

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/28/2014 04:08 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: VERITAS Community School Inc. (U282B140011)

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	15
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Community Support	10	9
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	22	17
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	11
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Existence of charter	15	0
<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	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>82</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 1: 84.282B

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

Applicant: VERITAS Community School Inc. (U282B140011)

## 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 presents clearly stated skills and instructional practices as well as a curriculum outline by subject and grade (pg.17).

The applicant describes a curriculum that integrates health and wellness with data driven instruction (pg.18.)

The curriculum also entails a positive behavior component (pg.15).

The applicant presents a plan to address students performing above and below grade level which includes the Expeditionary Learning model that begins with pre-assessment followed by modeled learning, guided learning, and independent learning that allows students to move to their next level of learning. (Pg. 15-22).

The applicant presents information that the health and wellness program was implemented and successful at the Namaste Charter School, which ranked in the top 10% of Chicago's charter and contact schools(Chicago School Report Card, 2013(pg.19)

The applicant provides a curriculum outline for grades K- 5 (pg.17).

The applicant will begin serving grades K-3 and add one grade over the following two years to serve grades k-5 (pg. 20).

#### 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 entry level assessments described, as well as the resources provided based on the data, and continuous assessment data along with the curriculum will assist all students with meeting state standards. (Pgs 15-22)

The applicant presents a convincing case that the implementation of the Peaceful People curriculum will benefit the

academically disadvantaged student by teaching them how to define and create peace for themselves and those around them. This skill is essential for a productive academic environment, which indeed can assist the educationally disadvantaged be successful (pg.23).

The applicant stresses that students developing self-awareness, self control, and conflict resolution will assist educationally disadvantaged students to be successful in addition to classroom education (pg.23).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation**

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

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents their goals as three pillars, including academic, health and wellness, and peaceful classrooms (pg. 22).

The applicant presents four learning objectives overall student academic proficiency, school and individual growth, improved health and wellness practices, and a safe and peaceful classroom and school environment (pg.23-25).

Assessments include both summative and formative assessments to determine success (pg.26).

The applicant presents clear achievement assessments pg23-25).

The goals include student academic proficiency and school and individual growth (pg.23).

Assessments are varied and include North Carolina's Ready Preventions Physical Education Tool, MAP, Pacer test, NC end of the year grade assessments grade 3-5 for math and reading, DIBELS and common assessments, (pg.23-26) .

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

## 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: 9

### Sub Question

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides adequate information that community leaders and parents had input on the design of the proposed school (Pg.29-31).

The applicant states outreach in the community garnered parental and community input on the school design (pg. 27).

The applicant provides information that they have met with over three hundred parents and community members (pg. 28).

The application contains letters from community leaders (pg e324-e343)

The board members bring a variety of skill sets to the table including education, school leadership, finance, law, strategic planning and accounting ( pg.33) Most board members have adequate experience in the areas which they will serve (pg e.219-237).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. (ii) The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 5 points).

#### Strengths:

The applicant describes parental and community training sessions that promote parental involvement.

The applicant also gives extensive opportunities for parental involvement in school activities and academics (pg.28-29). The applicant

stresses communication between home and school is the critical to academic success (Pg 28, 30-31).

The applicant proposes that parents will be offered workshops based on parent surveys that could include parenting skills, resume building, or information on school curriculum (pg.30).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The application did not contain actual parent letters of support.

The applicant did not include examples of documentation of community and parent input.

The letters included were from politicians, educators, health care providers, and the CEO of the Goodwill (e333-ee343).

**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:** 17

**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 specifies a desire to hire staff that reflects the community, which represents underrepresented groups based on race, through a teaching position announcement that places an emphasis on diversity, value placed on those who can share and teach a different point of view, identification of job responsibilities that stress the school's needs, goals, and mission, focus upon opening the pool to a wide range of applicants in particular minorities, and specific job responsibilities that allow for varied backgrounds and experiences (pg.15, pg.

**Weaknesses:**

The job posting does not guarantee recruitment of underrepresented groups.

**Reader's Score:** 1

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

### Sub Question

#### Strengths:

The director has 21 years teaching experience (pg.32).

The applicant has key personnel also serving as board members (pg.32-35)

#### Weaknesses:

The principal has adequate teaching experience but lacks administrative experience.

The positions of all personnel have not been filled yet (Pg.32-35).

Reader's Score: 16

### 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 management plan presents specified duties and responsibilities for the management team which appear sufficient and include planning, personnel, and finance (pg.36-37).

The organizational chart is presented within the application and explains the hierarchy The School Director reports to the Board of Directors and the Principal reports to the School Director (pg 37).

The applicant presents clear milestones and timelines of the management plan (pg.42-45).

The application proposes to evaluate the progress of each metric of the management plan annually (pg.45).

#### Weaknesses:

The management plan did not include years two and three of the proposal.

Reader's Score: 11

### 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 Letter of support is included. (pg 45-46) letter e65 the actual contract has been requested.

The charter application has been submitted (pg.45).

The applicant was given preliminary approval on 4-8-14 and expect full approval in Jan 2015 after the SBE holds a discussion on the matter and takes final action (pg.45, e65).

**Weaknesses:**

The contract has not been granted..

**Reader's Score: 0**

**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 board of directors will have autonomy over the operation of the school including curriculum, operating procedures and budgeting.

**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 states they will use Core Knowledge Sequence, Common Core State Standards, and North Carolina Essential Standards to meet the academic needs of all students (Pg.5-12).

The applicant describes a Support Service Plan to provide support and intervention for disabled students and linguistically and culturally diverse students (pg.5-12)

In addition the application proposes steps to assist students with disabilities and English learners. (Pgs 6-12) 15 (pg.15-22)

ELL students will be identified through a home survey (pg.e104).

The applicant will address the needs of ELL through specific instructional practices which include immersion based classroom, specific language curriculum, an English as a Second Language certified teacher to provide modifications (pg. e104).

The applicant plans to use specific strategies to support ELL including small group setting, tutors, a personalized education plan after school programs, and educational camps (pg.e104)

Weaknesses:

#### 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 applicant proposes a series of strategies to address the educational needs of military connected students (pg 13-14). The applicant plans to develop policies and procedures to assist military connected students such as giving consideration in all aspects of school life, timely enrollment , and placement in spite of difficulty in the transfer of records or variations in entrance age requirements (pg. 13).

The applicant includes plans to provide correct placement and provide excused absences for military connected students as needed (pg.13) .

The applicant provides information regarding partnerships with community agencies that support military connected students and their families.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:     3**

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**Status:**           Submitted  
**Last Updated:**   08/28/2014 04:08 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/23/2014 02:02 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: VERITAS Community School Inc. (U282B140011)

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	3
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	15
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Community Support	10	9
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	22	16
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	10
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Existence of charter	15	0
<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	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>77</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 1: 84.282B

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

Applicant: VERITAS Community School Inc. (U282B140011)

## 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 provides a clear and specific discussion of the curriculum and instructional practices to be implemented. For example, it provides specific examples described in clear detail for all of the content areas. (e.g., Core Knowledge Sequence, Expeditionary Learning model, Daily fluency practice, and a balanced literacy approach, among others (p29-30).

The applicant also describes the unique features to be implemented which make this school more effective. For example, the new charter will promote student mental, social and physical health in several ways. In addition to forty minutes of daily physical education and organized recess, the school's curricular plan will promote physical activity through classroom movement breaks. The teachers will be trained and encouraged to integrate movement into classroom activities. Another unique component of the curriculum and instructional plan is its emphasis on nutrition and healthy eating habits. In addition, the applicant describes its curriculum and instructional practices to teach students the habits, vocabulary, and language necessary to peacefully manage their behaviors and resolve personal conflicts on their own (p 33).

#### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant lacks a description for how its three Pillar approach (e.g., p146, Targeted Academics, Health and Wellness, and Peaceful Classroom) has worked in other settings to enable all students to meet challenging State achievement and content standards.

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 applicant provides a thorough discussion for how it will meet this criterion. The applicant has designed its curriculum and innovative supplemental to ensure student success for all students, including educationally disadvantaged students. For example, in accordance with North Carolina's Accountability Model, the applicant's emphasis on Targeted Academics is designed with the goal of ensuring all students are performing on or above grade level in math and language arts by the completion of third, fourth, and fifth grade and that all students meet or exceed expected growth in language arts and math (as measured by the North Carolina end-of-grade test) (p 34).

Also, the applicant is using unique curricular approaches which include the innovative practices of data driven, targeted, standards-based instruction combined with health and wellness instruction plus the peaceful classroom curriculum to address the social success of all students, especially those that are challenged (p 35).

The applicant describes the diversity of students to be served and how its instructional and intervention approaches will benefit all students. For example, the applicant will use a specific social curriculum to create a school culture where diverse students are included and teaches students how to define and create peace for themselves and those around them and thus support a productive academic environment (p37).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 3

**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 provides a clear description of its plan for implementing appropriate performance measures to assess the achievement of the charter school's objectives (p 37). It has developed clear and measureable Performance Measures, in specific goal areas with clear, attainable objectives.

The applicant provides a clear discussion of (p37) of its Growth Measures. For example, As part of its targeted academic approach, the applicant is committed to meeting and exceeding overall academic growth as measured by North Carolina's READY Accountability Model beginning in the first year of operation and continuing each year following. The applicant describes its specific strategies and performance standards in clear detail for each program goal areas (e.g. academic success, health and social wellness in a peaceful classroom environment, at each grade level (p 37-40).

The applicant describes how the school staff will use feedback for continued improvements. For example, the school staff will conduct monthly, school wide evaluation regarding the classroom and school culture, safety and positive environment for students (p41).

The applicant provides a clear description of the specific formative and summative assessments to be used and how they

will be utilized to measure student progress (p40).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**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:**

Responses provided in sub-questions 1 and 2.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant effectively communicates its commitment to parental and community involvement as necessary for the students to reach the academic and wellness success. For example, the School Director has been active in the school's targeted communities since February 2013, building understanding and relationships with people who reside or work within these neighborhoods, including local organizations, churches, and businesses (42).

The applicant's Board of Directors has sought input on the specific needs of the community, and used that feedback to design the school's educational program to meet those needs (41). For example, the applicant sought input from stakeholders in the five-targeted neighborhoods, parents, neighborhood associations, church leaders, business, real estate associations, school boards and preschool directors. They surveyed residents (89 surveys, p157), held community meetings and communicated through various social media avenues. They then used the feedback to develop a school mission that represented the cultural values and norms of the communities.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Sub Question**

- 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 effectively communicates its commitment to parental and community involvement as necessary for the students to reach the academic and wellness success

Also, the school will have a Community Engagement Facilitator who will engage and involve parents, families, and the community in the life of the school by creating programming that will provide a way for parents to get involved and give input into school matters. The facilitator will meet regularly with the Principal and School Director to provide advice and counsel on school matters; he or she will also make an annual presentation to the Board to keep them abreast of community related matters that could influence the trajectory of the school's development. The Community Engagement Facilitator will coordinate family volunteers and will plan and execute events for families at the school (p 41).

**Weaknesses:**

Lacks specific evidence of specific support from parents (e.g. There are no letters of support from families). The applicant lacks sufficient evidence showing how parent feedback was utilized in plan design involved in the planning activities.

**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:**

Responses provided in sub-questions 1 and 2.

**Reader's Score: 16**

**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 employment policies to demonstrate it is an equal opportunity employer (p 31). It also clearly communicates its intention to ensure diversity. For example, it describes the elements it will include in an ethnically sensitive teaching position announcement to ensure a diverse teaching staff that is representative of the student demographics (p 46).

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly describe its strategies for posting the described ethnically sensitive teaching position announcement to ensure that a diverse pool of applicants, especially those from groups that have been traditionally underrepresented may be encouraged to respond.

Reader's Score: 1

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

#### Strengths:

The applicant has developed effective recruiting and hiring practices with additional practices to ensure retention to keep and grow an excellent instructional team (p45). The applicant describes specific strategies, for example, the school will have weekly professional development on Fridays with opportunities for peer mentoring and other activities (p45).

The applicant provides descriptions of the personal qualities as well as professional qualifications desired among teaching staff to be hired (p 46).

The applicant provides strong qualifications (p46) and a resume for the Founder, Board Chairperson, and future School Director, who as this first year is a planning year, the Director is the only key personnel thus identified.

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant has not yet identified their key personnel. The applicant does not provide specific evidence of the key project personnel or BOD member skills, experience, and success in the following areas: launching a high-quality charter school; managing or leading a non-profit organization; establishing (or maintaining) school governance by board of trustee and recruiting and evaluating effective educators. The identified future director does not have administrative experience in operating a school.

The applicant does not clearly address how one person will effectively serve in multiple governance positions (e.g., the school founder is both the Board Chairperson and the future School Director (p 47/376). The applicant does not address how the make-up of the board may change once two members transition to being employees of the new school (director and teacher).

Reader's Score: 15

### 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 succinct organizational chart (p51) and clearly defines the responsibilities for the school key personnel (p52-56). For example, as depicted in the organizational chart the School Director will be the only employee who reports directly to the school Board of Directors, and the Principal will report to the School Director (p51).

The applicant includes a detailed timeline chart with milestones for accomplishing project tasks aligned with those responsible (p56-59) for the planning year.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not provide a discussion of the management plan or activities for the remaining 2 years of this funding cycle. For this reason, it is not possible to determine the quality of the management plan — or the adequacy of the responsibilities, timelines, and milestones — for accomplishing project tasks in years two and three of the proposed project on time and within budget.

**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:**

None noted.

**Weaknesses:**

While there is evidence of preliminary approval by the State, there is no evidence of an existing approved contract.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**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 provides a detailed discussion for how it meets this criterion. It demonstrates a full understanding of the legal and legislative criteria with which it must comply. For example, it states that while the charter must meet some basic provisions, such as having at least 50% of teachers state certified, charters are free to organize and operate as best suits the mission of their school (p 60).

**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 provides a detailed and clear plan for serving and supporting the academic and social success of all its students, with specific interventions for disabled, high risk and low performing students, including those with learning or English literacy challenges (p19-21). For example, the applicant's Support Services Plan (SSP) is intended to be an integrated system of progressive levels of support and intervention, including evaluation and determination of special education services, when appropriate.

The applicant explains how the delivery phases, documentation protocols, and defined delivery of services have been developed (p 20). For example, the School Intervention Team (SIT) will guide implementation and delivery of services.

The applicant describes how it will ensure quality student engagement and academic progress for all students, including

English Language Learner (ELL) students. For example, the applicant will administer (p 23) a Home language survey and other appropriate testing. It will also employ specific instructional programs plus recognized practices, and strategies to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for ELL students (p 25).

**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 applicant provides a convincing description for how it fulfils this criterion. This explanation includes the personal experience on the part of the school director to demonstrate an understanding of the challenges facing military families and their children, supported by clear strategies. The applicant has analyzed the community to be served for military families and has made multiple community and organizational connections to ensure services for these families (p28).

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.

**Reader's Score:** 3

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/23/2014 02:02 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2014 11:22 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: VERITAS Community School Inc. (U282B140011)

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	15
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Community Support	10	9
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	22	17
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	15
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Existence of charter	15	0
<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	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>86</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 1: 84.282B

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

Applicant: VERITAS Community School Inc. (U282B140011)

## 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 curriculum's delivery framework is carefully outlined using 11 key approaches (page 15). The applicant indicates that the proposed project will be a K to 5 charter school (page e4). The applicant presents a clear outline of the curriculum, by grade and by subject that incorporates physical activity and healthy eating.

The applicant will use targeted academics to enable all students to meet challenging state standards (pages 19 and 20). The applicant provides adequate information to clarify specific curriculums and instructional practices and how the use of assessment data will guide student achievement (page 21 and 22).

#### 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 provides information about the lack of social economic diversity in the proposed projects targeted neighborhood (page 22). The applicant indicates that the proposed project's charter school is likely to perform better because the school will reflect the community.

The applicant clearly states that the proposed project charter school will have a diverse student population and that the implementation of the Peaceful People Curriculum will result in productive academic environments in the classrooms (page 23).

The applicant discusses the proposed project's Charter School's Three Pillars (Academics, Health and Wellness, and Peaceful Classroom). The applicant states that research on Peaceful People Curriculum will assist educationally disadvantaged students to develop additional skills, such as self-awareness and self-control, and collaboration and conflict resolution. The skills will promote students to learn how to define and create peace for themselves and those

around them, which are essential skills for creating a productive academic environment (page 23).

**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 has developed four goals. The goals support the proposed Charter School's Three Pillars. To achieve those goals, the applicant lists objectives (absolute measures) that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based (page 23 to 25).

The performance targets are identified by the applicant (pages 25 and 26). The assessment data will be obtained from various sources. The measures of progress will inform the instructional leaders about strengths and weaknesses of the proposed project.

The applicant provides details about the summative and formative assessments that will be used as well as the school wide evaluations (pages 26 and 27).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**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: 9**

**Sub Question**

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

**Strengths:**

The applicant discusses meetings designed to gather input on the specific needs of the community. The applicant indicates that the Three Pillars are based on the needs and desires expressed in those meetings (page 27).

The applicant states that parental involvement will be (page 28).

The applicant indicates that the proposed project will provide ongoing opportunities for community leaders to have input in various school activities and to use the proposed charter school's facilities (page 28).

The applicant has included several letters of support from local community leaders and supporters (pages e324 to e343).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**2. (ii) The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental and community involvement in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 5 points).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant provides a description of the proposed project's plan to promote parental and community involvement. The applicant will continue to meet with stakeholders, use a neighborhood website to advertise the school, post community meeting invitations on Facebook, and distribute fliers. The applicant will continue to make contact with numerous Houses of Worship located in the target area. The applicant lists several activities and strategies that will be used to provide parents with meaningful information and interesting opportunities to become involved (pages 30 and 31).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides limited information about the outputs of involving parents and the community in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school.

**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: 17

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 provides information about its plan to recruit and hire teachers who will support and embrace the mission of the proposed project. The applicant indicates that professional development will be a major component of the proposed projects succession plan as well as its retention plan. The applicant will implement several methods to encourage applications for employment from groups traditionally underrepresented such as print and internet advertisements, professional associations, social media, and relationships with local colleges and universities (page 31).

The applicant provides discussion about attracting a teacher pool that is representative of student demographics. The applicant indicates that there will be a focus on opening the field of candidates to a wide range of applicants, in particular to offering minority candidates opportunities to apply for positions.

**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 provides an adequate description of the credentials, experiences, and educational preparation for board members. The information presented suggests that all board members are qualified to execute the assigned duties (pages 32 to 35).

The qualifications for the successful candidates for key project personnel have been set. The applicant indicates that the positions of school director, principal, and other key personnel have not been filled (pages 38 to 42).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant provides an inadequate explanation as to whether some key project personnel positions have been filled by current board members. Assuming that they have not been filled, the applicant provides limited information to assess the qualifications of some key project personnel.

Reader's Score: 15

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 indicates that the five year budget is well planned and conservative in nature. The applicant projects that by year three, the projected charter school will be fully sustainable, based on existing state funding (page 35).

The applicant provides a chart that clarifies the responsibilities of the Board, the School Director, and the Principal (pages 36 and 37).

The applicant clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of the School Director and the Principal (pages 38 and 39).

The list of responsibilities of the principal is comprehensive. The applicant will provide a completed Ready- to-Open Framework (RTOF) document which is available from the State Office of Charter Schools. The format of the management plan discussed by the applicant shows the task, the completion date, and person responsible (pages 42 to 45).

The quality of the management plan is excellent. The plan is very likely to achieve the objectives of the proposed project. It includes clearly defined responsibilities, timelines for accomplishing project task.

**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:**

No strengths noted.

**Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant provides evidence that the proposed project charter application was submitted to the state office of charter schools on December 2013 and has received preliminary approval by the state advisory board April 2014, the applicant does not provide evidence that a contract between the charter school and the State authorized public chartering agency has been finalized.

Reader's Score: 0

### 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 provides adequate documentation that confirms the purpose of the charter school is to operate independently of existing schools to accomplish goals that are to the good of educating all children. The proposed charter is granted full autonomy over matters related to the operation of the school as specified in State Charter School Law (page 46 to 49).

#### **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:**

(b) Improving high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates for students with disabilities.

The applicant has articulated a well-developed statement about how it will process students to determine if there are students who are at-risk for learning difficulties.

(c) English Learners

The applicant provides an adequate explanation as to how quality student engagement and academic progress will be delivered to students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) students.

The applicant provides sufficient information to describe the specific steps that the staff applicant will take to provide direct services to identified students (pages 11 to 13).

The program described by the applicant is likely to be successful because it screens and identifies students, determines the level of services needed, delivers services, and evaluates student progress in a coherent manner.

**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 applicant discusses careful classroom selections permitting excused absences and transfer processes (pages 13 and 14).

The applicant indicates that partnerships, designed to support military families, have been established with various community resources (page 14).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/03/2014 11:22 AM

