. Disadvantaged Students	3	2
3. Strategy for Achievement	15	7
4. Community Support	8	4
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Quality of Personnel	22	15
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	18	9
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Performance Contract	16	16
2. Flexibility	3	3
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority 1</b>		
1. Rural/SPED/ELL	4	2
<b>Competitive Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority 2</b>		
1. Promoting Diversity	2	1
<b>Competitive Priority 3</b>		
1. Military Families	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>75</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Chicago Collegiate, Inc. (U282B130022)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

#### 1. I. 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 a comprehensive description of the curriculum that the proposed educational program at the charter school will implement. The grade levels to be served are clearly indicated and the plan to grow to school from grade four to grade twelve is clearly explained (e23 and e24). The data presented by the applicant, that describes the academic achievement levels of students in the surrounding schools, show that the applicant is in touch with the achievement challenges that the students face (page e24). Based on analyses of those data the applicant provides a highly developed argument that justifies the curriculum developed by the charter school (e28 to e30). The applicant provides a detailed description of the instructional program that teachers will follow and the details of a typical day of a student (e29). Additionally, the applicant provides an impressive explanation of how the school staff will implement practices associated with the delivery of instruction by teachers (pages e31 and e32) and how the school staff will cultivate and maintain a school culture that is conducive to learning (page e32).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

#### 2. 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 some information about the overall approach that will assist educationally disadvantaged students to meet State content and academic achievement standards (page e32 and e33). The applicant plans to administer frequent assessments diagnostic exams in the core subject areas, and perform data analysis on results (page e32).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides inadequate information about the specific activities that will be implemented to give the educationally disadvantaged students the extra boost that they will need to achieve academically at the expected levels and graduate from high school college-ready. For instance, students might benefit from test-taking skills development, schedule accommodations because of family financial obligations, or assistance with barriers that prevent consistent school attendance. The applicant provides limited information about the instructional activities that the Learning Specialists and the after-school tutors will implement when they conduct activities designed to remediate and reinforce skills and concepts not mastered that are related to State academic content and student achievement standards.

**Reader's Score:** 2

**3. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of the charter school's objectives.****Strengths:**

The applicant provides an adequate description of how the assessment of the charter school's objectives will be undertaken. The levels of achievement (Goals 1 – 5) for students who attend the charter school for four or more years, three or more years, at least two years, and those students in the eighth grade (independent science experiment) is clearly articulated. Goals 6 and 7 have measures that clearly define how students will be assessed (page e33 to e38).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides insufficient information that details the strategy for assessing achievement of the charter school's objectives relative to the students it will have enrolled in year one (Y1). The discussion about achievement levels of students, who attend the charter school for four or more years or three or more years, etc., is unsatisfactory because the objectives are not clearly articulated. For instance, the applicant could have clearly explained the assessment objectives for students who have attended the charter school less than four years on the State achievement tests in reading and writing (page e34).

**Reader's Score:** 7

**The extent of community support for the application.**

**The Secretary considers the extent of community support for and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

- (i) The extent of community support for the application (up to 4 points); and**
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 4 points).**

**Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the charter school, 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.**

**General:**

Overall comments are not provided.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Sub Question**

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

**The Secretary considers the extent of community support for and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

**(i) The extent of community support for the application (up to 4 points)**

**Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the charter school, 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.**

**Strengths:**

(i) The applicant's decision to hold "community conversations" (e40) in partnership with five community-based organizations, to garner letters of support from prominent citizens, and support from numerous community service, education, and civic/religious entities (page e41) is commendable.

**Weaknesses:**

(i) The spirit of the applicant's quest for community support is to have that support translate into active involvement that will enhance the educational experiences of students at the charter school. However, the applicant does not provide a strategy that will encourage community supporters to contribute in-kind resources or other forms of tangible support.

The applicant does not discuss any evidence that supports the contention that the educational program of the charter school is based on the expressed needs and desires of the school-community (page e42).

**Reader's Score: 2**

**2. The extent of community support for the application.**

**The Secretary considers the extent of community support for and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

**(ii) The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 4 points).**

**Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the charter school, the Secretary encourages the applicant to describe how parents**

**Sub Question**

**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.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides an adequate discussion about its successful efforts to communicate with community leaders, conduct outreach sessions, and other activities to understand and drive the design of the educational program. The applicant provides sufficient information about how the charter schools plans to communicate with the parents of students and the role that the Director of Community Engagement will play in the process (page e43).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not provide sufficient discussion or evidence of the involvement of members in the community in the actual program design and implementation processes. The applicant's comments indicate that community involvement and input was limited to the founding team canvassing the neighborhood for feedback on what the needs and desires were (page e42). There is a strong indication that the parent and community involvement was incomplete in terms of the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school. The applicant should have provided evidence that there was an opportunity for parent and community group interactions and discussions about the charter school.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

**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--**

- (i) 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 (up to 2 points); and**
- (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 20 points).**

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

**General:**

Overall comments are not provided.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**Sub Question**

**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--**

- (i) 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 (up to 2 points); and**

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The applicant provides convincing information that the staff will take extraordinary steps to obtain applications from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (page e e44 and e45). For instance, the applicant utilizes the resources for teacher development and training such as Teach For America, Building Excellent Schools, and KIPP to garner candidate referrals (page e44). Website postings, including, but not limited to, Monster.com, Center for Ed Reform, and Craigslist. The available positions were posted in career offices of several colleges and universities (pages e44 and e45).

### Weaknesses:

The applicant provides limited information about staff make-up for year one of the proposed project. The description of the staff (page e45) accounts for 47% (27% African-American, 10% Hispanic, and 10% Asian) and there is no information presented about the remaining 53% of the staff and if the applicant considers the majority reflects underrepresented groups such as persons who might be underrepresented based on disability, age, or gender. The applicant does not clearly indicate that 100% of the teaching staff meets highly qualified standards.

Reader's Score: 1

## 2. 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--**

**(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 20 points).**

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

### Strengths:

The applicant presents appropriate information about the educational preparation, career experiences in education, and significant accomplishments of the Executive Director, Dean, Director of Community Engagement, and Business Director. For example, the Executive Director has served in a senior position with Teach For America and has work experience with other education based organizations and holds an advanced (Masters) degree (page e72 and e73). The Dean has relevant teaching and instructional leadership positions. The Dean is fluent in Spanish (pages e90 and e91) The Director of Community Engagement and the Business Manager have relevant work experiences and appropriate educational preparation (pages e92 to e94 and e86 to e89).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The person selected to hold the position of Dean does not possess a Masters Degree (page e91). Without that level of educational attainment, administrative certification by the state may be a concern.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**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 provides adequate information about the utilization of funds for the start-up phase of the proposed project and the projection that the charter school will be fully-sustainable on existing public funds available to the school district (page e53). The responsibilities of the Executive Director and other key personnel are explained clearly (pages e56 to e60). The applicant's organizational chart depicts supervisory roles (page e55) and the narrative provides a clear explanation of the roles of key personnel (pages e56 to e60).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant fails to provide a management plan. The applicant fails to provide a clear list of the major activities that must be accomplished in order to have an effective and efficient charter school operating on time and within budget constraints. For example, the management plan should clearly indicate the major activities in areas such as personnel, operations (meals and transportation), etc. The management plan should include the name of the person responsible for the activity or task, milestone dates indicating when important steps should be completed and/or a review conducted for corrections and adjustments, and the date of completion.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

**1. Existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter schools and its authorized public chartering agency. The existence of a written 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 other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school.**

**Note: The applicant is encouraged to submit a copy of its approved charter or performance contract. If the applicant has had an application for a charter denied, the applicant should describe the circumstances surrounding such denial and how it plans to revise the charter applicant before resubmitting it to the authorized public chartering agency.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides evidence that an approved written charter or performance contract exists between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency (pages e245 to e248). The contract provides comprehensive information about how student performance will be measured in the charter school (pages e169 to e178). The applicant clearly indicates that the State Standards Achievement Test and the Common Core assessments will be administered to all charter school students (page e173). The approach taken by the applicant to triangulate data from state, national, and internal assessments is commendable because the applicant's plan includes the stipulation that subgroups make Adequate Yearly Progress (pages e169 and e170).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 16**

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the flexibility afforded under its State's charter school law in terms of establishing an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency, and 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 operations, and personnel in accordance with its State's charter school law.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides convincing information, with specific references to the Charter School Law in the State School Code, which clearly shows the high degree of flexibility that exists (page e63). The applicant provides an adequate explanation that shows charter schools are exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools. According to state law, a charter school is exempt from all other State laws and regulations in the School Code governing public schools and local school boards except health and student safety standards (pages e63 and e64).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 3

## Priority Questions

### Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 1

#### 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1--Improving Achievement and High School Graduation Rates [Rural Students, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners]

This priority is for projects that are designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice) and college enrollment rates for students in rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice).

(b) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for students with disabilities.

(c) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for English Learners.

**Note:** This competitive preference priority encourages the applicant to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) to which it is well-suited to respond. Applicants will receive up to four points for how well they address priority areas (a) through (c). Applicants may choose to respond to one, two, or three of the priority areas but, in order to receive the maximum available points, it is not necessary for applicants to respond to more than one priority area.

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides a satisfactory explanation that indicates how the needs of students with disabilities will be met. The applicant provides a convincing description of the process to be implemented that ensures that students who have been receiving special education services are identified, receive appropriate educational services, and are monitored (page e188). The applicant provides an excellent description of the steps to be undertaken if a student is suspected of having a learning problem. The process outlined by the applicant is clearly presented. The process includes the implementation of pre-referral interventions to identify underlying causes and to provide remediation to allow the student to make adequate progress. If the interventions are not successful, a recommendation is made to the parents that the student be evaluated for a possible disability. Based on the results of the evaluation the determination is made as to whether an IEP is developed or if a 504 plan is appropriate (page e188). Appropriate support services and careful monitoring will be implemented before a referral is made to determine if a disability exists (page e188). The applicant's plan to deliver instruction, assess student progress, and the efficient use of staff resources for students with disabilities is comprehensive (pages e18 to e19).

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant provides limited discussion about the proposed project's plan to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates.

Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity.

Projects that are designed to promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation.

**Note:** An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project would help bring together students from different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body, or to avoid racial isolation.

**Note:** For information on permissible ways to address this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice entitled, **Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools** at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf>.

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides adequate information that describes its non-discriminatory policies, academic expectations, and the positive approach that will be implemented to manage student behavior (pages e20 and e21). The applicant's approach to promote student diversity with the perspective of students progressing beyond high school graduation reflects high academic expectations. The applicant focuses on college completion for the student population. The description of experiences designed for students to grow socially and emotionally is commendable (pages e20 and e21).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant's discussion of how the proposed project will promote diversity emphasizes strategies that embrace fair and equitable treatment of students. However, the application does not describe specific steps it will take to attract and retain students of different races, socio-economic status, or level of academic skill.

SCORE (maximum points =2)

\_\_\_1\_\_\_

Reader's Score: 1

### Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 3

#### 1. Competitive Preference Priority 3--Support for Military Families.

This priority is for projects that are designed to address the needs of military-connected students (as defined in this notice).

**Note:** For purposes of this program, projects meeting this priority must target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. The applicant's recruitment and admissions policy must comply with its State charter school law and CSP program requirements (for information on admissions and the lottery under the CSP, see [Charter Schools Program Nonregulatory Guidance](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html) at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html>).

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant provides adequate information that describes how the proposed project will comply with the White House Report, 2011 and the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (page e22). Specifically, the applicant plans to reach out to military families through the key partnerships it has with churches, service organizations, and local leaders. The applicant also provides an adequate explanation indicating that the charter school will remove barriers that may result from frequent military-based transfers (pages e22 and e23).

#### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides insufficient information to explain how the charter school will target military-connected students. For instance, there is limited discussion of how effective the recruitment efforts will be in light of the charter school's admission procedures.

Reader's Score: 1

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/16/2013 01:52 PM

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Last Updated: 08/15/2013 10:34 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Chicago Collegiate, Inc. (U282B130022)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	14
2. Disadvantaged Students	3	3
3. Strategy for Achievement	15	13
4. Community Support	8	7
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Quality of Personnel	22	22
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	18	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Performance Contract	16	15
2. Flexibility	3	3
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority 1</b>		
1. Rural/SPED/ELL	4	3
<b>Competitive Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority 2</b>		
1. Promoting Diversity	2	1
<b>Competitive Priority 3</b>		
1. Military Families	3	3
<b>Total</b>	109	94

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Chicago Collegiate, Inc. (U282B130022)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

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

**Note:** The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the quality of the educational program to be implemented by the proposed charter school, including how the program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards, the grade levels or ages of students to be served, and the curriculum and instructional practices to be used. If the curriculum and instructional practices have been successfully used in other schools operated or managed by the applicant, the Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the implementation of such practices and the academic results achieved.

#### Strengths:

The applicant clearly lays out the grades to be served and the plan to grow the school from 4th-5th grade through high school, providing a seamless program 4-12. The program is based on significant research and incorporates not only Illinois standards, but also other standards that will be incorporated to supplement and compliment the program. The model is based not on textbooks, but on teachers using the backwards-planning model. This model ensures a focus on outcomes and goals as opposed to working through the textbook. The applicant has identified a number of curricular resources and a broad scope and sequence to be implemented. The model has proven successful in other schools, including KIPP schools, at which school leadership has had significant experience. The applicant provides a clear picture of what a day and week will look like for a student and the academic focus of that time. The applicant articulate a number of instructional practices that will be implemented that help ensure teachers can meet with learning styles of their students.

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant has a minimally developed plan at the high school level at this time, though it should be noted that it will be 4 years until the school enrolls 9th grade students. Nonetheless, a clear high school program is necessary to ensure the program at the earlier grades is effectively preparing students for that high school program.

Reader's Score: 14

#### 2. 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 has articulated a number of strategies to assist disadvantaged students in meeting State standards. Frequent assessments and flexible approaches are outlined that, coupled with the strong instructional program, are likely to support all students' achievement.

#### Weaknesses:

none identified

Reader's Score: 3

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant has outlined a comprehensive plan to assess achievement of the school's objectives, not only for student academic performance, but also for financial and operational objectives. The academic plan uses a variety of measures including State and local measures, and the school strategically outlines metrics for students who have been at the school for two or three years, a stronger indicator of the school's success. Measures are both formative and summative and include a strong plan for data analysis that include all staff. Furthermore, staff evaluation is framed in the context of achievement of the school's objectives, and includes significant feedback and coaching. The accountability plan is robust and will require much coordination and resources, however, it appears evident that that school leadership has experience implementing this approach.

**Weaknesses:**

It is unclear how the school will measure college graduation rates, which is indicated as a goal. Furthermore, the school has outlined key reading and writing proficiency goals only for students who attend the school for four or more years. While it is reasonable to set goals for students who have spent a longer time in the school, it is also appropriate to set benchmarks for those who do not spend four years.

Reader's Score: 13

**4. The extent of community support for the application.**

**The Secretary considers the extent of community support for and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

- (i) The extent of community support for the application (up to 4 points); and**
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 4 points).**

**Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the charter school, 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.**

**General:**

The applicant has outlined a comprehensive plan for community and parent engagement and has documented support from a number of community organizations as well as parents interested in enrolling their children in the school.

Reader's Score: 7

**Sub Question**

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

**The Secretary considers the extent of community support for and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

- (i) The extent of community support for the application (up to 4 points)**

## Sub Question

**Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the charter school, 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.**

### **Strengths:**

The applicant identified a number of organizations in the community that are excited about partnering with the school. The applicant also indicated interest from over 141 families to enroll their children in the school and over 600 community residents endorsing the school (p.236-7). Finally, the applicant documents a number of community conversations and meetings with community leaders. The applicant effectively portrays strong community and parental interest for this new school.

### **Weaknesses:**

While the applicant documents a number of community organizations who will support the school, it is unclear what activities these organization have done or will do to actualize that support.

**Reader's Score: 3**

## **2. The extent of community support for the application.**

**The Secretary considers the extent of community support for and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

**(ii) The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 4 points).**

**Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the charter school, 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.**

### **Strengths:**

This documents a clear commitment by the school to focus on community and parent engagement prior to the opening of the school. The applicant outlines a variety of strategies that not only request parents to come to the school to learn about the school and their students' progress, but also to engage with the school's leadership to provide "advice and counsel on school matters" (p. e42-3). The applicant's approach articulates an understanding that parents are partners, who will learn from the school, while also providing input to the school. The applicant includes a number of community organizations with whom they hope to partner, and while this can be easier said than done, the school appears to have staffed appropriately for this work. The applicant indicates that the school sought and received input from potential parents and community members in the design of the program (p. e42).

### **Weaknesses:**

None identified

**Reader's Score: 4**

## **Selection Criteria - Quality of Project 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--

- (i) 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 (up to 2 points); and
- (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 20 points).

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

**General:**

The school has already hired a diverse staff and has strong leadership in place to carry out this project.

**Reader's Score: 22**

**Sub Question**

**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--

- (i) 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 (up to 2 points); and

**Strengths:**

The applicant indicates a clear commitment to not only encouraging applications for employment from diverse individuals, but also to hire these individuals, as demonstrated by a staff that is nearly 50% people of color for year 1.

**Weaknesses:**

None identified

**Reader's Score: 2**

**2. 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--

- (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 20 points).

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

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The applicant provides a compelling narrative that includes evidence of broad and deep skills of the executive director and board members. This narrative is supported by the resumes of these individuals. The executive director has extensive experience and training in the education charter school sector, not only as a teacher and instructional leader, but also as a leader responsible for finance and operations. Though she has not previously started a charter school, her training as a fellow at Building Excellent Schools has been preparing her for this role. The board members include individuals with skills across a number of key areas that support the successful governance of the schools, particularly in areas such as education, fundraising and communications, finance, and non-profit management. Additional leadership staff have documented experience in the local education community including in successful charter schools. Collectively this group seems well positioned to create, govern and manage a successful charter school.

### Weaknesses:

None identified

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 has clearly outlined key roles and responsibilities for carrying out the proposed project, including the board and management. The roles between board and staff are clear and appropriate. A number of key staff roles are provided along with the key responsibilities for each of those roles. The applicant indicates that much of this plan is based on best practices learned from successful schools and networks around the country. The applicant has provided sufficient specificity which indicates a structure and systems likely to support quality management of the project.

### Weaknesses:

While a timeline was included as part of the Charter Application, a very general outline was included as part of the narrative for this project. All items on the timeline were through July 2013 and no specific timeline was provided that would correspond to the grant period.

Reader's Score: 10

## Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

- 1. Existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter schools and its authorized public chartering agency. The existence of a written 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 other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school. Note: The applicant is encouraged to submit a copy of its approved charter or performance contract. If the applicant has had an application for a charter denied, the applicant should describe the circumstances surrounding such denial and how it plans to revise the charter application before**

resubmitting it to the authorized public chartering agency.

**Strengths:**

The school has been approved by the State Board of Education and the CPS Board, and the applicant included a letter of support from CPS, including the board minutes detailing approval. The contract has not yet been executed and therefore is not included in the application, however, the applicant indicates that the charter application itself, which is attached, serves to define the performance expectations of the agreement.

**Weaknesses:**

Because the contract has not yet been executed, an assessment of the quality of the contract is not possible, (though this reviewer believes that CPS has quality contracts with the schools it authorizes.)

**Reader's Score:** 15

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the flexibility afforded under its State's charter school law in terms of establishing an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency, and 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 operations, and personnel in accordance with its State's charter school law.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant cites Illinois statute which articulates the authority and flexibility under which the charter school operates. While the school is not an independent LEA, it operates with substantial flexibility, including autonomy over curriculum (as long as it is standards-aligned), staffing, management and fiscal affairs.

**Weaknesses:**

None identified

**Reader's Score:** 3

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 1**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 1--Improving Achievement and High School Graduation Rates [Rural Students, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners]**

This priority is for projects that are designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

**(a) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice) and college enrollment rates for students in rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice).**

**(b) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for students with disabilities.**

**(c) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for English Learners.**

**Note: This competitive preference priority encourages the applicant to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) to which it is well-suited to respond. Applicants will receive up to four points for how well they address priority areas (a) through (c). Applicants may choose to respond to one, two, or three of the priority areas but, in order to receive the maximum available points, it is not necessary for applicants to respond to more than one priority area.**

**Strengths:**

For this priority area, the applicant specifically addresses students with disabilities, and at the time of submitting this application, the school indicates a population significantly above that of the neighborhood and city (over 22% with an expected rate of over 25%). This demonstrates that the school's program is attracting parents of students with special needs. The school is likely to have the necessary core service for these students as it will work with the CPS District to provide services, and the applicant has committed significant staffing and professional development resources to ensure support for special education students. The applicant also has outline various support systems and frequent assessments as tools to monitor students progress and accelerate learning.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant has indicated that CPS will provide much of the service for students with IEPs, specifically stating "the District serves children with disabilities attending charter schools in the same manner as it serves children with disabilities attending other schools." Given that this priority is focused on accelerating learning, it is evident that students may need to be served differently. While the school provides information regarding some unique support systems, the direct delivery of special education services may need to be different than that delivered in traditional CPS schools.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 2**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity.**

**Projects that are designed to promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation.**

**Note: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project would help bring together students from different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body, or to avoid racial isolation.**

**Note: For information on permissible ways to address this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice entitled, *Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools* at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf>.**

**Strengths:**

The school is committed to serving a student body that mirrors that of the local schools. While this is not a particularly diverse neighborhood in terms of racial and ethnic backgrounds, the applicant has indicated a commitment to promoting inclusion of all students and training staff in inclusive and culturally relevant pedagogy. The applicant has effectively spoken to curricular diversity, including promoting diversity of thought, while recognizing that the school will reflect the neighborhood in which it is located.

**Weaknesses:**

While the school is committed to reflecting the local schools, it makes no attempts to reach out to diverse groups from other neighborhoods who may be interested in the school.

Reader's Score: 1

### Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 3

#### 1. Competitive Preference Priority 3--Support for Military Families.

This priority is for projects that are designed to address the needs of military-connected students (as defined in this notice).

**Note:** For purposes of this program, projects meeting this priority must target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. The applicant's recruitment and admissions policy must comply with its State charter school law and CSP program requirements (for information on admissions and the lottery under the CSP, see [Charter Schools Program Nonregulatory Guidance](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html) at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html>).

#### **Strengths:**

The school has indicated a commitment to reaching out to military families and has already formed or will form partnerships to support that outreach. The application demonstrates an understanding of some of the research and realities for military children and their families. This creates a strong starting point from which to develop strong relationships with students, families and other military groups, which will be critical to success with these students.

#### **Weaknesses:**

None identified

Reader's Score: 3

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/15/2013 10:34 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/16/2013 02:46 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Chicago Collegiate, Inc. (U282B130022)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	12
2. Disadvantaged Students	3	3
3. Strategy for Achievement	15	11
4. Community Support	8	6
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Quality of Personnel	22	19
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	18	8
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Performance Contract	16	16
2. Flexibility	3	3
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority 1</b>		
1. Rural/SPED/ELL	4	4
<b>Competitive Priority</b>		
<b>Competitive Priority 2</b>		
1. Promoting Diversity	2	0
<b>Competitive Priority 3</b>		
1. Military Families	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>84</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel - 1: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Chicago Collegiate, Inc. (U282B130022)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

#### 1. I. 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 educational program described will incorporate the state standards and college readiness standards of Illinois and as well as some of California, Indiana and Massachusetts that teachers will incorporate into a proven successful implementation via a Curricular Alignment Template. The strategies/practices have been used at Roxbury Preparatory Charter School in Massachusetts. The templates will be created by staff during summer professional development activities allowing staff to breakdown the standards for grade level and incorporating how mastery would be determined such as with trimester exams, projects, assessments for progress monitoring, remediation and reteaching/scaffolding as needed to meet the individual educational needs of every student. The applicant would provide services and track students beyond the grant period to ensure students graduate from college within six years (pp. 11-13).

#### Weaknesses:

Since the applicant does not plan to utilize a textbook curriculum for the charter, but allow teachers to write curricula based upon strategies implemented in Roxbury Preparatory Charter School and others it is unclear the preparation, experience, or training staff would receive to accomplish this since the Educational Director appears to be the only one with extensive experience with the practices proposed in the educational plan (p. 18).

Reader's Score: 12

#### 2. 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 students to be served in the program would be selected from surrounding schools of which 2012 CPS Data indicate may be significantly behind grade level performance. Of the 14 K-8 schools 19.9% met grade level or above standards in math and 15.3% in reading therefore the project to be implemented would focus on ensuring these students meet not only state standards but the supplement standards that have been incorporated into the project (pp. 10-12, 18).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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

**Strengths:**

The seven goals of the project have various measures to determine project success for students and teachers. Of the first five two measures are achievable during the grant period. For example, ensuring all students participating in the educational program for two or more years completing all coursework for Algebra I by grade eight may be accomplished by the students in 5th grade in year one of the grant and that same body of students would complete independent science experiments that would increase knowledge and skills in science, that would be assessed with a state assessment for proficiency (pp. 19-20). Part of goal 6 would measure college-readiness skills of students in middle school with a projection of 75% of students showing proficient or advanced at the end of each school year (p. 21)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant discussed measures for students who would have been served for two or more years by by charter and not the academic achievement for all students especially when it was predicted that students would enter the school two grade levels behind (pp. 22-23).

**Reader's Score: 11**

**The extent of community support for the application.**

**The Secretary considers the extent of community support for and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

- (i) The extent of community support for the application (up to 4 points); and**
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 4 points).**

**Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the charter school, 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.**

**General:**

Comments made.

**Reader's Score: 6**

**Sub Question**

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

Sub Question

**The Secretary considers the extent of community support for and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

**(i) The extent of community support for the application (up to 4 points)**

**Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the charter school, 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.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant partnered with various community organizations that included Roseland Pullman Boys and Girls Club, Roseland Christian Ministries, St. John's Missionary Baptist Church, Reformation Lutheran and the youth center to conduct open community meetings to discuss, share information, and collect intent to enroll regarding the charter. Local community support is evident through attached letters of support from community service, religious, and civic leaders. The applicant indicated that it obtained more than 600 signatures on a petition supporting the opening of the charter (pp. 25-27).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**2. The extent of community support for the application.**

**The Secretary considers the extent of community support for and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

**(ii) The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 4 points).**

**Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the charter school, 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.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant attached letters of support for the application from federal, state, and local officials. Also included in the narrative is a list of local and state organizations of education, community service, and civic/religious nature that support the applicant through partnerships. The local and state entities are potential partners that could support after school enrichment activities and local events that would include surrounding neighborhoods. The planned Family Advisory Council would have a monthly meeting schedule that includes planning community events and coordination of volunteers that would promote community involvement in the program. The applicant showed commitment to the project by ensuring that a director of community engagement would be on board prior to school opening who could ensure parents and the community are informed about the school. The applicant distributed various information throughout the community utilizing volunteers to assist in collecting intent to enroll data for grades four and five. (p. 27).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not clearly show that community involvement in the planning and design of the proposed program to be implemented by this grant or how the Family Advisory Council would provide feedback to the leadership team would be incorporated (p. 27-30). The applicant indicated that a lottery system was used to enroll students for the opening of the charter but did not provide sufficient detail to show that all students would have equal access to be served by the charter (p. 26).

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project 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--**

- (i) 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 (up to 2 points); and**
- (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 20 points).**

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

**General:**

Comments made.

**Reader's Score: 19**

**Sub Question**

**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--**

- (i) 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 (up to 2 points); and**

**Strengths:**

The applicant will adhere to employment non-discrimination laws when hiring staff (p. 41)

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

Although the applicant posted vacancies within various media it did not provide a strong discussion of how it would recruit or employ personnel from underrepresented group other than mention of its non-discrimination employment policy. There was limited information provided on the breakdown of staff in year one to provide clear discussion regarding diversity (p. 41).

Reader's Score: 1

## 2. 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--**

**(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 20 points).**

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

### Strengths:

The executive director for the charter school has an extensive background in education with more than fifteen years servicing students with similar demographics that would be served with this proposed project as well as experience with charter operations and instructional components of the charter school. She has been involved in the development of the practices and strategies proposed in this project such as being involved with the KIPP Writing and Thinking rubric and benchmark assessments. She was the senior managing director of the Los Angeles Institute of Teach for American that trained over 650 teachers. The board of directors is diverse and representative of the surrounding communities to be served in the project. The Dean has worked over ten years with college prep focusing on high school freshman and math skills. She also holds a Bachelors degree in Elementary Education and Spanish. The director of community engagement has over 25 years of experience with youth programs and collaboration within the local community with agencies and organizations supporting youth (pp. 33-36).

### Weaknesses:

The experience or job description for the learning specialists and dean of students positions were not provided or clearly discussed but are considered key personnel to the project (pp. 41, 43-44). The resume for the founder and executive director of a youth service non-profit were attached but role/position was not discussed or connected to the project (attachment e92).

Reader's Score: 18

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

### 1. Quality of the management plan.

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

**Strengths:**

The project has distinct roles and responsibilities of the board and staff to ensure adequate operation of the charter. The primary role of the Board of Directors is to provide governance of the entire charter school throughout its duration that include approving policies both fiscal and operational as well as support and evaluation of the executive director. The organizational chart shows key responsibilities of the executive director in the day-to-day operation of the school, hiring staff, and coordination with other key personnel to meet the needs of students, families, and staff.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant discussed curriculum and college-readiness standards preparation by staff and the review team from November 2012 to July 2013 therefore did not provide adequate timelines, milestones, and task completion relating to the full grant period (pp. 46-48). There was a reference to a management plan that was submitted with the applicant's original charter application but it was not included with this proposal.

**Reader's Score: 8**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design**

- 1. Existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter schools and its authorized public chartering agency. The existence of a written 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 other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school. Note: The applicant is encouraged to submit a copy of its approved charter or performance contract. If the applicant has had an application for a charter denied, the applicant should describe the circumstances surrounding such denial and how it plans to revise the charter applicant before resubmitting it to the authorized public chartering agency.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant included a copy of its approved charter contract with the Chicago Public Schools Office of New Schools that was submitted August 13, 2012, and approved December 2012 for opening its school September 2013. The application adequately discussed the intended use of state criterion-reference assessments, national norm-referenced assessments, and internal standards-based assessments that would be used to measure student success during their participation in the charter. The applicant plans to also collect formative and summative data throughout each school year that the project management team would use to create interim and end-of-year assessments and create professional development for staff (pp. 48-49, e169).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 16**

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to describe the flexibility afforded under its State's charter school law in terms of establishing an administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency, and 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 operations, and personnel in accordance with its State's charter school law.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant by state law has autonomy with the curriculum that would be offered provided that it is standards-based and has outlined the state standards and college-readiness standards for the grade levels to be served including some supplemental standards from California, Indiana, and Massachusetts that is allowed by the state's charter school law. The area where non-exemption occurs were listed such as having a student discipline code, requiring criminal background checks of staff, reporting child abuse and neglect, and compliance with the State's student record act. The charter teaching staff must meet NCLB highly qualified teacher standards but is not required by the teacher to hold a state teaching certificate for the location on this charter.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 1**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 1--Improving Achievement and High School Graduation Rates [Rural Students, Students with Disabilities, and English Learners]**

**This priority is for projects that are designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:**

**(a) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice) and college enrollment rates for students in rural local educational agencies (as defined in the notice).**

**(b) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for students with disabilities.**

**(c) Accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates (as defined in the notice) and college enrollment rates for English Learners.**

**Note: This competitive preference priority encourages the applicant to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) to which it is well-suited to respond. Applicants will receive up to four points for how well they address priority areas (a) through (c). Applicants may choose to respond to one, two, or three of the priority areas but, in order to receive the maximum available points, it is not necessary for applicants to respond to more than one priority area.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant plans to open its school August 2013 to serve at least 120 students in year one that would be selected from surrounding schools. The planning activities for the applicant to open the charter included recruitment and enrollment of 92 students of which 22% have already been identified to be students with disabilities. Services will be provided to ensure

that students with disabilities are successful in meeting high school graduation requirements through educational programs beginning at grade four. The instructional model would extend the instructional day and employ frequent assessments that would allow the applicant to measure and monitor student progress such assessments described by not specifically mentioned would include both qualitative and quantitative assessments. The curriculum chosen support inclusion and extensive professional development for staff that include 13 professional development days and a five-week summer training that would equip teachers and learning specialists to work with special education students successfully. The applicant has designated a full time director of community engagement position to work closely with the instructional specialists to connect families to other services outside of school that would be needed to support educating the whole child that include such entities that provide health and youth services (pp. 3-5).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 2**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity.**

**Projects that are designed to promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, or avoid racial isolation.**

**Note: An applicant addressing Competitive Preference Priority 2--Promoting Diversity is invited to discuss how the proposed design of its project would help bring together students from different backgrounds, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to attain the benefits that flow from a diverse student body, or to avoid racial isolation.**

**Note: For information on permissible ways to address this priority, please refer to the joint guidance issued by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice entitled, *Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools* at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.pdf>.**

**Strengths:**

No strengths found.

**Weaknesses:**

The student demographics as provided by the applicant as currently enrolled is 96% Black, 3% Hispanic/Latino and 1% American Indian but there was no discussion regarding the diversity of students in the surrounding schools which would be the selection pool for the charter (p. 6). The applicant plans to open serving 4th and 5th grade students adding a grade level each year to reach their proposed goal of serving grades 4-12 but only 4th graders are discussed (pp. 6-7),

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Priority - Competitive Priority 3**

## 1. Competitive Preference Priority 3--Support for Military Families.

This priority is for projects that are designed to address the needs of military-connected students (as defined in this notice).

**Note:** For purposes of this program, projects meeting this priority must target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. The applicant's recruitment and admissions policy must comply with its State charter school law and CSP program requirements (for information on admissions and the lottery under the CSP, see Charter Schools Program Nonregulatory Guidance at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html>).

### Strengths:

The applicant's selection site for the charter allows it to partner with the Naval Base's School Liaison Officer since military families may not all live on military facility but within its boundaries therefore recruitment efforts and coordination with other providers to military families will occur such as through the Illinois Joining Forces or Illinois Military Youth Programs. The state joined the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children in 2010 that supports the efforts in this application to remove barriers that would prevent military children from completing high school due frequent deployment and mobility of their families that include waiving course prerequisites that effect middle and high school students. The applicant will adhere to the guidelines of the compact (pp. 8-9).

### Weaknesses:

The partnerships the applicant have or plan to have with other organizations that provide services to a military families did not discuss the type of services that would be provided to show a clear connection to supporting the educational programs that would be offer by the school.

**Reader's Score:** 2

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/16/2013 02:46 PM