

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/11/2014 03:30 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Excel Public Charter School (U282B140032)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Curriculum	15	14
Significance		
1. Achievement Standards	5	5
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	13
Quality of Project Design		
1. Community Support	10	10
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	22	22
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	15
Quality of Project Design		
1. Existence of charter	15	13
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
Priority Questions		
Improving Achievement and High School Graduation		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP 1	4	4
Support for Military Families		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP 2	3	1
Total	107	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 7: 84.282B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Excel Public Charter School (U282B140032)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. Quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices. (15 points)

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 and content 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:

With plans to open for the academic year 2015, Excel Public Charter School will serve grades 6 and 7 in its first year, expanding to grade 12 in succeeding years (p. e14). After reviewing the student data for the community in which the school will be located, the applicant expects that students will enter the school "two to three years behind in their reading and math skills, and with little exposure to science" (p. 3). The proposal includes a thoughtful plan to focus on skill mastery by 8th grade in order for students to be prepared for a college-prep high school program. Recognizing the skill level of incoming students and preparing to increase student performance from that point is a hallmark of this proposal. The proposed curriculum at Excel includes 100 minutes of ELA classes a day for middle school students in order to provide not only reading instruction and remediation, but also analysis of fiction and non-fiction texts (p. 15). Students will also receive 100 minutes a day of math and science instruction. In math, following the example of other top performing charter schools, the approach will be a combined emphasis on procedures and application (p. 16). Sample schedules provide a clear look at the proposed curriculum (p. 52-56), and a table on page 51 showing a comparison between Excel's proposed instructional time and that of the school district in which Excel will be located gives an indication of how the applicant will reach the academic goals.

The instructional methods outlined in the proposal are varied and will reach a wide variety of learners. While the proposal gives specific examples of teaching strategies such as oral drills and Socratic seminars, the applicant recognizes and explains the true purpose of instructional methods (p. 18).

This section is well researched including 10 unique sources. It points to the overall strength of this proposal as well as the high standards to which Excel Public Charter School will hold its students.

Weaknesses:

The proposal includes a list of 10 school leaders who were approached with specific questions surrounding curriculum and instruction and whose schools are successful (p. 20-21). No data is provided about any of these schools in relation to these topics however.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The extent to which the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting

State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards. (5 points)

Strengths:

Excel Public Charter School proposes to hire a "Dean of Student Supports" to manage all IEP services and "Student Supports Coordinators" who will serve as special education teachers (p. 4-5). The numbers of these teachers will increase as the school grows. English learners "will be educated using a structured English immersion approach" (p. 5). The applicant recognizes that this is a specific technique and outlines the methods teachers will use in order to implement it (p. 6). Details have been provided regarding the rationale and use of "ability grouping" in classes (p. 22). Finally, although all students will be invited to attend after-school "Study Hall," priority will be given to those struggling with ELA and math (p. 22).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of the charter school s objectives. (15 points)

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to propose a comprehensive plan for assessing the achievement of the charter school 's objectives, including developing of performance measures and performance targets for its proposed grant project that are consistent with those objectives. The applicant should clearly identify the project-specific performance measures and performance targets in its plan and should review the Performance Measures section of the notice for information on the requirements for developing those performance measures and performance targets consistent with the objectives of the proposed project. The applicant may choose to include a discussion of the project-specific performance measures and targets it develops in response to the Performance Measures requirements when addressing this criterion.

Strengths:

The applicant describes 7 goals ranging from academic to parent satisfaction (p. 23-25). The measures for each goal are clearly described. Academic goals for reading, writing, math, and science include an absolute measure, growth measures, and a comparative measure (p. 23-25). An internally created rubric will be used as an absolute measure for a social studies goal (p. 25). Attendance rate and retention rate measures have been set. Parent satisfaction measures include measures on an annual survey and a measure for completion of surveys (p. 26). Finally, related to a school goal about college readiness, four absolute measures are included. One of these is "70% of Excel graduates will earn a college degree within six years of high school completion" (p. 25). It is impressive to include a goal not only to apply and enroll in college, but also to complete a college degree.

Weaknesses:

Measures 3.01, 3.03, 3.04, and 3.05 for science include performance on the "MSP for Science," but the applicant does not explain what this assessment it (p. 24-25). Students will be spending a considerable amount of time learning computer coding and computer science beginning in 7th grade, yet there is no goal or measurement for this. Finally, it is unclear why none of the measurements include the state assessment.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. 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:

(Please provide your responses in sub-questions 1 and 2.)

Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of 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.

(10 points total)

General:

Reader's Score: 10

Sub Question

1. (i) The extent of community support for the application (up to 5 points).

Strengths:

Excel Public Charter School's "Design Team" met with 26 organizations while preparing the application. The Design Team also made a rare move in volunteering at a local clothing bank in order to meet the economically disadvantaged families the school wishes to serve (p. 26-27). Over 100 signatures of support from families with eligible children were gathered (p. 26).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 5

2. (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 5 points).

Strengths:

Working with the University of Washington, the Design Team has already conducted a preliminary parent survey in order to determine the needs of families as related to local schools (p. 27). Four high needs were identified and have been incorporated into the school's design. This is another example of the thoughtful and thorough nature of the planning behind this proposed school. The applicant explains the need to involve families in two ways: 1) directly supporting their students' learning and 2) impacting the management and direction of the school as a whole (p. 29). Over ten detailed means of achieving this are outlined (p. 28-29). The school's "Board of Directors" consists of parents, business owners, and former students from the community in an effort truly involve the community.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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

(Please provide your responses in sub-questions 1 and 2.)

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide evidence of the key project personnel's skills, experience, and success in the following areas: launching a high-quality charter school; developing an innovative school design; managing or leading a non-profit organization; establishing or maintaining school governance by board of trustees; developing and implementing an effective curriculum; recruiting and evaluating effective educators; and strengthening fiscal management.

(22 points total)

General:

Reader's Score: 22

Sub Question

1. (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).

Strengths:

The applicant articulates the school's hiring goal, "We will prioritize the hiring of staff members that reflect the diversity of our students" (p. 35). To achieve this, hiring will be from local and national pools and several sources will be used including National Association for Black Educators, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and The Martinez Family Foundation.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

Excel Public Charter School has a nine-member board, and these individuals have ties to the local community through home and profession. The board members have expertise in educational leadership, manufacturing, accounting, fundraising, law, management, finance, and human resources. The "School Director" and "Dean of Academics" have been identified. Each possess teaching experience, and together they have experience founding and running a non-profit focused on assisting underserved students in Seattle as well as developing inquiry-based science curriculum for middle school students.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. 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. (15 points)

Strengths:

In a table on pages 42-43, three areas of responsibility are listed with tasks for the Board of Directors and the School Director. These general areas are "Finance and Accounting," "Planning," and "Personnel." This is an easy means of learning the overall management and organizational plan of the school. An additional table on pages 45-46 is a timeline from authorization through July 2015. This table includes the two categories of curriculum development and teacher hiring/professional development with tasks listed as well as identifying the responsible parties. These tables are supplemented by the school's "Start-Up Plan" on pages e315-e320. The attention to detail is indicative of careful planning and a desire to provide the best education for the students.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

- 1. Existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter school 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. (15 points)

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 performance contract is complete and includes performance goals, metrics, and measures. A signed copy of the charter and performance contract is included on pages e19-e47.

Weaknesses:

On page e28, there is a reference to a school performance framework, but this is not provided.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

- 1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school. (3 points)**

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, curriculum, and personnel in accordance with its State s charter school law.

Strengths:

The applicant explains areas of autonomy and flexibility afforded the school. Clear examples are used (p. 49).

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 3

Priority Questions

Improving Achievement and High School Graduation - Competitive Preference 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 the 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: The Department encourages the applicant to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) to which it is well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this Competitive Preference Priority.

Strengths:

The proposed school plans on serving a similar number of students with disabilities and English language learners as the school district in which it will be located. It has a clearly articulated plan regarding instruction and support for these students. The school will eventually serve grades 6-12, but it will open with 6th and 7th grades. Skill mastery in these grades is the focus in order for students to be ready for college-prep material in high school.

Weaknesses:

There are no weaknesses in this section.

Reader's Score: 4

Support for Military Families - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Support for Military Families.

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

Note: To receive points under this priority, an applicant's project must target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. The applicant's recruitment and admissions policies and practices must comply with the State's 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:

Many aspects of the school's design will help students with family members serving in the military.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does provide specific recruitment strategies for this population. No data is provided showing how many active military families have students enrolled in Kent public schools.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/11/2014 03:30 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/26/2014 02:44 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Excel Public Charter School (U282B140032)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Curriculum	15	13
Significance		
1. Achievement Standards	5	5
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	14
Quality of Project Design		
1. Community Support	10	10
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	22	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	15
Quality of Project Design		
1. Existence of charter	15	15
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
Priority Questions		
Improving Achievement and High School Graduation		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP 1	4	4
Support for Military Families		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP 2	3	2
Total	107	101

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 7: 84.282B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Excel Public Charter School (U282B140032)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. Quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices. (15 points)

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 and content 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:

That the applicant has designed an educational program based on the success of 90/90/90 schools suggests that the program will be successful. The applicant plans to use extra time through the equivalent of 80 additional school days and double the amount of time on math instruction. The applicant also presents many high quality instructional practices such as direct, inquiry-based, and project-based instruction, with an At-Risk review team for struggling students. Furthermore, that the applicant includes a discipline policy and a plan for character development to support the academic curriculum shows a commitment to enabling all students to meet standards. The proposal includes a thorough explanation of the instructional focus for each grade level and each content (e.g. 6th and 7th mastering basic literacy and 8th grade transitioning to more Project-Based Learning to prepare for high school).

Weaknesses:

While successful general instructional practices and philosophies are stated, they are general and no specific curriculum is specified. Furthermore, it would be helpful if the proposal cited data from the schools it models itself on to prove the effectiveness of these instructional practices.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The extent to which the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards. (5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant shows that will assist educationally disadvantaged students through plans to serve 75% of students eligible for free and reduced lunch and less than 50% of students meeting grade level. The proposal presents a detailed educational plan that includes strategies for addressing students below grade level (ability grouping, Study Hall, small teacher to student ratio, etc..)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of the charter school s objectives. (15 points)

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to propose a comprehensive plan for assessing the achievement of the charter school 's objectives, including developing of performance measures and performance targets for its proposed grant project that are consistent with those objectives. The applicant should clearly identify the project-specific performance measures and performance targets in its plan and should review the Performance Measures section of the notice for information on the requirements for developing those performance measures and performance targets consistent with the objectives of the proposed project. The applicant may choose to include a discussion of the project-specific performance measures and targets it develops in response to the Performance Measures requirements when addressing this criterion.

Strengths:

The applicant presents a detailed evaluation plan that includes 7 annual goals with absolute measures as well as growth measures and a comparative measure. These goals cover four academic content areas (ELA, Math, Science, social studies) as well as measures for college readiness, attendance and retention, and parent satisfaction. Furthermore, the academic evaluation plan is thorough and includes a diagnostic exam and multiple other exams including the Qualitative Reading Inventory, Smarter Balanced Assessment and Measure of Academic of Progress (MAP).

Weaknesses:

The proposal does not include a goal or metric for computer science, which its students spend a significant amount of time learning.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. 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:

(Please provide your responses in sub-questions 1 and 2.)

Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of 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.

(10 points total)

General:

Reader's Score: 10

Sub Question

1. (i) The extent of community support for the application (up to 5 points).

Strengths:

It is clear that Excel is committed to the community taking an active leadership role in the school. Excel met with over 100 local families at the Kent Clothing Bank to gather community input for the school design and they continue to visit the Kent Clothing Bank.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. (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 5 points).

Strengths:

The applicant developed a parent survey to learn about the needs of families and have 16 Community Coffees scheduled. Furthermore, Excel plans to have a parent liaison each year, as well as a parent on the board and monthly morning Joe coffee hours before school. This ensures that parents will be involved in the program design of the school. Additionally, the proposal presents multiple strategies for parental involvement including orientation, home visits, family nights, morning joe, etc... to ensure that parents are involved in the implementation of the school.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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

(Please provide your responses in sub-questions 1 and 2.)

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide evidence of the key project personnel' s skills, experience, and success in the following areas: launching a high-quality charter school; developing an innovative school design; managing or leading a non-profit organization; establishing or maintaining school governance by board of trustees; developing and implementing an effective curriculum; recruiting and evaluating effective educators; and strengthening fiscal management.

(22 points total)

General:

Reader's Score: 20

Sub Question

Sub Question

1. (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).**

Strengths:

The application includes a GEPA statement that mentions the teacher recruitment strategies in which they will pursue organizations with an obligation to advancing the careers of minority teachers.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

Both the School Director and the Dean of Academics have the relevant training and experience necessary to start a charter school. Both have instructional expertise and experience serving students from low-income backgrounds. The board members also have the experience necessary to lead a new charter school. The members have a range of backgrounds, from education to law, accounting, finance, and construction.

Weaknesses:

While the school director has nonprofit leadership experience and teaching experience, he does not have experience as a school leader.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. **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. (15 points)**

Strengths:

The application includes a five-year budget plan that will ensure the applicant's fiscal sustainability on state charter funds alone. It is appreciated that the applicant has already raised a significant amount of funds to eliminate possible hurdles in the start up process. Furthermore, the proposal defines responsibilities of both board members and the school director within each category (e.g. financial, planning, and etc...). Finally, the proposal includes a detailed startup plan with 128 tasks including milestones and designated person responsible.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. Existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter school 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. (15 points)

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 charter contract is attached and includes multiple measurable objectives (e25-26).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school. (3 points)

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, curriculum, and personnel in accordance with its State s charter school law.

Strengths:

Section 8 describes in detail the flexibility afforded by Washington charter school law in areas including scheduling, personnel, funding, and educational programs (p. 49). Overall, the applicant has a high degree of autonomy. The proposal also outlines exceptions to this flexibility, such as local, state, and federal laws.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Priority Questions

Improving Achievement and High School Graduation - Competitive Preference 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 the 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: The Department encourages the applicant to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) to which it is well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this Competitive Preference Priority.

Strengths:

The applicant plans to serve 11% special education and 15% English learners and has developed a robust student recruitment and enrollment strategy to help ensure self-selection does not take place. Excel plans to have an inclusion model, response to intervention, daily small group study hall, sheltered English immersion strategies, and give preference to hiring ELL certified teachers. Special Education students will be served by a Student Support Coordinator. Finally, ELL and special Education students will be served through the culturally responsive pedagogy, curriculum that matches the life experience of students, and the requirement that lesson plans show how teachers will differentiate.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 4

Support for Military Families - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Support for Military Families.

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

Note: To receive points under this priority, an applicant's project must target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. The applicant's recruitment and admissions policies and practices must comply with the State's 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:

That the proposed school will be located near the Lewis McCord base in Tacoma, WA provides the opportunity for the applicant to serve military students. Additionally, the school structures already developed by the applicant will be helpful to military students: small school size, family outreach, homeroom advisory, emphasis on character development and socio emotional health, and the presence of a social workers, licensed counselor, and a partnership with Kent Youth and Family Services.

Weaknesses:

Although there are some structures in the school that could help serve military students, the applicant does not specifically target military students. Additionally, the proposal does not provide data on how far away the military base will be from the school, nor about how many active military families live in the area or are currently enrolled in Kent Public Schools.

Reader's Score: 2

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/26/2014 02:44 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/21/2014 12:16 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Excel Public Charter School (U282B140032)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Curriculum	15	15
Significance		
1. Achievement Standards	5	5
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	12
Quality of Project Design		
1. Community Support	10	10
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	22	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	15
Quality of Project Design		
1. Existence of charter	15	13
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
Priority Questions		
Improving Achievement and High School Graduation		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP 1	4	4
Support for Military Families		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP 2	3	1
Total	107	98

Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 7: 84.282B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Excel Public Charter School (U282B140032)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. Quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices. (15 points)

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 and content 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:

Proposed curriculum and instructional practices are well designed and based upon successful practices that are supported by research and have been utilized with similar student populations (see C: Curriculum and Instructional Practices). Plan appropriately provides extra supports to students in 6th and 7th grade who may be entering the school at a disadvantage and modifies these supports and instruction as students reach higher grade levels.

Weaknesses:

No significant weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The extent to which the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards. (5 points)

Strengths:

Applicant provides a coherent plan to assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting standards which includes Rtl, a Sheltered Immersion Program, extended day, extended year, and daily small group Study Hall (See description in Comp. Pref. Priority 1 answer).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of the charter school s objectives. (15 points)

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to propose a comprehensive plan for assessing the achievement of the charter school 's objectives, including developing of performance measures and performance targets for its proposed grant project that are consistent with those objectives. The applicant should clearly identify the project-specific performance measures and performance targets in its plan and should review the Performance Measures section of the notice for information on the requirements for developing those performance measures and performance targets consistent with the objectives of the proposed project. The applicant may choose to include a discussion of the project-specific performance measures and targets it develops in response to the Performance Measures requirements when addressing this criterion.

Strengths:

Proposal narrative includes and quantifies numerous measures for assessing student achievement, retention, and attendance during initial school years, appropriately allowing 1-3 years to reach certain measures. Multiple assessment tools are provided for reading and math (Smarter Balanced Assessment, MAP). School will also measure college acceptance and enrollment rates (see section 3, Goals 1-7 for all measures).

Weaknesses:

Proposal lacks details on how non-academic aspects of project implementation will be evaluated. For some measures, applicant provides percentages for general concepts (e.g. parent satisfaction will equal 85%) without specific question or criteria. These measures are not helpful without context or specificity (see section 3, Goals 1-7).

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. 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:

(Please provide your responses in sub-questions 1 and 2.)

Note: In describing the extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of 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.

(10 points total)

General:

Reader's Score: 10

Sub Question

1. (i) The extent of community support for the application (up to 5 points).

Strengths:

Applicant has garnered significant community support for the project, having met and held discussions with a broad range of organizations, including civic, cultural, educational and advocacy institutions. Applicant has met with more than 100 families at community events and has utilized a parent survey to guide project design [see Section 4.A.].

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 5

- 2. (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 5 points).**

Strengths:

Proposal offers specific suggestions and input from parents and local community members, gleaned from parent surveys, that have been incorporated into project plan. these include increased communication from school to parents, a college preparation program, and provision of school materials in home languages [see section 4.B.].

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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

(Please provide your responses in sub-questions 1 and 2.)

Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide evidence of the key project personnel' s skills, experience, and success in the following areas: launching a high-quality charter school; developing an innovative school design; managing or leading a non-profit organization; establishing or maintaining school governance by board of trustees; developing and implementing an effective curriculum; recruiting and evaluating effective educators; and strengthening fiscal management.

(22 points total)

General:

Reader's Score: 20

Sub Question

- 1. (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).**

Strengths:

Applicant emphasizes school's intention to encourage applications for employment from underrepresented groups and provides potential sources (e.g. National Association of Black Educators) from which such recruitment will occur [see Section 5C].

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

The school has in place a diverse and highly qualified Board of Directors with a range of skill sets and experiences to support the project. Currently identified staff members possess experiences in schools and non-profits that should prepare them to successfully guide the project's implementation, such as budgeting, non-profit management, curriculum and instruction.

Weaknesses:

While School Director has experience in the non-profit sector and as a teacher, he is not an experienced school leader.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. 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. (15 points)**

Strengths:

Proposal includes a strong management plan that includes a detailed Start-Up Plan (see Appendix), appropriate budget, and clear delineation of responsibilities. School has already raised significant funds (see Budget Narrative) that should help eliminate possible hurdles during the start-up process.

Weaknesses:

No significant weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

- 1. Existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter school 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. (15 points)

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:

School has attached charter contract that includes multiple measurable objectives, including instructional time, integration of non-cognitive skills, professional support for teachers and parent/community participation.

Weaknesses:

Attached charter references how Commission will evaluate school based on a performance Framework, but Framework – with associated performance levels and criteria – is not attached/included in application.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources**1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school. (3 points)**

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, curriculum, and personnel in accordance with its State s charter school law.

Strengths:

Applicant describes the flexibility afforded by SEA and includes examples of autonomy in different matters such as hiring and firing, issuing debt, and entering contracts, among others.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 3

Priority Questions**Improving Achievement and High School Graduation - Competitive Preference 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 the 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: The Department encourages the applicant to provide a thoughtful, in-depth response to the priority area(s) to which it is well-suited to respond. Applicants may choose to respond to one or more

of the priority areas and are not required to respond to each priority area in order to receive the maximum available points under this Competitive Preference Priority.

Strengths:

The plan provides evidence that the proposed school would provide high-quality educational experience to students with disabilities and English learners, including aspects of the school design (e.g. extended time, RTI approach, Sheltered English Immersion strategies, and other supports) specifically geared to the needs of these populations. These instructional strategies, coupled with student assessments and supports for students struggling upon entry into school in 6th and 7th grade are likely to increase high school graduation rates.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses identified in this section.

Reader's Score: 4

Support for Military Families - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Support for Military Families.

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

Note: To receive points under this priority, an applicant's project must target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. The applicant's recruitment and admissions policies and practices must comply with the State's 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:

Applicant highlights that school location is near Lewis-McCord base in Tacoma, WA (see answer to Competitive Preference Priority 2). A number of aspects of the school design (e.g. small size, home visits) would likely support the needs of students from frequently transient military families.

Weaknesses:

Plan does not provide targeted or proactive efforts to recruit or support students from military families.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/21/2014 12:16 PM