

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Foundations College Preparatory School (U282B140087)

Reader #1: *****

	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	14
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	13
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	0
Total	107	101

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 6: 84.282B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Foundations College Preparatory School (U282B140087)

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:

The applicant has a strong clearly defined curriculum based on the detailed description of how the program will enable all students to meet the challenging State student academic achievement and content standards. The curriculum includes adequate college readiness instructional practices, and scaffolding strategies to build strong student independence.

The applicant anticipates a student population with 90% free and reduced lunch eligibility Page 19

This charter school proposes to provide a student body of 90% low-income African American youth on the south side of Chicago. The curriculum will prepare students to thrive in college at rates equal or surpass those of their non-low income peers. The focus of the curriculum will include student growth toward college readiness benchmarks that measures academic performance for college. Page 1

The applicant plans to create a 6-12th grade college preparatory continuum. The applicant states the goal will focus on providing a true rigorous college prep experience that will include the necessary scaffolding to build independence and self-discipline. Page 3

The instructions at Foundations is supported by: a full school day and year for all students in grades 6-12th, flexible scheduling based on teacher expertise and learning objectives, frequent use of technology in the classroom, intensive teacher coaching and professional development training. Page 6

The curriculum includes a Blended Learning Station Rotation model which means classes are more inclusive. The school will implement a Data Driven culture, which pertains to teachers receiving student data from digital programs based on student strengths and areas of growth to develop IEP goals. Page

Weaknesses:

None found

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:

The applicant has a detailed plan to develop an educational model for African American students who are residing in low-income areas on the south side of Chicago. The proposed educational model is aligned to the State Common Core Standards and will provide students with a foundation of higher order thinking skills for high school and college readiness.

Weaknesses:

None found

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 has proposed a strong evaluation section with standardized assessments.

The applicant has provided a chart that list student growth, and academic goals for years 1 and 2. The applicant states there will be student growth assessed though standardized assessments such as the NWEA in year 1. The applicant will improve the average student academic growth to achieve a 1.5 years growth, and a 2 year growth for students more than 2 grade levels behind. The applicant states 80%o of the students at Foundation College Prep will meet or exceed the nation-wide target growth. Page 21

Weaknesses:

The overall chart does not provide details of student growth for each grade and content area. More information is needed in the elaboration section. The applicant did not address student growth of the students with disabilities. Page 22

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:

The applicant has included a detailed list of community agencies which the school has developed partnerships to maintain an active parent and community relationship. Some of the partnerships include the Phalanx Family Services, the Urban League, and Girls club. Other partnerships have open the door to "Parent Cafes" in which the community can learn about the Foundation College Prep.

Reader's Score: 10

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The applicant has designed an detailed project with strong Community Support for the application based on the active parent and community relationships, along with the local community partnerships.

(A) The school meets with families to establish relationships to make sure they are onboard with the Foundations College Prep way before school starts. The school builds home school bonds through several strategies to welcome the community such as: welcome phone calls, a parent on boarding meeting session, and an ally family summer barbeque. Page 31

(A) The applicant has included a detailed list of community agencies which the school has developed partnerships to maintain an active parent and community relationship. Some of the partnerships include the Phalanx Family Services, the Urban League, and the Girls Club. The applicant states they have other community partnerships which have open the door to "Parent Cafes" allowing the community to learn about the Foundation College Prep. Page 29

Weaknesses:

None found

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 has designed a strong project, which involves the active participation of a Parent Core Group. This Parent Group will participate in devleoping special school events, dismissal procedures, student uniforms, and the Parent Innovation Fund.

Sub Question

(B) The applicant has launched a Parent Core Group which will transition into the school Parent Association. The "Parent Core" has been involved in helping to develop the student uniforms, student culture incentives, arrival and dismissal procedures, and other programmatic decisions. Page 30

(B) The Parent Core Group will host school meetings that will be open to all families. The focus of the meetings will allow parents to learn about the schools academic program, and good student work habits. The parents will also demonstrate to other parent how to monitor student performance as well as be involved in special events or family fun nights. The group will oversee the "Parent Innovation Fund", which will support parent initiatives to support and improve the school community. Page 31

Weaknesses:

None found

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 has a sound and reasonable Personnel section based on evidence of the GEPA statement to follow local and federal laws regarding seeking employment for persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented.

(A) The GEPA statement in the project says Foundations has implemented a multi-layered recruitment strategy to prevent discrimination. Page e10

(A) The applicant has included a plan to focus on recruiting a diverse pool of teachers via online, through target advertising, by word of mouth, and through outreach efforts. Page e11

Sub Question

Weaknesses:

None found

Reader's Score: 2

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

Strengths:

The applicant has designed a clearly defined Personnel section with documentation of the qualifications and experiences of the key personnel.

(B) The project has include summary of several key personnel along with the credentials for their proposed roles. The list includes: the Executive Directive, the school Principal, the Dean of School Culture, the Dean of Operations and Sustainability, and the Instructional Staff. Page 33

Weaknesses:

None found

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:

The applicant has an adequate Management Plan based on the objectives of the proposed project, and responsibilities of the Leadership Team.

The applicant states the Board of Foundations College Prep. is responsible for ensuring that the school is accountable to the students and families it serves. The schools plan is to operate in a manner faithful to the terms of its charter and in compliance with all applicable laws. The applicant states the school is financially sound and fiscally responsible. The Board will oversee the leadership team that handles the operations of the school. The School boards role, is to hold the executive director, accountable for academic, organizational, and financial performance. Page 43

The applicant has a list of the project personnel and their skills and experiences. It includes: The Principal, Executive Director, School Manager, Special Education Teacher, Project Teacher, Math Teacher, Science Teacher, Physical Education Teacher, Social Studies Teacher, and The Dean of School Culture.
Page 32-41

The applicant has provided a chart, which includes the Leadership Team and their Responsibilities
Page 45

A Professional Development chart it includes training topics and weeks of scheduled training.
Page e83

The applicant has a Student Assessment Plan which list the grades, the assessment for each grade objectives, and

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not list milestones for the project and timelines for the academic objectives.

Reader's Score: 13

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 applicant has sufficient proof of the existence of a written charter contract with the Chicago Schools Board of Education, which is the authorized public chartering agency.

The existing contract with the Chicago Public Schools Board of Education begins as of May 2014. The contract holds the school accountable for the quality of the student academic ratings. Page 47

Weaknesses:

None found

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:

The applicant has described the degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA, and the applicant has identified the terms of autonomy under the state charter school law.

The applicant states the state of Illinois has exempt charter schools from requirements of the Illinois Code except for specific requirements related to health and safety. The applicant states it is completely autonomous with regards to governance, education model, staffing, and the budget.

Weaknesses:

None found

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 met the Absolute Priority Competitive Preference section, based on the in-depth design to accelerate student learning, improve high school graduation rates and college readiness in high poverty students in the Chicago area.

(A) The mission of Foundations College Prep is to empower underserved youth to thrive in colleges by teaching them to think critically, live with honor and strive for their personal best. The project will focus on accelerating learning and increasing student college successes. Page 1

(A) The school team is committed to building Chicago's highest performing open-enrollment school, a school that will

prepare students to thrive in college at rates that equal or surpass those of their non-low income peers. Page 1

(A) The school will focus on student growth toward achievement of college readiness benchmarks. The applicant expects all students to be on track for college on both academic and non-academic measures by the time they leave Foundations. Page 1

(A) The applicant will provide a quality school on the far south side of Chicago in a high poverty area of Chicago that has historically underserved students. The applicant will develop creative sustainable solutions that can accelerate learning, increase graduation rates, and transform students' lives. Page e15

(B) The applicant has statistics that shows Student With Disabilities will be a fifth of the student population. The school model has a strong focus on meeting the individual academic and socio-emotional needs of all students and is particularly well suited to serving students with disabilities. Page 4

Weaknesses:

None found

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 at (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html>)).

Strengths:

None found

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address recruiting military students.

Reader's Score: 0

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Foundations College Preparatory School (U282B140087)

Reader #2: *****

	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	14
Quality of Project Design		
1. Community Support	10	8
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	22	22
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	10
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	0
Total	107	96

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 6: 84.282B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Foundations College Preparatory School (U282B140087)

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:

- This proposed charter school has met the Absolute Priority by providing evidence of how the program will accelerate learning and help to improve high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates in high-poverty schools.
- The project design presented was comprehensive, and clearly indicated specifics regarding how the program would enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement and content standards. Foundations College Preparatory School has designed a program to meet the needs of at-risk students with a multi-tiered approach and the provision of collaboration time for teachers and staff (p. 19). The application has provided detail regarding how Foundations College Preparatory School will accelerate learning and help to improve high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates in high poverty schools (pp. 1-4). Applicant states that they project 1/5th of the student body will require special services, and that over 90% of the students served will be economically disadvantaged (p. 19).
- Foundations College Preparatory School will serve 160 students for the 2014-2015 school year (p. 6) in grades 6-8. Applicant has a Grade 6-12 charter, and anticipates bringing in a maximum of 20-30 new 9th-grade students each year, and will increase student enrollment when a new wing is added (p. 6).
- Applicant has provided a comprehensive overview of curricular components specific to academic areas and described how this curriculum is backwards mapped from Common Core State Standards and College Readiness Standards (p. 13). To promote academic achievement, students in the middle grades will receive additional instructional time in math and literacy (p. 13 – Building the Foundations for College Readiness), and will be offered opportunities to work independently or in small groups (p. 14).
- Foundations College Preparatory School will vertically align 6th- through 12th-grade curriculum with State standards, and create a college-like environment in classrooms by promoting project-based, interdisciplinary classes (p. 8).

Weaknesses:

- No weaknesses noted.

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:

- The significance of the proposed project is clearly delineated to assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic and achievement standards.
- Applicant states that several aspects of the school design will assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic and achievement standards (p. 18). Students that need extra interventions will receive access to adaptive digital curriculum (p. 18), and all students will be provided with a collaborative environment that includes a robust assessment process to determine student progress (p. 17).
- Foundations College Preparatory School has designed a model to meet the needs of at-risk students who need academic and socio-emotional support in order to be prepared for college (p. 19). Staff will utilize the Response to Intervention (RTI) model to offer students a multi-tiered approach to remediation, and a high-quality academic program (p. 20).

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:

- Applicant noted the importance of a robust assessment process in their curriculum overview (p. 17) and has provided a comprehensive overview of goals that are aligned with project objectives (pp. 22-25) and included annual and long-term targets.
- Foundations College Preparatory School noted that the academic assessment of entering students would occur prior to the start of each year (p. 25). Benchmarks would include prior year student performance, NWEA diagnostics, and teacher observations and reports (p. 25).
- The application includes other organizational outcomes (p. 27) in addition to student outcome measures and presented a dashboard (p. 28) identifying organizational goals (re-enrollment rates, parent involvement, etc.), along with corresponding metrics, and target dates.

Weaknesses:

- Foundations College Preparatory School has presented four overarching goals (pp. 22-25) including student growth, innovation, and student performance. Applicant does not, however, address who will be primarily responsible for assuring the implementation of strategies to assess achievement of school objectives. [-1]

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: 8

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

- Foundations College Preparatory School has developed partnerships in the area (p. 29) and included a list of active supporters (p. 30), such as Neighborhood Housing Services and the Far South Community Action Council for Chicago Schools. Ongoing partnerships have also been developed with the Urban League and the Boys and Girls Clubs (p. 30).

Weaknesses:

- Applicant provided vague information regarding the extent of community support for the application, and it was unclear if opportunities were provided to community members to support the application, rather than just receive information about the school. [-1]

Reader's Score: 4

- 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:

- Applicant has hosted 'Parent Cafes' in which parents from the community are able to ask questions and discuss community or school-related issues (p. 30). Additionally, Foundations College Preparatory School has launched a Parent Core Group (which will eventually become the Parent Association) to help develop student uniform codes and other programmatic decisions (p. 30). Staff will meet with families daily, and strive to build a home-school bond

Sub Question

through a parent on-boarding session and an all family summer barbeque (p. 31).

Weaknesses:

- Insufficient information was provided regarding how community members would be engaged in school operations or afforded opportunities to assist Foundations College Preparatory School with implementation practices. [-1]

Reader's Score: 4

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:

- Applicant states that they will encourage employment applications from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented (GEPA Statement p. e10-11) and that Foundations College Preparatory School has made hiring a diverse, high-performing staff a top priority during the planning year (p. 41).

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:

- Key project personnel includes the Executive Director and Principal, both of whom have a strong track record of leadership and a diverse set of experiences that will help the organization achieve program goals (pp. 32-33). The Principal is a former teacher and spent time with one of the nation's top charter networks (p. 34), and the Executive Director has considerable experience in financial modeling, data analysis, and charter school development (p. 33).

Sub Question

- The leadership team of Foundations College Preparatory School has been structured to reflect the educational model (p. 44), and roles and responsibilities of personnel have been detailed on pages 45-46.

Weaknesses:

- No weaknesses noted.

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:

- Applicant has provided some activities, with corresponding start- and end-dates (pp. 22-25), and aligned these activities with budget items (p. e183-e186). Applicant has indicated how grant funds would be used to fulfill project tasks in support of the Foundations College Preparatory School objectives.

- Applicant has provided a detailed listing of Year One leadership roles with corresponding responsibilities (pp.45-46). These responsibilities are aligned with the goals (p. 22), and the educational program components (pp. 6-12).

Weaknesses:

- Applicant did not clearly delineate all the benchmarks and milestones needed to successfully attain project objectives within the established timeline. [-3]

- Incomplete information was provided with regard to the specifics of how staff would successfully achieve the project objectives on time and within budget. [-2]

Reader's Score: 10

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:

- Foundations College Preparatory School received its final authorization from the Chicago Public Schools Board of Education in May 2014. A 5-year contract was signed in June, 2014 and was attached to the application (e114-e167).

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:

- Applicant described that Illinois law exempts charter schools from most requirements of the Illinois School Code, except for specific requirements related to health and safety (p. 47).

- Foundations College Preparatory School will be afforded flexibility, and also will be held accountable with the Board of Education with the City of Chicago. Applicant has clearly described the degree of autonomy Foundations College Preparatory School will have over the school's budget, expenditures, daily operations and personnel (p. 48).

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 proposed charter school project fully met competitive preference priority 1 for proposing to improve achievement and high school graduation rates for students for students with disabilities (p. 4). Foundations College Prep has presented a detailed model (p. 5) which describes school elements that will have a direct impact on accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates for students with disabilities. These elements include flexible schedules, the use of personalized and adaptive digital curriculum, and the promotion of a data-driven culture.
- Applicant states that they project 1/5th of the student body will require special services, and the staffing model includes a full-time social worker (p. 5) and a Case Manager (p. 19). School design aspects will help students with disabilities meet educational goals (p. 18), including the access to adaptive digital curriculum, small group instruction in core classes, and personalized learning (p. 19).
- Applicant has demonstrated specific strategies for 'students with disabilities' (pp. 18-19) and states that they anticipate a student population with over 90% free and reduced lunch eligibility (p. 19). Staff will utilize the Response to Intervention (RTI) model to deliver a multi-tiered approach to remediation (p. 20), ensuring that all students will receive a rigorous, high-quality academic program.

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 at (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html>)).

Strengths:

- No strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

- The applicant did not fully address competitive preference priority 2 to support military families.
- The charter school design did not address the needs of military-connected students in that the proposed project did not target military-connected students who are current or prospective public charter school students. Evidence was not provided on the recruitment and admissions policy related to charter school enrollment of military students. [-3]

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/22/2014 05:36 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/25/2014 12:04 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Foundations College Preparatory School (U282B140087)

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	14
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	10
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	0
Total	107	98

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 6: 84.282B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Foundations College Preparatory School (U282B140087)

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:

Overall, the project proposal addresses the absolute priority of improving achievement and high school graduation rates for a planning, program design and initial implementation grant ((84.282B). This proposal meets the criteria for this priority with its focus on improving student achievement and graduation rates as well as serving a population living in high poverty by the fact that the school anticipates having a student population consisting of 90% qualifying for free or reduced lunch. (p. 1).

The proposal provides extensive evidence for a high quality and comprehensive project design. The proposal states that the school will be serving initially 80 sixth graders and 80 seventh graders. The proposal also notes that the school will expand to 120 students per grade and will ultimately serve grades 6-12 (p. 6).

The table on pages 6-7 identifies best practices that the school will incorporate into their teaching and learning, such as using data to drive instruction, teaching the whole child and building the teachers' instructional capacity. The table also include elements of teaching and learning that the school will incorporate in order to prepare students for college (p. 7). Examples of these include college exposure during advisory class and college prep seminar, critical thinking emphasized across the content areas and interdisciplinary project-based instructional units. (p. 7).

The proposal discusses how the school has redesigned the school day to maximize such elements as maximizing individualization and differentiation for students; maximizing the number of students (and instructional minutes) taught by expert teachers; matching class size, resources and digital content with learning objectives, student needs and teacher expertise; and ensuring students engage in a variety of rigorous learning environments and activities (p. 9).

The school presents a model of instructional staffing that includes a resident teacher, expert teacher and an instructional coach. (p. 12). The expert teacher, for example, teaches classes with more students and the instructional coach provides support to the resident teacher (p. 12).

The proposal mentions that the curriculum is based on the Common Core State Standards in math and ELA that focuses on the basics as well as on critical thinking and in-depth, grade-level content across the disciplines. (p. 13). The curriculum is backwards mapped from Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and College Readiness Standards (CRS). AP courses are mapped backwards from the AP course learning goals aligned to specific AP tests. (p. 13).

The proposal adds that the teachers of Foundations courses will use a blended model to help them differentiate for students at varying levels. In literacy and math, students will rotate between teacher-led whole-group instruction, individualized instruction and flexible small group learning.

The proposal mentions that in addition to the math and science classes, the students will take science, social studies, fine arts, physical education, and an interdisciplinary, project-based class that will reinforce content and skills from core classes in a technology-rich environment. The interdisciplinary courses will use a comprehensive approach to teaching

21st century skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication (p. 14).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

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:

The proposal provided extensive evidence that the proposed project will academically assist educationally disadvantaged students. The proposal states that Foundations is committed to meeting the needs of all students and will meet the needs of students with disabilities and IEPs (p. 17). Some of the strategies the school will employ to meet these students needs will be: collaborative environment that includes common planning time for co-teachers, regular professional development on inclusion and co-teaching, robust, continuous assessment to determine student progress, using Positive Behavior Intervention & Support (PBIS) as a proactive means to student discipline and curricular, technology and personnel resources to ensure teachers meet the learning needs of all students (p. 17).

The proposal mentions that students with IEPs will have access to the general education curriculum, including academic and non-academic classes, and receive services and/or supports within general education classrooms among their same age peers as indicated in their IEPs, ensuring that students are in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) (p. 18).

The proposal states that a Case Manager, with the support Social Worker, will create a daily schedule for students with IEPs to follow the inclusion model. (p. 18).

The proposal mentions that Foundations College Prep will utilize the Response to Intervention (RTI) mode taking a multi-tiered approach to remediation; all students receive a rigorous, high-quality academic program with opportunities to learn in larger classes and receive targeted support in small groups (p. 20).

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 proposal provided much evidence that a plan for a high quality project evaluation would be in place. The proposal mentions in a table on pages 22-25 several objectives related areas such as student growth and student performance. The objectives are associated in the table with an elaboration, which serves to operationalize the objective as well as a goal for year one and a goal for year two. For example, two year one goals for the objective of implementing their innovative model include having 100% of the students setting rigorous academic and personal goals and 70% of the students meeting those goals. (p. 25).

With respect to monitoring the school's achievement goals, the proposal makes explicit that they will assess students at the beginning of the school year to establish a baseline (p. 26).

For organizational performance, the proposal states that the school will use the Consortium on Chicago School Research's Five Essentials Survey to benchmark our organizational effectiveness against other schools and within three years, aim to be rated strong in all five areas (p. 27).

On page 28, the proposal includes a table that shows how the school will measure engagement and demand with respect to such measures as the number of charter applicants the school has and the number of parents that show up for report card pickup. (p. 28).

Moreover, the table continues and shows how financial, governance and H/R elements will be addressed for the overall assessment of the school (p. 29).

Weaknesses:

For the organization measures, the proposal does not clarify what being rated strong means for each of the essential supports nor is it apparent how the teacher tool box serves the overall assessment (p. 27).

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

Sub Question

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

Strengths:

The proposal provides extensive evidence of community support. The proposal states that the school has received support from community organizations such as: Neighborhood Housing Services, Demoisselle 2 Femme, the Far South Community Action Council for Chicago schools, as well as many notable leaders and activists, Joyce Champan, Director of the South Side Community Action Council and President of the Pullman Development Corporation, and Rev. Stephen Henry of the Mary Magdalene Missionary Baptist Church, the Vice President of the Board of

Developing Communities Project in the DCP Coalition of churches on the far south. Foundations has also received support from key political leaders in the community, such as Senator Dick Durbin, Alderman Carrie Austin, and State Representative Willie Davis. (p. 30).

The proposal states that the school has developed ongoing partnerships with Phalanx Family Services, the Urban League, the Boys and Girls Club, Ignite One, the alderman's office, and the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy. Partnerships with these, and other local institutions like Agape Community Center, the Ray and Joan Kroc Center (the Salvation Army), Olive Harvey City College, Catholic Charities, Cease Fire, the proposal states are essential in structuring meaningful volunteer opportunities for students and a sense of commitment to our neighborhood. (p. 30).

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 proposal provided extensive evidence of parent and community involvement in the implementation of the program. The proposal states that the school's goal is for parents to view Foundations not just as a school, but as a resource for the community. The proposal also documents efforts to involve parents in what is happening in the school through strategies such as web-based communications, meetings with parents, and progress reports sent home to parents (p. 31).

The parent corps group has been involved in shaping school policies, such as dress code (p. 30.). The parent innovation fund will additionally help support various innovative ideas being realized in the school (p. 30).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

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 proposal provided extensive evidence that the applicant would encourage applications for employment from members of traditionally underrepresented groups. The proposal states that Foundations College Prep recognizes the importance of hiring a diverse, high-performing staff, and made this a top priority during the planning year. (p. 41).

The proposal mentions some staff recruitment strategies such as: National teacher recruitment, including extensive online and social media presence; maintenance of a calendar of hiring events throughout Illinois and surrounding states, partnership with Troops to Teachers to recruit US Veterans seeking teaching credentials, Engagement of Teach for America's alumni-of-color group, "The Collective," for candidates, referrals, and networking (p. 41-42).

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:

The proposal provides extensive evidence for the relevant training and experience of the project personnel. The proposal lists the executive director of the school, documents the responsibilities of that position and describes her extensive experience in education, financial management and data analysis. (p. 32-33)

The proposal also notes the principal's extensive previous experience in school management and teaching and documents her responsibilities. (p. 33-34).

Similarly, the proposal mentions the Dean of Students, Dean of Operations, Math Instructional Lead, and other key staff, shares their extensive experience related to supporting teaching and learning and describes their responsibilities for each position. (p. 35-41).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Sub Question

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:

The proposal provided some evidence of a high quality management plan. The proposal clearly defines the responsibilities of the key staff in the table on pages 45-46. For example, it states that the Dean of Operations will oversee day-to-day school operations and student recruitment.

The proposal clarifies that the board does not manage the school, but rather oversees the leadership team that handles the operations of the school. (p. 43).

The proposal notes that at monthly meetings, the board considers the school's academic performance against annual goals and interim benchmarks; regular financial updates; and organizational and operational milestones.(p. 44).

The proposal adds that meeting the goals, reporting requirements, and other requirements of the CSP grant will be a measure reviewed by the board on a regular basis as part of the financial and operational reports on the school.(p. 46).

The leadership team is listed in the proposal with a description of their responsibilities is included on page 45.

Weaknesses:

However, there are some gaps in the management plan. The proposal does not make clear what specific activities will be carried out as part of the management plan. Moreover, the proposal does not make apparent the milestones associated with the management plane or a timeline that suggests when the project activities will be completed.

Reader's Score: 10

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 proposal meets this criterion for the quality of project design. The proposal states that Foundations College Prep received its final authorization to open by the Chicago Public Schools Board of Education (CBOE) in May 2014 and signed a 5-year charter contract in June of 2014. (p. 47).

The proposal also adds that An annual performance scorecard will be publicly issued to Foundations that includes pupil

performance on standardized tests, other student performance indicators including graduation, dropout and AP exam passing rates, Annual Yearly Progress pursuant to No Child Left Behind, results of a culture and climate survey, comparison metrics to other CPS schools, and when applicable, college enrollment and persistence rates. (p. 47).

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:

The proposal describes the extent to which the school's charter will afford flexibility for managing the school. The proposal states that Illinois law exempts charter schools from most requirements of the Illinois School Code, except for specific requirements related to health and safety, which are specified in the charter law. (p. 47).

The proposal also mentions that Foundations College Prep remains completely autonomous with regard to governance, education model, staffing, and budget (p. 48).

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 provided convincing evidence that the project is designed to accelerate learning and help to improve high school graduation rates* and college enrollment rates for students with disabilities. The proposal states that according to CPS data, special education students comprise 15% of the population in schools in the Far South network, which is the highest for any community-based network in the city (p. 4). The school expects special education students to comprise one fifth of the student population (p. 5).

The proposal includes a model for how the school intends to accelerate student learning with students identified with disabilities. These include an advisory period, use of personalized, adaptive digital curriculum, flexible class schedules with varying sizes and structures, and data driven culture (p. 5-6). The proposal states that the school will utilize inclusion as much as possible, leveraging our talent model to strengthen the quality of special education co-teaching. We are also investing in a full-time social worker to address the socio-emotional needs of our students with disabilities.

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 at (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/charter/nonregulatory-guidance.html>)).

Strengths:

The proposal did not address this criterion.

Weaknesses:

The proposal did not provide evidence to support this competitive preference priority.

Reader's Score: 0

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