

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Maryland Eastern Shore Charter School Alliance Ltd. (U282B130051)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	15
2. Disadvantaged Students	3	2
3. Strategy for Achievement	15	13
4. Community Support	8	7
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Quality of Personnel	22	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	18	14
Quality of Project Design		
1. Performance Contract	16	0
2. Flexibility	3	3
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority		
Competitive Priority 1		
1. Rural/SPED/ELL	4	4
Competitive Priority		
Competitive Priority 2		
1. Promoting Diversity	2	2
Competitive Priority 3		
1. Military Families	3	0
Total	109	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel - 4: 84.282B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Maryland Eastern Shore Charter School Alliance Ltd. (U282B130051)

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:

Maryland Eastern Shore Charter School Alliance (MESCA) plans to draw upon the resources related to the teacher practices from "The Skillful Teacher," "Teach like a Champion" and "Mastery Teaching," all related to building strong effective teachers. (p.e26) Core Knowledge is to be the school's curriculum and emphasis will be placed on the use of higher order questioning and thinking skills. The education philosophy of the school is to be based on a set of principles including the following: strong leadership, high expectations for all students, time on task, structured classrooms, and rigorous core aligned instruction. The applicant will use formal and informal assessment to guide instruction. Emphasis will be put on integrating student and family engagement and effective character education. Special attention is to be placed on exposure to enrichment opportunities. The Core Knowledge curriculum supports Maryland's Common Core Standards. Reference is included in the proposal that affirms research support that the program is associated with greater academic achievement in math and reading because of its alignment with other content areas. (p.14) Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Standards of practice are also to be integrated within the school as a means to promote interest and participation of underrepresented populations. The applicant described research by Dr. E. D. Hirsch Jr. and recognition that he received because of implementation of STEM which promotes deeper learning in Math and Science. (P.14-15)

Weaknesses:

None 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 Core Knowledge areas aligned with the State Core Standards and MESCA plans to incorporate Blended Learning which uses technology along with face-to-face teaching in large and small groupings along with individualized teaching.(p. e36) This approach has been used as a viable alternative to help small, rural and urban schools track data for ongoing assessment and identification of needed credit or remediation. Dorchester Prep intends to be a "small school" consistent with research that indicates that "small schools" for low-income children in grades 6th and up have a positive impact on

student achievement. (p.e40)

Weaknesses:

No specific summary data or information was presented that shows evidence that the combined curriculum approach will assist educationally disadvantaged children meet State academic standards

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

Dorchester prep students will participate in the state-wide Maryland Assessments. Northwest Evaluation's Measures of Academic Progress will be used by teachers. MESCSA will also offer computerized assessments to determine the progress of individual student base knowledge. (p.e40) The Kickback management software will be the data management platform that Dorchester prep will use. This is an interactive program to keep track of student information, attendance, grades, behavior and family communication. According to the applicant, MESCSA will measure its governance by the standards of excellence for nonprofit operations. (p.e42) The applicant indicates that the Board has been established to ensure that the mission, vision, and goals of Dorchester Prep are met and upheld. The Executive Director(ED) is to be held accountable for meeting the educational goals of the school. (p.e42)

Weaknesses:

There were no indicators or measurement factors to determine the quality of the objectives to be achieved.

Reader's Score: 13

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:

An extensive survey was done to get feedback and direction to shape policy and programs of the charter school. The educational program is designed to engage community leaders, businesses, and organizations in the school's Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education. Family engagement is to be infused throughout and the project will implement the research based work of the Flamboyant Foundation. The Board plans to meet bi-annually with the Community Committee to seek input into the schools strategic plan. There is evidence of strong community support for 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)

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:

There are a number of attached letters from community organizations, businesses, potential partners, faculty from universities and political figures that verify that there is community support for the charter school. (p.e65-79) The proposed STEM program is to utilize local community partners such as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC). Students are being targeted from low-income families in Dorchester County. MESCSA has held 25 meetings in that area in addition to participating in three radio interviews to inform parents and the community about the school. (p.e19) All students will need to complete registration and a random lottery system is to be used to determine final enrollment by grade levels. (p. e60)

Weaknesses:

There was no evidence or meeting summaries referenced to show that parents have been involved in the initial planning and development of the charter school grant application.

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:

One of the principles governing the school is that there will be a "robust student and family engagement."(p.e26) Parents will be able use real time to keep track of student's information about attendance, grades and behavior through use of the Kickback data system that is to be developed. Data will be provided to parents four time per year. MESCSA plans to infuse an approach of the Flamboyant Foundation to implement a school-wide family engagement approach that includes teacher training and home visits. (p.e39) Feedback from parents and the larger community will be gathered and used in setting procedures. Feedback forms will be placed in the lobby of the

Sub Question

school to allow for anonymous feedback. The Board is to establish a Community Committee of parents and community members to meet at least bi-annually to review the school's progress and input into the strategic plan. (p.e48)

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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:

There is to be an Educational Director, a Director of Curriculum Instruction, and a Director of Operations and Finance. Much is referenced in the grant relative to personnel managing the school like a business and using standards of excellence often used by nonprofit organizations. Given the descriptions of rolls and responsibilities, the personnel projections appear to be adequate.

Reader's Score: 20

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:

According to the applicant, purposeful planning will include recruitment of members of groups traditionally underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. The Board plans to use Nemnet Minority Recruitment along with the National Alliance of Black School Educators, Teach for America Alumni Network and the Urban Teacher Center as resources for recruitment. (p.e49)

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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.

Strengths:

The Executive Director's Credentials and experiences should be an asset in launching the Dorchester Prep Charter School. He has served as the Senior Operations officer at a charter school. He participated in the Emerging Leaders program of Building Excellent Schools. He holds a MA in Education and has managed organizations. He has also worked as a teacher and held positions that required leadership responsibilities. Others identified as Board members appear to be committed and bring a variety of interest to promoting and overseeing the school. Roles and responsibilities were included within the proposal and referenced a Director of Curriculum, Director of Advancement and a Director of Operations and Finance.

Weaknesses:

No qualifications were identified for other positions and no information was presented about the selection or qualifications that will be required of the teaching staff.

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:

A grid with a list of the school overall objectives with projections of a timeline for attainment along with responsibilities is included in the proposal as Figure 3. (P.e46-47). A Budget narrative was provided (p.e228-238) relative to the funds being requested for its Charter School Grant Application.

Weaknesses:

No criteria or measurement factors were presented to determine the quality of the elements of the charter school. It would have been helpful if the budget narrative items would have been cross-referenced within the management plan.

Reader's Score: 14

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:

None noted.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not include an approved performance contract, so the extent which student performance is required is not available.

Reader's Score: 0

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:

Charter school students must meet or exceed the state average performance rates on all content areas of the core standards. The state provides charter schools with flexibility in selecting an its educational program, determining budgeting priorities, and negotiating collective bargaining agreements, and hiring their school leaders and the school staff. (p.e56-55)

Weaknesses:

None 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 proposal is presented by the Maryland Eastern Shore Charter Alliance (MESCSA) to establish Dorchester Preparatory Public Charter School to accelerate learning and graduation rates and college enrollment in a rural region. The project is to target students in grades 6-8 that are at risk. According to the applicant, (p.e23) the targeted student's performance levels are significantly lower than the average student's performances within the state. The applicant also indicates on (p.e18) that 28 % of students dropped out of school in 2012 school year. Dorchester County Public Schools where the students will come from is one of only two Maryland counties identified for the Rural, Low-Income School Program (RLIS) under Title VI, Part B. The county is struggling with unemployment, high crime, substance abuse and homelessness. (p.e20). Persons with Bachelor's Degree or Higher in Dorchester is only 16.5% and only 13% in Cambridge.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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:

On (p.e44), the applicant indicates that the Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI) will lead the Special Education service team that will oversee implementation and compliance with IDEA and IEP plans. Students are to be served within the school, but will be provided with supplemental services consistent with compliance of Maryland State Department of Education Charter School Law. (p.e62) MESCSA will be responsible for implementation of the (IEP) of any special needs student attending Dorchester Prep. The school also plans to implement the Response to Intervention (RTP) model that will ensure that students needing special services receive them in a timely manner. (p.e64)

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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:

None noted.

Weaknesses:

No reference was made to serving the needs of children of military families.

Reader's Score: 0

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Maryland Eastern Shore Charter School Alliance Ltd. (U282B130051)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	12
2. Disadvantaged Students	3	3
3. Strategy for Achievement	15	15
4. Community Support	8	6
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Quality of Personnel	22	22
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	18	18
Quality of Project Design		
1. Performance Contract	16	0
2. Flexibility	3	3
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority		
Competitive Priority 1		
1. Rural/SPED/ELL	4	4
Competitive Priority		
Competitive Priority 2		
1. Promoting Diversity	2	0
Competitive Priority 3		
1. Military Families	3	0
Total	109	83

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel - 4: 84.282B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Maryland Eastern Shore Charter School Alliance Ltd. (U282B130051)

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 projected charter school is planning to serve middle school students Gr. 6-8. The applicant presents the mission and vision of the charter school as well as community need for the school. The Maryland Eastern Shore Charter School is adopting Core Knowledge as its curriculum, which it plans to align with Common Core Standards. Two key elements of instruction to be implemented are STEM, which will be integrated with Blended Learning.

Weaknesses:

The instructional practices proposed include integrating STEM practices, Blended Learning, Khan Academy, LearnZillion adaptive, etc. The application lacks sufficient information on how the proposed instructional practices are to be interconnected in a cohesive, cogent, and coherent way in order to support curriculum delivery. The application also lacks evidence that the instructional practices to be used can support the learning of the targeted student population. The proposed teaching model demands intensive teacher training and ongoing professional development in order to implement the curriculum, measure its effectiveness, and adjust teaching accordingly. Information about the school's plan to provide professional development is insufficient.

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 projected charter school will utilize the Home Language Survey to identify students in needs. The charter school plans to solicit support from Dorchester County Public Schools in order to meet the needs of special education students. Other education program initiatives that are expected to support disadvantaged students and help them meet State standards include an environmental education program, service-learning, and financial literacy instruction.

Weaknesses:

No weakness is noted.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The school will adopt MAP, MSA, and PARCC to measure student academic progress. The application provides specific short- term and long- term objectives with target goals as well as methods to be used to determine progress in meeting the objectives. The school also proposes using survey results, student attendance records, and other means to measure progress and success.

Weaknesses:

No weakness is noted.

Reader's Score: 15

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:

It is evident that the community supports the proposed charter school by the many letters of support accompanying the application. Feedback from the community will be solicited by communicating directly with the stakeholders, soliciting feedback forms, and forming community committees.

A lottery will be implemented to ensure an equal opportunity for all students to attend the charter school.

Page e48 notes ways in which the charter school is encouraging parental and community involvement.

The projected charter school encourages parents and community involvement, but no structure or process is described in the application to engage parents and community members in the planning, program design, and implementation.

Reader's Score: 6

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:

It is evident that the community supports the proposed charter school by the many letters of support accompanying the application.

A lottery will be implemented to ensure an equal opportunity for all students to attend the charter school.

Page e48 notes ways in which the charter school is encouraging parental and community involvement.

Weaknesses:

No weakness is noted.

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:

Feedback from the community will be solicited by communicating directly with the stakeholders and forming community committees to involve them in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school.

Page e48 notes ways in which the charter school is encouraging parental and community involvement.

Weaknesses:

The projected charter school encourages parents and community involvement, but no structure or process is described in the application to engage parents and community members in the planning, program design, and implementation.

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:

The applicant proposes to recruit staff from various organizations such as Nemnet Minority Recruitment, National Black School Educators, etc. Such strategies serve as evidence that efforts are being made to address the criteria of encouraging applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented. See p.e48.

The project key personnel have adequate skills to launch a charter school with expertise in school leadership, legal, and business management. (See page e49-51). The charter school plans to recruit personnel in curriculum and instruction, operation and finance, and organization's advancement. This strategy will allow the school to fill in personnel gaps and provide the team capacity needed to operate a high quality charter school.

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 proposes to recruit staff from various organizations such as Nemnet Minority Recruitment, National Black School Educators, etc. Such strategies serve as evidence that efforts are being made to address the criteria of encouraging applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented. See p.e48.

Weaknesses:

No weakness is noted.

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

Sub Question

board governance; effective curriculum development and implementation; and strong fiscal management.

Strengths:

The project key personnel have adequate skills to launch a charter school with expertise in school leadership, legal, and business management. (See page e49-51). The charter school plans to recruit personnel in curriculum and instruction, operation and finance, and organization's advancement. This strategy will allow the school to fill in personnel gaps and provide the team capacity needed to operate a high quality charter school.

Weaknesses:

No weakness is noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the management plan.

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

Strengths:

The application clearly defines the responsibilities of the leaders. (See page e81-86). The action plan (page e46-48) describes, timelines and milestones to accomplish project tasks. As an example, the charter school will create benchmark and comprehensive assessments by January 2014. A five year budget projection is clearly outlined. (See page e221-239).

Weaknesses:

No weakness is noted.

Reader's Score: 18

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:

No strength is noted.

Weaknesses:

No contract exists.

Reader's Score: 0

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 charter school requests flexibilities on leadership of the school, education program/curriculum and instructional approaches, program emphasis, staffing innovations, etc. The degree of flexibility afforded is clearly stated. See p. 56.

Weaknesses:

No weakness is 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 responds to this competitive priority by providing research data and an analysis of the target populations, as well as evidence on efforts to solicit supports from the community to improve achievement and high school graduation

rates for rural students. See page e19-21.

Weaknesses:

No weakness is noted.

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 strength is noted.

Weaknesses:

No information is presented.

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:

No strength is noted.

Weaknesses:

No information is presented.

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/20/2013 03:43 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/30/2013 09:59 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Maryland Eastern Shore Charter School Alliance Ltd. (U282B130051)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	15
2. Disadvantaged Students	3	3
3. Strategy for Achievement	15	15
4. Community Support	8	8
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Quality of Personnel	22	22
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	18	14
Quality of Project Design		
1. Performance Contract	16	0
2. Flexibility	3	3
Priority Questions		
Competitive Priority		
Competitive Priority 1		
1. Rural/SPED/ELL	4	4
Competitive Priority		
Competitive Priority 2		
1. Promoting Diversity	2	2
Competitive Priority 3		
1. Military Families	3	3
Total	109	89

Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - Panel - 4: 84.282B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Maryland Eastern Shore Charter School Alliance Ltd. (U282B130051)

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 has selected Core Knowledge curriculum program. The program provides a through outlined curriculum and instructional practices specifically from researched based and innovative learning models. The Core Knowledge Foundation supports Common Core Standards. Research supports smaller class sizes to serve academically low performing students and improve their achievement levels. Page e27

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 curriculum program that the applicant has selected will support the school and help it meet State content and State student academic achievement standards. The Core Knowledge team provides staff development, coaching support and technical assistance to sites. Pages e 39-42

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

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

Strengths:

The applicant describes a variety of methods aligned to monitoring and developing short and long term objectives. Each year the enrollment will increase until the school reaches full capacity. Leadership and teachers will work together to collect and analyze student data and determine what changes and approaches are needed. Pages e42/e54

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

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:

(i) The applicant has attached strong documented support from local partnerships, elected officials and community members. Letters showed that the community supported the grant application. Some members of the community were involved in developing the application.

(ii) The applicant has engaged parents and the community through outreach activities and community meetings. The applicant conducted over "25 community meetings" to get input from parents and community during the development of the charter application.

Reader's Score: 8

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.

Sub Question

Strengths:

The applicant has attached strong documented support from local partnerships, elected officials and community members. Letters showed that the community supported the grant application. Some members of the community were involved in developing the application. Pages e 65-80

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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 has engaged parents and the community through outreach activities and community meetings. The applicant conducted over "25 community meetings" to get input from parents and community during the development of the charter application. Pages e57-58

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

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:

(i) The applicant has developed a reasonable plan for reaching out to members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented and encouraging their applications for employment. The applicant will also reach out to national organizations to seek guidance and assistance in recruiting members from underrepresented groups.

(ii) The sound qualifications and background of the Founder and Executive Director who was the Senior Operating Office at Excel Academy Public Charter School, Washington, DC. will manage key personnel and the HR timeline aligned to building a full staff and recruitment plan. His strong leadership background is appropriate for achieving the objectives set forth in the proposal.

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 has developed a reasonable plan for reaching out to members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented and encouraging their applications for employment. The applicant will also reach out to national organizations to seek guidance and assistance in recruiting members from underrepresented groups.
Page e 48

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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.

Strengths:

The sound qualifications and background of the Founder and Executive Director who was the Senior Operating Office at Excel Academy Public Charter School, Washington, DC. will manage key personnel and the HR timeline aligned to building a full staff and recruitment plan. His strong leadership background is appropriate for achieving the objectives set forth in the proposal. Pages e49-50 /e45-46

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Quality of the management plan.

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

Strengths:

The applicant describes an appropriate management plan that details the roles and responsibilities of the Board, Executive Director and decision making process. School management milestones are aligned task actions completion of task and responsibilities aligned to staff and leadership accountability. Pages e42-46

Weaknesses:

It is unclear how long volunteers will fill staff leadership positions before permanent staff are hired.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

- 1. Existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter schools and its uauthorized 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:

No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

At the time of the application the applicant had not received the final approval from the Dorchester County Board of Education. Pages e 55-57

Reader's Score: 0

- 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 evidence that describes LEA alignment to SEA as outlined in Maryland State Department. The LEA policies mirror SEA flexibility. Dorchester County School Policy 390. Page e56

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 proposes a charter middle school specifically designed to improve student achievement levels and high school graduation rates in rural Dorchester County Maryland. The applicant describes targeted supports that students will receive to increase reading and mathematics skills and prepare students to enter high school and graduate. Pages e18-19

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

The applicant's "Open Enrollment" approach is sound for promoting diversity in a County where African American and low income student achievement data show the highest concentrations of low performing students and suspension rates in Maryland. Pages e22-24

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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 proposes outreach, enrollment and support of military connected students living in the county.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/30/2013 09:59 AM