

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/20/2014 10:01 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Roberto Clemente Elementary Charter School (U282B140006)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Curriculum	15	15
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Achievement Standards	5	5
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	12
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Community Support	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	22	22
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	13
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Existence of charter	15	15
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Improving Achievement and High School Graduation</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	4	4
<b>Support for Military Families</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>99</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 8: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Roberto Clemente Elementary Charter School (U282B140006)

## 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 program will enable all students to meet challenging state student academic achievement and content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices will be geared toward 320 students which will range from 5 to 11 years old. Two languages will be used to provide academic instruction to the language majority students and the language minority students. This is a best practice for developing high levels of academic achievement, bilingualism, bi-literacy, and cross-cultural awareness among students. Curriculum mapping and grouping of students will provide the opportunity for differentiated instruction aiming at the specific levels/needs identified through the assessments. Curricula will be research-based and nationally field tested. Academic courses offered will be reflective of the cores subjects. Students will take part in cooperative learning activities in order to provide opportunities to rehearse learned skills with their peers.

#### 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 project will focus on a diverse population of 320 students of which 95% are Latinos, many of which are ELL and low income. This group of students lag behind white students in measures of educational attainment, such as reading, math, high school graduation, and college enrollment and completion. The school will be student-centered and will incorporate a rigorous and engaging curriculum aligned with the Pennsylvania State Standards, Standards Aligned System, and the Common Core Standards. The proposed project will include a dual language program(English/Spanish) to develop student proficiency in both, and use rigorous research based academic curricula that embraces diversity and strives for excellence using a holistic approach.

**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 plans to use the Edward Deming plan-do-study-act cycle to measure achievement of the charter school objectives. Data from sources such as benchmark tests, classrooms tests, teacher observations and standardized test will be infused. The cycle will allow the applicant to establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with the expected output (the target or goals). By establishing output expectations, the completeness and accuracy allow for target improvement.

Measurable academic performances objectives are presented that reflect a commitment to academic achievement for students. Non-academic objectives are also presents that will assist in efforts to promote student performance (pgs. 38-40). The applicant will provide every student a core curriculum that aligns to state standards and Common Core Standards and meet state "adequate yearly progress" or (AYP) goals.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not specify how specific performance measures and performance targets will be infused in its use of the plan-do-study-act cycle. Information is not presented describing how the ongoing cycle of improvement will yield data for decision making.

**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:**

N/A

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

a. The applicant demonstrates the project has community support. Partnerships have been established with community-based organizations who support present programs and are willing to continue their support to the school (pg. 21). Some organizations include The Hispanic American Organization, PP&L, The National Council of La Raza, Kutztown University, Lehigh University, and Northampton Community College. Support is provided in the areas of curriculum development, professional development, student support, and before and after school activities.

**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:**

Parental and community involvement in the charter is evident. The community churches and community organizations were involved in the distribution of posters and brochures with information about the mission, vision, and objectives of the charter. Two public hearings regarding the application involved parents and children. A focus group was used to gather parent and community input on planning, program design and implementation of the charter school. (pg. 42). Parents will also be required to demonstrate consistent personal involvement in support of the school's mission by signing a commitment of active participation in the school's academic and nonacademic endeavors (pgs. 22-23).

**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:**

NA

**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 states it will be a equal opportunity employer and is committed to the principle of nondiscrimination in all employment-related practices and decisions. Executive, administrative and academic personnel exercising employee management responsibilities are required to take vigorous and appropriate action to assure that all employment related practices and decisions are made without discrimination, harassment, or prejudicial treatment because of race/ ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, and disability status.

**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:**

Staff assigned to work on the project are qualified and experienced. Staff described for the project include a project director, IT administrator, and fiscal director. The majority of the key personnel are Latinos, bilingual and bi-literate with many years of experience in charter school development and implementation. In addition, key personnel have extensive experience in working with Latino children, youth and families (pg. 25-28, and Resumes in the Appendix).

**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:**

The applicant provides a plan to guide staff in managing the project. Major project tasks are presented for the Project Director assigned to work on the project. (pg. 29 and Appendix e71-e74). The majority of responsibilities are out of the planning state and in progress or completed. Similar tables with explicit responsibilities are drafted for each program year for the project director, IT administrator, and fiscal director.

**Weaknesses:**

The management plans outlined for project staff are broad and lack detail. There is no alignment of major project tasks with milestones or timeframes to ensure completion.

**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 submits a copy of an approved charter contract. The grant of the Charter was approved by vote of the PA State Charter School Appeal Board on July 30, 2013. The approval makes the charter accountable for student achievement and to produce positive academic results as well as to adhere to the charter contract. This is according to the PA Charter School Law. The Charter may be renewed for additional periods of five years duration (pgs. 30-31).

**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:**

Information is presented describing an appropriate degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to the charter school. Two principles guide charter schools in PA. First, charters can operate as autonomous public schools, through waivers from

many of the procedural requirements of district public schools. The second is that charter schools in PA are accountable for student achievement. Principals and teachers in PA Charter Schools have more control and flexibility about work rules and school duties than the school districts (pg. e46).

**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 will serve a diverse population of 320 students of which 95% are Latinos, many of which are ELL and low income. The vision of the charter school is to provide a comprehensive model of college readiness including a dual language program (English/Spanish) to develop student proficiency in both languages. Rigorous research based academic curricula will be used to support instructional practices. Family and community support will enhance the applicants ability in meeting the overall Priority.

**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 does not address CPP2.

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

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**Status:**           Submitted  
**Last Updated:**   08/20/2014 10:01 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/25/2014 01:37 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Roberto Clemente Elementary Charter School (U282B140006)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Curriculum	15	14
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Achievement Standards	5	5
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	13
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Community Support	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	22	20
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	14
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Existence of charter	15	14
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
 <b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Improving Achievement and High School Graduation</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	4	4
 <b>Support for Military Families</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>97</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 8: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Roberto Clemente Elementary Charter School (U282B140006)

## 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 project indicates that all curricular innovations are aligned with state standards and the selected curricular innovations are research based.

The ages for the program are clearly targeted from k through 5 in a low performing school.

The curricular innovations and initiatives are very ambitious and well conceived with milestones and training schedules included in the overall design.

The instructional practices are targeted to the specific population of the school.

In most respects, it appears that this will be a pilot program which could serve as a model for other low performing schools once program goals are achieved.

#### Weaknesses:

There did not appear to be a lot of efforts to provide planning across grade levels and subject areas which could be significant with the dual language focus.

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:

The project clearly delineates strategies for working with educationally disadvantaged students including before and after school programs, home visits, and community partnerships.

Every component of curricular innovation has been considered and students will have access to enhanced materials and methods of instruction.

All program components are data driven and research based specific to the target population,

**Weaknesses:**

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 performance objectives are clearly stated with all performance indicators at 85%ile or above (page 53).

The performance objectives are in compliance with state assessments in reading, writing and math as well as in alignment with stated charter goals and objectives (of increased graduation rates, college attendance, and dual language learning). (p. 39)

A school improvement team will monitor performance targets and time will be allocated for data driven decision making .

The school will use research based studies to develop assessments and engage the authorized chartering agency to ensure compliance with all legal requirements.

Outside experts from local universities will ensure that curriculum initiatives address performance measures.

**Weaknesses:**

The performance measures could be stated in more specific terms and aligned specifically with state requirements.

An implementation plan could address specific strategies and milestones to ensure that performance measures are assessed at each phase of implementation.

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:**

The project engages several founders and community organizations who can provide expertise to realize the mission and vision of the charter.

Parents were involved in every phase of charter approval, including an appeal. In an effort to obtain community support a full agenda of meetings, public hearings, and a media campaign was scheduled.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The project engages founders and members of the community directly linked to program mission and goals.

Parents are required to sign a commitment letter to play an active role in their child's academic progress.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses.

**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:**

There is sufficient evidence that parents and community partners will engage in the planning, program design and implementation of the charter school.

Partners are encouraged to visit the school frequently and training is provided for parents to learn about school programming and implementation (NCLR's Padres Comprometidos). The fact that these programs are in place provides an infrastructure for partnerships and parents to provide meaningful input to the program's success.

An Advisory Committee will assist parents in promoting the academic programs available through the charter, including STEM, dual language and early college.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses.

**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:**

Resumes and historical involvement of key personnel are provided. The plan to hire bilingual faculty and administrators is in accordance with the overall stated objectives of the charter. (p. 25)

Key personnel have extensive experience in working with the Latino community and with charter school development and operation.

Many of the key personnel are part of the founding group.

**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:**

It is clearly stated in the proposal that all employment related decisions are made without discrimination or prejudice because of race, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation and more. Further the applicants represent the demographics of the school and community as much as possible.

**Weaknesses:**

There are no apparent weaknesses in this category.

**Reader's Score: 2**

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

**Strengths:**

Key personnel have extensive experience in working with Latino families and with charter school development.

Many of the key personnel are founders and are active in the Hispanic community. (p. 40) For example one of the key personnel is also key in the Hispanic American Organization which provides the sort of services critical to the mission and vision of the school to involve parents and the entire community in the stated objectives.

The project director is highly qualified and has over a decade and a half experience in administration of charter schools and specifically of charter schools serving primarily Latino youth.

All key personnel and administration have played an active role in founding the school.

Resumes and information was provided for all active participants in development of the charter (Attachment E-Charter Contract).

### Sub Question

#### Weaknesses:

The key personnel are a strong and driving force for realization for the components of the charter; however, a more comprehensive document relating to hiring practices and qualifications would be helpful moving forward.

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:

An organizational chart is provided which delineates checks and balances of stated charter objectives. (Attachment E)  
All key personnel have moved their management plan activities from in progress to completion.

All stakeholders are engaged in decision making through public forums and other forms of communication.

Roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and committees thereof are clearly outlined (p. 36)

A school-based management team makes school level decisions and represents administrators, teachers, community and students.

The management plan incorporates and considers importance of training in legal requirements of a charter, school operations, and group process skills (p. 38).

An annual retreat will provide opportunities for self assessment of the management team and school administration.

Parents sign letters of commitment stating their willingness to participate in school operations.

The By-Laws clearly outline school governance and operations and are included as Attachment G,

The founders group are members of the initial Board of Trustees (Attachment H) to ensure that the mission is upheld and sustained.

#### Weaknesses:

A timeline that lists specific milestones and delegated personnel for each level of implementation would be useful for all stakeholders and could be reviewed and revised as necessary.

Reader's Score: 14

### 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 history of the charter is clearly described in the proposal. The process of denial and appeal of the original charter submission is clearly delineated.

All elements of governance, program design, and enrollment are clearly outlined in the charter. The processes and adaptations made from denial to appeal and final approval of the charter are clearly outlined.

**Weaknesses:**

A timetable with delegated personnel to monitor milestones outlined in the charter would be helpful.

Archival information specific to the school should be referenced as often as possible in the proposal in addition to requirements of NCLB, etc.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**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:**

Issues of flexibility regarding hiring and operational procedures are addressed in the By Laws.

The charter is clearly in compliance with state charter school guidelines.

The application describes the autonomy the school and its delegated authorities will have over matters of budget, operations, curriculum, etc.

The founders group is incorporated in every phase of operations and implementation during initial implementation.

The administrative relationship between the school and authorized chartering agency is clearly outlined in the By Laws. (p. 29)

**Weaknesses:**

There are no significant weaknesses in degree of flexibility afforded to the charter by the LEA.

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 primary focus of the grant is to improve high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates for English Learners so the entire scope of the grant addresses this priority.

This charter will be the first K-5 elementary school and only school in its district to focus on college readiness within a dual language approach (specific to the population which is 65% or more Hispanic). (p. 15-16)

Further the entire curriculum is research based with programs directly related to target population (p. 15)

The use of college symbols and other innovative strategies at an early age are innovative and may be effective.

#### Weaknesses:

The priority objective is effectively addressed with no apparent weaknesses.

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:**

This priority is not addressed.

**Weaknesses:**

This priority is not addressed.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 08/25/2014 01:37 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/21/2014 05:06 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Roberto Clemente Elementary Charter School (U282B140006)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Project Curriculum	15	15
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Achievement Standards	5	5
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	13
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Community Support	10	10
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	22	22
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	15
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Existence of charter	15	15
<b>Adequacy of Resources</b>		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Improving Achievement and High School Graduation</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	4	4
<b>Support for Military Families</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>102</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #8 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 8: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Roberto Clemente Elementary Charter School (U282B140006)

## 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 clearly demonstrates that an appropriate curriculum and instructional practices are in place for the Roberto Clemente Elementary Charter School. The proposed charter school will serve a student population that is 95 percent Hispanic in which English is the second language. The applicant is proposing to offer a dual language elementary (K-5) curriculum which will provide students academic content and literacy instruction in English and Spanish. Dual language immersion programs have often been used as a best practice for developing high levels of academic achievement among English language learners with language deficiency challenges.(pgs. 3-5)

Additionally, the applicant effectively described several other research-based curriculum programs in subjects, such as Comprehensive Language Arts and Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies, Spanish, Computer Literacy, Art, Music, Physical Education and Health. In order to effectively implement the curriculum, all of the curriculum programs will be incorporated through a curriculum mapping process. Curriculum mapping will help the staff in identifying gaps, redundancies, and misalignments in the curriculum and instructional program. Additionally, the alignment of instruction to the content standards and benchmarks in all content areas, increasing accountability for instruction (pgs. 4-6)

#### 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 applicant adequately demonstrates that the proposed program will provide academic support mechanisms to assist educationally disadvantaged students in meeting all state and local standards. For example, the applicant's decision to develop a dual language immersion charter school program and enroll a 95% Hispanic student population is an exceptional approach to addressing the needs of ELL students. (pgs. 3-6) The dual language immersion program curriculum will be aligned to the Pennsylvania State Standards, Standards Aligned System, and the National Common

Core Standards, thus ensuring struggling ELL students are receiving the appropriate instruction in both languages. In this program: (a) two languages are used for instruction and two groups are involved, (b) the language majority students and the language minority students are grouped together for academic instruction, and (c) it provides core academic instruction in both languages. During the first years of operation, the school will teach 70% in English and 30% in Spanish and increase the Spanish percentage gradually.

**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 effectively demonstrates that comprehensive data driven strategies and practices are in place to assess student achievement against the school's objectives. For example, the school's data will be reviewed by a team of teachers and administrators to assess benchmark tests, standardized test, classroom test, and teacher evaluations. (pg. 5-8) The assessments will take place continuously and measured against the school's improvement plan and plans to implement prevention, intervention and post-intervention will be made based on the results.

The school will use the effective school research surveys to assess the school's objectives in a comprehensive approach based on seven research-based characteristics of a school's climate associated with improved student learning. Based on the research-based survey, the applicant will evaluate seven conditions that enable schools to be effective. They are: (1) the vision for learning; (2) instructional leadership, (3) decision making, (4) safety and orderly schools, (5) expectations for student learning; (6) family and school communication and involvement, and (7) school leadership. (pg. 10)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not clearly identify project specific performance measures and performance targets in its plan. Additionally, the applicant does not clearly demonstrate a continuum of assessment based on the objectives in the proposed project. The narrative was vague and lacked detailed information.

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:

The applicant clearly demonstrates that there was community and parental involvement with the development of the application, as well as the design of the Charter School. For example, the applicant indicates that several partners have committed to support and provide services to the school in the areas of curriculum development, professional development, student support, and before and after school activities. Several of the partners include organizations such as The Hispanic American Organization, PP&L, The National Council of La Raza, Kutztown University, Lehigh University, Lehigh Carbon Community College, and Northampton Community College. (pgs. 12-15) The support services will greatly benefit the small school especially, from the colleges and universities to assist with curriculum design and professional development for teachers. Those experiences will be an asset to the school which plans to enroll a 95% Hispanic student population.

Reader's Score: 10

#### Sub Question

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates that there was community and parental involvement with the development of the application, as well as the design of the Charter School. For example, the applicant indicates that several partners have committed to support and provide services to the school in the areas of curriculum development, professional development, student support, and before and after school activities. Several of the partners include organizations such as The Hispanic American Organization, PP&L, The National Council of La Raza, Kutztown University, Lehigh University, Lehigh Carbon Community College, and Northampton Community College. (pgs. 12-15) The support services will greatly benefit the small school especially, from the colleges and universities to assist with curriculum design and professional development for teachers.

#### 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).

### Sub Question

#### Strengths:

The applicant effectively demonstrates that the community and parents provided support and involvement with developing a vision and mission for the school and the program design. The applicant's support from the Hispanic community was extremely instrumental in the decision to develop a dual language immersion program to address the needs of the proposed enrollment of a 95% Hispanic student population. The dual language immersion program is the first school of this kind in the region. (pgs. 12-15)

The applicant held meetings throughout the community and solicited support from parents and churches. As a result of the community outreach, over 400 applications were received and the school will enroll approximately 320 low-income students. Plans are in place to continue the ongoing support with parents and the community. For example, parents will sign agreements to volunteer at the school and to attend parent-teacher conferences, thus encouraging parents to become active participants in their child's education. (pgs. 15-16) Additionally, parents and community members will serve on a school advisory committee to further become involved in school curriculum decisions and other non-academic endeavors.

#### 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:

The applicant clearly demonstrates that the key personnel involved with the development and implementation of the program is qualified and has experience in similar educational development projects. For example, the team of key personnel has been involved in the new charter school design, needs assessment, administration, finance plans and facility plans. The key personnel team will be responsible for the planning and implementation of the project and opening of the school. The majority of the key personnel are Latinos, bilingual and bi-literate with many years of experience in charter school development and implementation. (pgs. 20-23) Based on a review of the resumes in the Appendix, all of the key personnel have many years of experience as educators and working with Latino children and families. Those experiences will be an asset to the school which plan to enroll a 95% Hispanic student population.

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).

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The applicant effectively demonstrates that the proposed program has policies and procedures in place to ensure and encourage applications for employment from underrepresented groups. The applicant indicated that 65% of the population in the region are Latino and the development of the dual language program will require the hiring of as many bilingual faculty and administrators as possible. (pgs. 18-20) The applicant indicated that while there is a greater need for a bi-lingual staff, the search will be conducted in a fair and equitable manner, using only legally valid job related criteria and standards, including but not limited to experience, training, education, skills, and potential for successful performance.

The applicant provided further evidence that the school is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is fully committed to the principles of nondiscrimination in all employment-related practices and decisions, including, but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, supervision, promotion, compensation, benefits, termination, and all other practices and decisions affecting the employees status, rights, and privileges.

### 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 applicant clearly demonstrates that the key personnel were involved with the development and implementation of the program is qualified and has experience in similar educational development projects. For example, the team of key personnel has been involved in the new charter school design, needs assessment, administration, finance plans and facility plans. The key personnel team will be responsible for the planning implementation of the project and opening of the school. The majority of the key personnel are Latinos, bilingual and bi-literate with many years of experience in charter school development and implementation. (pgs. 20-23) Based on a review of the resumes in the Appendix, all of the key personnel have many years of experience as educators and working with Latino children and families. Those experiences will be an asset to the school which plans to enroll a 95% Hispanic student population.

### 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:

The applicant provides a detailed management plan that includes a comprehensive description outlining the various stages of program implementation. The management plan includes reasonable timelines for program implementation and areas of responsibility for key staff. The plan indicated which tasks and activities are in the planning stages or completed and ready to be implemented. The management plan is flexible and incorporates milestones for indicating when project

tasks are accomplished. (pgs. 23-25)

**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 applicant clearly demonstrates that the grant of the Charter was approved by vote of the PA State Charter School Appeal Board on July 30, 2013. The initial application phase began in 2010 and resulted in several public hearings. After an initial denial, the applicant resubmitted and the charter contract was approved. ( pgs. 24-26) The Charter states that the Board of Trustees shall operate the charter school in accordance with the provisions of the Charter School Law, and any applicable amendments thereto enacted during the term of the charter and any regulations or standards applicable to charter schools. The Charter makes RCECS accountable for student achievement and to produce positive academic results as well as to adhere to the charter contract. This is according to the PA Charter School Law.

The granting of the charter is specifically contingent upon operation of the charter school in conformity with the terms of the application submitted by the RCECS Board of Trustees to the Board of School Directors of ASD on November 12, 2014. The Charter may be renewed for additional periods of five years duration, and upon any such renewal, a new charter shall be executed between the ASD Board of School Directors and the RCECS Board of Trustees. (Appendix)

**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 applicant clearly demonstrates the program's flexibility to operate as a charter school. The applicant indicated that there are two principles that guide charter schools in PA. First is that they can operate as autonomous public schools, through waivers from many of the procedural requirements of district public schools. These waivers do not mean a school is exempt from the same educational standards set by the State. (pgs, 24-28)

Principals and teachers in PA Charter Schools have more control and flexibility about work rules and school duties than the school districts. The second is that charter schools in PA are accountable for student achievement. In PA, a charter school is authorized to function once it has received a charter, a statutorily defined performance contract detailing the school's mission, program, goals, students served, methods of performance contract detailing the school's mission, program, goals, students served, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success. The length of time for which charters are chartered is 5 years then the charter goes to an evaluation process to renew the charter. Charter schools are held accountable to their sponsor or authorizer, a local school board, to produce positive academic achievement and adhere to the charter contract. (Appendix)

**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:**

RCECS will serve a diverse population of 320 students of which 95% are Latinos, many of which are ELL and low income. RCECS's vision is to be the only school in Allentown to provide a comprehensive model of college readiness including a dual language program (English/Spanish) to develop student proficiency in both languages. RCECS will use a rigorous research based academic curriculum.

**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. The applicant does not address CPP2.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not address CPP2 in the abstract or the narrative. Therefore, no scores were awarded.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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