

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/05/2015 02:47 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Knowledge Academies, Inc. (U282B160007)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Curriculum and Instructional Practices</b>		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	11
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Achievement Standards	5	4
<b>Assessing Achievement of School Objectives</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	13
<b>Community &amp; Parental Support &amp; Comm. Involvement</b>		
1. Community Support	10	9
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	22	19
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	10
<b>Existence &amp; Quality of Charter or Performance Con.</b>		
1. Existence of Charter	15	14
<b>Degree of Flexibility Afforded by the SEA/LEA</b>		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Supporting High-Need Students - 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	3	3
<b>Supporting High-Need Students - 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	3	0
<b>Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments</b>		
1. CPP 3	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>85</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 9: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Knowledge Academies, Inc. (U282B160007)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Curriculum and Instructional Practices

#### 1. The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices (20 U.S.C. 7221c(b)(1)).

**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.**

#### Strengths:

The applicant explains the proposed project is for grade levels 5 – 8, beginning Fall 2016, with the school being able to educate over 400 students when at capacity (page e17 or Page 3). The existing Knowledge Academy middle school was recognized as a top 5% Tennessee Reward School for Academic Learning Gains in 2014.

Curriculum and instructional practices to be used at this school include assessing students for Learning Style Preferences, which is used at the successful existing school (page e18 or Page 4). Staff will have information readily available as to how students learn best, and the styles of learning that students least prefer.

The applicant describes research-based strategies that have had a statistically significant and positive impact at or above a 20-percentile gain in achievement. The applicant describes Marzano strategies: 1) focus on vocabulary, 2) students stating learning goals in their own words, 3) students involved in tracking their own progress, and 4) identifying similarities and differences, that will be used. What is particularly strong is that Learning Coaches will conduct quality reviews on three week cycles (page e20 or Page 6).

The applicant provides great detail on a number of Reading and Math Intervention strategies they plan to use on pages e21 to e27 or Pages 7-12.

There is a strong focus on school-to-family connections to support academic progress. The Center for Personalized Learning will be a space for family workshops that focus on talent development and workforce development needs, as proposed by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, Partnership 2020. A computer lab will provide for skills advancement for families and students. The gym will allow space for recreational activities, and there will be space for after school homework (pages e12 and e19 or Abstract and page 5).

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide a comprehensive description of the educational program or the curriculum, particularly in the areas of Science and Social Studies.

The applicant does not specifically state that the same academic and instructional approaches used at the existing successful Middle school will be replicated at the planned new middle school (other than Learning Style Preferences mentioned above).

The applicant mentions Personalized Learning, for example “KA’s academic plan includes maximizing the ability of every learner to achieve dynamic results, at their own pace (page e31 or Page 17),” but does not provide detail as to how this will be delivered. It is unclear how curriculum is designed or how instruction will take place (e.g., large group, small group,

computerized, etc.).

**Reader's Score:** 11

### **Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students**

**1. The extent to which the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students and other students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards (20 U.S.C. 7221c(a)(1)).**

**Strengths:**

The applicant notes that 90% of the intended school population will be economically disadvantaged, 18% will be ELL, 12% will be identified as in need of Special Education services. The applicant writes that they will serve higher percentages of Hispanic and Arabic students than Metro Nashville Public Schools (page e15 or Page 1).

The applicant describes strategies designed to improve the educational outcomes and learning environments for special education and ELL students as: 1) The Learning Combination Inventory - an evidence-based framework to identify and serve the learning preferences of students classified as ELL and/or students with disabilities (page e17 or Page 3), and 2) multiple Reading, Writing and mathematics intervention strategies that can be used to address student needs and improve comprehension and understanding, including mini daily intervention courses (pages e21 to e27 or Pages 7-13).

The applicant describes the ratio of trained personnel and students with special needs and English language learners as well as ongoing professional development and planning built into the weekly schedule (page e29).

The RTI approach is clearly explained on page e30 or Page 16, as well as a comprehensive system of RTI Performance Benchmarking and Tracking and ongoing assessment with NWEA's MAP to assure all students are progressing (page e27-28 or Pages 13-14).

The applicant describes multiple opportunities for families to connect with the school, and partnerships with community-based organizations (pages e36-37 or Pagea 22-23), to assure that adults are working collaboratively to assure that all students, and educationally disadvantaged students in particular, are getting needs met and realizing academic gains.

The applicant describes every three week classroom quality reviews and every three month data analysis. These ongoing checks will help assure students are progressing on academic content standards and working toward meeting State student academic achievement standards.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not provide clear information on their intended students' current level of performance, and how the proposed project will better assist educationally disadvantaged students and other students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards compared to the current options in the community. For example, the applicant does not state "Middle school students with disabilities in the Metro Nashville Public school have an average proficiency level of 35% on state assessments. Our program will assist 50% or more students with disabilities in achieving proficiency or better on state assessments." Providing intentional, measurable subgroup outcomes would have more strongly described how this proposed school will assist in closing achievement gaps for educationally disadvantaged students.

**Reader's Score:** 4

## Selection Criteria - Assessing Achievement of School Objectives

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

**Note:** The Secretary encourages the applicant to propose a comprehensive plan for assessing the achievement of the charter school s objectives, inclusive of developing 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 Section VI.4. Performance Measures 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:**

Academic Performance measures and increasing targets for Years 1-3 are provided on Page e47 (or page 33).

The applicant describes a thoughtful plan and strategy to assess student educational progress on regular intervals. Knowledge Academies' RTI Leadership Team will meet monthly to assess progress toward goals (page e27 or page 13). NWEA MAPS will be used to assess student learning gains. The ongoing classroom observations and data analysis will assist in the monitoring of student progress.

The applicant includes Accountability Metrics for Employees, Students and Families (pages e33-36 or pages 19-22).

The applicant lays out project specific performance measures and the data collection to be used within pages e56-58 (or pages 42-44).

The applicant plans to contract with an outside evaluator to monitor progress toward Performance Measures (page e58 or page 44).

Clearly defined performance measures are stated in the contract with the authorizer (pages e216-e220).

#### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant states "Our team is focused on preparing students to make the best academic and social choices, leading to the completion of a college degree" (page e32 or page 18). However, there are no performance measures connecting to the steps necessary to assure students are on on the path toward or ultimately attaining a college degree. Therefore, there is inconsistency with this objective.

**Reader's Score:** 13

## Selection Criteria - Community & Parental Support & Comm. Involvement

**Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.**

**The extent of community support and parental and community involvement (20 U.S.C. 7221c(b)(3); 20 U.S.C. 7221b(b)(3)(E)).**

#### **Strengths:**

See below for responses.

**Weaknesses:**

See below for responses.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**Sub Question**

**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--**

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

**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.**

**Strengths:**

Appendix C. contains letters of support from community partners, including social services, teacher training, related services, and mentoring organizations. Duke Talent Search (page e84) and the Adult Literacy Council (page e85) also provided letters of support.

Knowledge Academies has been approved to operate under Tennessee's Achievement School District (page e82).

Knowledge Academies was awarded a \$100,000 planning grant from Next Generation Learning Challenges, which is located in Antioch, TN (page e90)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**2. The Secretary considers the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

**(ii) How parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 5 points).**

**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.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes a plan to meet with community leaders, pastors, and local businesses, and to hold open houses.

2016 activities to promote parental participation include use of the Center for Personalized Learning and ongoing celebrations.

The community will be informed about the school through radio ads and family forums (page e42 or page 28).

The new school will be listed as a district school choice option, and staff will participate in school choice fairs (page

**Sub Question**

e53 or page 39).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant doesn't fully address how parents and the community have been involved with the planning and program design up to date.

**Reader's Score:** 4

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

**1. Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.**

**The quality of project personnel (34 CFR 75.210(e)(1), (e)(2), and (e)(3)(ii)).**

**Strengths:**

See below for responses.

**Weaknesses:**

See below for responses.

**Reader's Score:** 19

**Sub Question**

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide evidence of the key project personnel 's training and experience in activities related to the planning, program design, and initial implementation of a charter school.**

**Strengths:**

5 of the 8 members of the leadership team appear to be members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in school leadership based on race or color (pages e40-41 or pages 26-27).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not address how they will encourage members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on national origin, gender, age or disability to apply for employment with the school. The applicant writes that they intend to serve a large Hispanic population, but they do not specifically address how they will encourage Hispanic applicants for employment.

**Reader's Score:** 1

- 2. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 20 points).**

### Sub Question

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide evidence of the key project personnel 's training and experience in activities related to the planning, program design, and initial implementation of a charter school.**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant has successfully launched a middle school and a high school, and has received accolades including designation as a National K-12 Breakthrough Model for College, recognition as a 2015 NEXT AWARDS FINALIST by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, and named a school transformation provider for the Tennessee Achievement School District (page e40 and e12).

The middle school was rated "Achieving" in 2013, and "Excelling" in 2014 (placing them in the top 16% of all schools in the district) (page e40).

In addition, the lead developer has experience with fundraising, facilities, instructional design, and government. He has worked for the State Department of Education, and has collaborated with charter organizations. He also has experience writing school board policy, with school improvement grants, and with Race to the Top implementation.

8 of the 9 members of the leadership team are in place, and about ¾ have been with the organization, since 2012 (page e40).

Relevant skills, experience and accomplishments of the leadership team are listed , and include success with student achievement, as well as expertise in social services, special education, facilities management, and other skills essential for school

#### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not indicate how much of the leadership team's time will be used for the other Knowledge Academy sites.

The experience of team members, other than the lead developer, in planning, program design, and initial implementation of a charter school is not clear.

**Reader's Score: 18**

### **Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

#### **1. The quality of the management plan (34 CFR 75.210(g)(1) and (g)(2)(i)).**

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

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant describes a built in structure for ongoing communication and information sharing. Knowledge Academy's RTI Leadership Team will meet monthly (page e27 or Page 13).

The applicant notes that they would like to partner with New Leaders for New Schools and Building Excellent Schools, two highly regarded charter development organizations (page e50 or Page 36 and page e43 or Page 29).

Milestones prior to the school launch (page e42 or page 28) and during implementation (page e43 or page 29) are provided.

The applicant will partner with an outside evaluator, [REDACTED] School of Education, Belmont

University, to monitor and evaluate attainment of project objectives (page e56 or page 42). An evaluation plan, including performance measures, baseline data, data collection and methods are described on pages e55-e59 or page 41-45.

The applicant includes a very comprehensive Pre-Opening Charter Accountability Workbook as part of their application materials (pages e119-209).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not provide a clearly detailed management plan that lists the person responsible, timelines, budget, contingencies, and interdependencies, for each project task.

The applicant doesn't explain hiring practices, on-boarding, development of policies and procedures, purchasing plan, facilities, or technology infrastructure, hardware and software.

It is unclear if the applicant plans to serve 400 students the first year, or if 400 is the number of students to be served when the school meets capacity at some future year.

It is not clearly stated if the project proposed in this application is a direct replication of an existing school.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - Existence & Quality of Charter or Performance Con.**

**1. Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.**

**The existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency (20 U.S.C. 7221i(1)(L)).**

**Strengths:**

See responses below.

**Weaknesses:**

See responses below.

**Reader's Score: 14**

**Sub Question**

**1. The Secretary considers--**

**(i) Whether a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency exists (up to 10 points);**

**Note: In considering whether there is a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency, the Secretary will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether the school has received preliminary, conditional, or other intermediate approval to operate from the authorized public chartering authority, if applicable. An applicant should submit documentation regarding the status of any such approval and clearly describe the authorizer's approval process under applicable State law.**

**Strengths:**

Knowledge Academy at the Crossings is formally approved and authorized by Metro Nashville Public Schools to begin operations August 2016. The officially signed agreement is for a 10-year charter spanning 2016 to 2026.

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not fully explain the charter contracting process in Tennessee.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**2. The Secretary considers--**

**(ii) 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 (up to 5 points)**

**Note: In considering whether there is a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency, the Secretary will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether the school has received preliminary, conditional, or other intermediate approval to operate from the authorized public chartering authority, if applicable. An applicant should submit documentation regarding the status of any such approval and clearly describe the authorizer 's approval process under applicable State law.**

**Strengths:**

School performance metrics include Academic Progress – 50%, Attainment and College Readiness – 30%, Achievement Gap – 5%, and School Culture 15% (page e45 or page 31).

Page e32 or Page 18 has a table listing academic achievement, value added learning gains, attention, discipline and student and family survey expectations. Pages e33-36 or Pages 19-21 contain accountability metrics for Employees, Students and Families. Academic, organizational, and financial performance management frameworks are provided as part of the Metro Nashville Public Schools charter school contract (e213-236). The narrative describes how targets translate to a school grade, and how scores can be compared against other schools in the district.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Degree of Flexibility Afforded by the SEA/LEA**

**1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school (20 U.S.C. 7221c(b)(2)).**

**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.**

**Strengths:**

The Contract defines expectations, legal and through the authorizer, as well as autonomies. The applicant states on page 32 ( or e46) that public charter schools in Tennessee are provided a high degree of flexibility.

The applicant references “seven pages of allowable waivers from state regulations, that have been granted as waivers to KA @ the Crossings” on page e46 or page 32.

**Weaknesses:**

The list of waivers could not be assessed, as the “click here” isn’t functional within the printed or PDF version of the application, thus the reviewer is unable to access this information and fully consider it when scoring this Selection Criteria. The applicant did not provide information on specific State or local rules the school will be exempt from.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Priority Questions****Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students - 1****1. Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Supporting High-Needs Students (Rural Students, Students with Disabilities, English Learners)**

**Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes and learning environments for one or more of the following groups of students:**

- (a) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies**
- (b) Students with disabilities**
- (c) English learners**

**Note: 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 notes that the intended school population includes 12 percent students with disabilities (which is parallel to the district) and 18 percent English language learners (which is higher than the district) (page e15 or Page 1).

The applicant describes how the school program is designed to improve the educational outcomes and learning environments for students in the following manner: 1) The Learning Combination Inventory provides an evidence-based framework to more effectively identify and serve the learning preferences of students classified as ELL and/or students with disabilities (page e17 or Page 3), 2) use of multiple Reading, Writing and mathematics intervention strategies to address student needs and improve comprehension and understanding (pages e21 to e27 or Pages 7-13), 3) a comprehensive system of RTI Performance Benchmarking and Tracking, as well as ongoing assessment with NWEA’s MAP to assure all students are progressing (page e27-28 or Pages 13-14). The applicant describes the ratio of trained Special Education and ELL personnel to special needs students and English language learners. Ongoing professional development and planning is built into the weekly schedule to assure that student needs are being met (page e29 or Page 15).

**Weaknesses:**

No Weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students - 2****1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Supporting High-Needs Students (Federally Recognized Indian Tribes)**

**Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes and learning environments for students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.**

**Strengths:**

Competitive Preference Priority 2—Supporting High-Need Students [Federally Recognized Indian Tribes] – was not addressed within this application.

**Weaknesses:**

Competitive Preference Priority 2—Supporting High-Need Students [Federally Recognized Indian Tribes] – was not addressed within this application.

**Reader's Score:** 0

**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments**

**1. Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments**

**Projects that are designed to improve early learning and development outcomes across one or more of the essential domains of school readiness for children from birth through third grade (or for any age group within this range) through a focus on including preschool, whether offered in school or community-based settings, as part of elementary education programs and systems in order to expand opportunities for preschool students and teachers.**

**Strengths:**

Competitive Preference Priority 3—Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments was not addressed within this application.

**Weaknesses:**

Competitive Preference Priority 3—Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments was not addressed within this application. The applicant describes a program to serve students in grades five through eight.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 11/05/2015 02:47 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/05/2015 11:09 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Knowledge Academies, Inc. (U282B160007)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Curriculum and Instructional Practices</b>		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	11
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Achievement Standards	5	4
<b>Assessing Achievement of School Objectives</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	12
<b>Community &amp; Parental Support &amp; Comm. Involvement</b>		
1. Community Support	10	7
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	22	21
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	9
<b>Existence &amp; Quality of Charter or Performance Con.</b>		
1. Existence of Charter	15	15
<b>Degree of Flexibility Afforded by the SEA/LEA</b>		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	81
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Supporting High-Need Students - 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	3	2
<b>Supporting High-Need Students - 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	3	0
<b>Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments</b>		
1. CPP 3	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	8	2
<b>Total</b>	108	83

# Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 9: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Knowledge Academies, Inc. (U282B160007)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Curriculum and Instructional Practices

#### 1. The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices (20 U.S.C. 7221c(b)(1)).

**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.**

#### Strengths:

The application clearly indicates that students in grades 5-8 will be served. (P. 3)

The application clearly identifies and describes a diagnostic tool to identify individual learning domains (Learning Combination Inventory) and for initial student placement. (P. 3)

The application provides detailed strategies to support reading, vocabulary and math achievement. (P. 3-13)

The application details supplemental academic support for students and their families through the Center for Personalized Learning. (P. 5)

The application has identified research-based strategies to support program delivery: Marzano (P. 6), DISSECT (p. 8), SCENE (P.9), ASKIT (p. 10), RAP (P. 10), LINCS (P. 11), CRA (P. 12), and STAR (P. 13).

The application details a robust RtI process inclusive of the identification of RtI team members (P. 13), meeting activity (P. 13), performance metrics, benchmarking and tracking (P. 14-15)

The academic plan provides detailed activities for advanced students (Duke Talent Program, Jack Kent Cooke Young Scholars Program, and Udacity) including learning opportunities and measurable goals (P. 17)

#### Weaknesses:

The application indicates that the aforementioned strategies will be used across the entire curriculum. However, the remaining text does not indicate how they are utilized or their significance in areas beyond reading and mathematics. (P. 3-13)

Reader's Score: 11

### Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

#### 1. The extent to which the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students and other students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards (20 U.S.C. 7221c(a)(1)).

**Strengths:**

The application identifies specific, research-based strategies to be used in the instructional delivery process, Marzano (P. 9), ASKIT (P. 10), RAP (P.10), LINCS (P. 11), DRA (P. 13), STAR (P. 13), and a detailed RtI program to support the fidelity of instruction and progress monitoring. (P. 14-16)

**Weaknesses:**

Although the application indicates that all instructional strategies will be used across the curriculum, it lacks supporting details.

**Reader's Score:** 4

**Selection Criteria - Assessing Achievement of School Objectives****1. The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of the charter school' s objectives.**

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to propose a comprehensive plan for assessing the achievement of the charter school s objectives, inclusive of developing 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 Section VI.4. Performance Measures 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 application indicated measurable and clearly stated performance goals in the following domains: Academic Achievement, Learning Gains, Student Attendance, Out of School Suspensions, Student Survey Ranking and Family Survey Rankings (P. 18)

The school has developed accountability metrics and frameworks to support domain success in the areas of Employee Accountability, Student Accountability, and Family Survey Ranking (P.18)

The Employee Accountability Metrics includes a support and accountability mechanism to assess both the fidelity of instructional delivery (every 3 weeks) and a quarterly individual teacher growth plan. (P.19)

The application indicates the use of research-based protocols to guide productive and accountable planning, professional dialogue, and the implementation of appropriate student interventions. (P. 20)

To support the project narrative, the assessment measures include students and families (with measurable goals) to support the accountability structure. (P. 20-21)

**Weaknesses:**

The Employee, Student, and Family accountability metrics do not indicate who is responsible for determining metric status. (P. 19-22)

The Employee Accountability Metric does not identify systems to determine the success of school leadership. (P. 19)

**Reader's Score:** 12

## Selection Criteria - Community & Parental Support & Comm. Involvement

### 1. Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.

The extent of community support and parental and community involvement (20 U.S.C. 7221c(b)(3); 20 U.S.C. 7221b(b)(3)(E)).

#### Strengths:

See responses below.

#### Weaknesses:

See responses below.

Reader's Score: 7

#### Sub Question

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--

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

**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.

#### Strengths:

The application identifies the Nashville Adult Literacy Council and the Centerstone New Vision as community agencies that support the provision of family services to strengthen and enhance the the application's proposed educational process. (P. 22)

The application details a calendar with a plan of 7 activities to engage parents, school stakeholders, and the community. ((p. 25-26)

The application includes text of recognition of local support for the school's proposed Center for Professional Learning. (P. 24)

#### Weaknesses:

Individual Education Services provide areas of service that are required on a child's IEP; it is unclear how these services are related to community support or parent engagement. (p. 22)

The application does not provide information on the relationship between the school and Freehand Reality. It is not possible to determine how the new facility relates to community support or parent engagement. (P. 22)

Reader's Score: 4

2. The Secretary considers the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--

(ii) How parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program

**Sub Question**

**design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 5 points).**

**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.**

**Strengths:**

The existing school's Center for Personalized Learning is a nationally recognized arena for providing a full compliment of wrap-around services for community support. (P. 24)

**Weaknesses:**

Although the application indicates five types of community outreach activities, it does not include a discussion of how those activities have engaged the stakeholders in the school planning and program design process. (P. 23)

The application indicated that it had identified faith-based, small business, and community leaders to provide services. It would have been strengthened if it had identified these groups and individuals and included letters documenting their support. (P. 23)

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

**1. Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.**

**The quality of project personnel (34 CFR 75.210(e)(1), (e)(2), and (e)(3)(ii)).**

**Strengths:**

Please see responses below.

**Weaknesses:**

Please see responses below.

**Reader's Score: 21**

**Sub Question**

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide evidence of the key project personnel 's training and experience in activities related to the planning, program design, and initial implementation of a charter school.**

**Strengths:**

Sixty-two percent of the presented leadership team are members of a traditionally underrepresented minority. (P. 26-27).

## Sub Question

### Weaknesses:

The application indicates that it will serve a diverse population and that 18% of the surrounding community is Hispanic; membership from this group is absent from the presented leadership team. (P. 26-27)

Reader's Score: 1

2. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 20 points).

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide evidence of the key project personnel 's training and experience in activities related to the planning, program design, and initial implementation of a charter school.**

### Strengths:

All members of the leadership team have advanced academic degrees. (P. e62-e80)

All members of the leadership team have education, counseling, and or school operations experience. (P. e62-e80)

The leadership team is comprised of members from a variety of backgrounds which will strengthen the plan and ensure that the proposed application plan is inclusive and well-rounded. (P. e62-e80).

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses among the leadership team were noted.

Reader's Score: 20

## Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The quality of the management plan (34 CFR 75.210(g)(1) and (g)(2)(i)).

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

### Strengths:

The appendices include the local district's Pre-Opening Workbook, Pre-Opening Checklist, and Pre-Opening Letter. (P. e117-e212)

The application clearly indicates that the Executive Leadership Team is responsible for implementing and monitoring the management plan. (P. 28-29)

### Weaknesses:

Only four of the eight matrices in the Planning Year Milestones chart included timelines. (P. 29)

The entire Implementation Year Milestone chart is void of any timelines for implementation. (P. 29-30)

Neither the Planning Year Milestone or the Implementation Year Milestones charts include a specific plan for completion of the associated budgetary allocation required for successful completion. (P. 28-30)

Reader's Score: 9

**Selection Criteria - Existence & Quality of Charter or Performance Con.**

**1. Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.**

**The existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency (20 U.S.C. 7221i(1)(L)).**

**Strengths:**

Please see responses below.

**Weaknesses:**

Please see responses below.

Reader's Score: 15

**Sub Question**

**1. The Secretary considers--**

**(i) Whether a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency exists (up to 10 points);**

**Note: In considering whether there is a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency, the Secretary will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether the school has received preliminary, conditional, or other intermediate approval to operate from the authorized public chartering authority, if applicable. An applicant should submit documentation regarding the status of any such approval and clearly describe the authorizer 's approval process under applicable State law.**

**Strengths:**

The application indicates that the KA @ Crossings is formally approved and authorized by Metro Nashville Public Schools as evidenced by the executed 10-year agreement. (P. 31, P. e101-e118).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 10

**2. The Secretary considers--**

**(ii) 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 (up to 5 points)**

**Note: In considering whether there is a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency, the Secretary will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether the school has received preliminary, conditional, or other intermediate approval to operate from the authorized public chartering authority, if applicable. An applicant should submit documentation regarding the status of any such approval and clearly describe the authorizer 's approval process under applicable State law.**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

The school's contract indicates approved performance measures in the areas of Academic Progress, Attainment of College Readiness, Closing the Achievement Gap, and School Culture. (p. 31)

The school is required to adhere to a performance framework that aligns with national standards. (e213-e234).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Degree of Flexibility Afforded by the SEA/LEA**

- 1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school (20 U.S.C. 7221c(b)(2)).**

**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.**

**Strengths:**

The application indicated that the state grants a high degree of flexibility by the LEA/SEA. (P. 32)

The application indicated that the state grants over seven pages of waivers to charter schools that allow for flexible operation and innovative management structures. (P. 32)

**Weaknesses:**

The list of waivers granted would have strengthened the response in this category, but they were not included in the application.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students - 1**

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Supporting High-Needs Students (Rural Students, Students with Disabilities, English Learners)**

**Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes and learning environments for one or more of the following groups of students:**

- (a) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies**
- (b) Students with disabilities**
- (c) English learners**

**Note: 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 indicates that it will serve ELL and SPED students at or above district averages. (P. 1)

The application indicates specific strategies to address the needs of ELL and SPED students. (p. 11, 12) and also provides details of a robust RtI process. (P.13-18)

**Weaknesses:**

The application indicates that the school will serve an ELL population that is estimated to be 18% of its population, which is higher than the district average. However, it does not indicate how/why the percentage will be higher than the district average. (p. 1)

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students - 2****1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Supporting High-Needs Students (Federally Recognized Indian Tribes)**

**Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes and learning environments for students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.**

**Strengths:**

No strengths have been identified as the application does not include information that addresses the needs of students in federally recognized Indian tribes.

**Weaknesses:**

The application does not address students in federally recognized Indian tribes.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments****1. Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments**

**Projects that are designed to improve early learning and development outcomes across one or more of the essential domains of school readiness for children from birth through third grade (or for any age group within this range) through a focus on including preschool, whether offered in school or community-based settings, as part of elementary education programs and systems in order to expand opportunities for preschool students and teachers.**

**Strengths:**

The application does not address early learning and development outcomes of essential domains of school readiness for children from birth through third grade; as such, no strengths were noted.

**Weaknesses:**

The application does not address early learning and development outcomes of essential domains of school readiness for children from birth through third grade.

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 11/05/2015 11:09 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/06/2015 12:46 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Knowledge Academies, Inc. (U282B160007)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Curriculum and Instructional Practices</b>		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	11
<b>Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students</b>		
1. Achievement Standards	5	5
<b>Assessing Achievement of School Objectives</b>		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	11
<b>Community &amp; Parental Support &amp; Comm. Involvement</b>		
1. Community Support	10	8
<b>Quality of Project Personnel</b>		
1. Project Personnel	22	19
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	7
<b>Existence &amp; Quality of Charter or Performance Con.</b>		
1. Existence of Charter	15	15
<b>Degree of Flexibility Afforded by the SEA/LEA</b>		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	3
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	79
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Supporting High-Need Students - 1</b>		
1. CPP 1	3	2
<b>Supporting High-Need Students - 2</b>		
1. CPP 2	3	0
<b>Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments</b>		
1. CPP 3	2	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	8	2
<b>Total</b>	108	81

# Technical Review Form

Panel #9 - Non-SEA Charter Schools - 9: 84.282B

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

Applicant: Knowledge Academies, Inc. (U282B160007)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Curriculum and Instructional Practices

#### 1. The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices (20 U.S.C. 7221c(b)(1)).

**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.**

#### Strengths:

The applicant clearly states it will serve grades 5-8 beginning in Fall 2016, with an expected enrollment of 400.

Expressing a well-documented knowledge of different research-based academic strategies and research studies, the applicant will use the Learning Combination Inventory to help develop personalized learning opportunities for students (e20-27).

The Center for Personalized learning will also enhance the educational program by serving as a hub for families and the community to receive educational training and giving students the opportunity to participate in college-level courses (e19; 31)

The applicant will also focus on 4 research-based learning strategies based on the Marzano model which are: building vocabulary, identifying similarities and differences, interactive games, setting goals/objectives, and tracking student progress, and scoring scales-- all age and grade appropriate to compliment a middle school curriculum (e20).

#### Weaknesses:

There are numerous reading and math intervention strategies detailed for students performing below average, but the number of math strategies is incompatible to the number of reading strategies. Likewise, it is not clear what actual classroom strategies will be implemented in general for students performing at or above level (e21-25).

The applicant has not identified a clear and cohesive curriculum, any example of mapped subjects aligned to state standards, or any indication of the skills to be taught during particular units. There is an abundance of information provided, mostly tailored to supporting ELL and SPED students, but without the curriculum specifically identified, the question "how the program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards and the curriculum" goes mostly unanswered.

Reader's Score: 11

### Selection Criteria - Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students

1. **The extent to which the proposed project will assist educationally disadvantaged students and other students in meeting State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards (20 U.S.C. 7221c(a)(1)).**

#### Strengths:

The applicant displays a clear understanding of its target student population, including those who are educationally disadvantaged due to language barriers, behavioral concerns, and disabilities as evidenced by the projected student population (e12). In an effort to assist these groups, the applicant has developed "mini-courses" to serve as daily interventions for students performing below grade level in math and reading (e21-25). It will employ a Response to Intervention system for tracking and monitoring, it has created a monitoring calendar, and has identified a leadership team to support the overall system (e27-28).

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

### Selection Criteria - Assessing Achievement of School Objectives

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to propose a comprehensive plan for assessing the achievement of the charter school s objectives, inclusive of developing 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 Section VI.4. Performance Measures 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 details growth and performance targets for students and includes an assessment plan that explains the use of formative and summative assessments throughout the school. It is also evident the applicant has given much thought to creating a range of metrics representative of academics, teaching, and parent involvement, echoing its original vision of delivering dynamic support for all members of the school community. These multiple means of evaluation related to academic achievement, behavior, and parent satisfaction will be obtained through surveys, progress reports, and personalized growth programs; all are attached to measurable targets (e32).

#### Weaknesses:

The extensive assessment plan does not clearly articulate how the performance metrics are broken down between grade levels and across core subjects; it is only described as "all core content subjects" on the larger school level annually (e32). This makes it difficult to understand what standards are being measured and mastered. Additionally, it makes it impossible to gauge if the performance expectations are appropriate and attainable.

There is much discussion of providing support to English language learners and students with disabilities throughout the application as targeted groups, but there are no specific performance measures identified for these groups.

**Reader's Score:** 11

### **Selection Criteria - Community & Parental Support & Comm. Involvement**

#### **1. Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.**

**The extent of community support and parental and community involvement (20 U.S.C. 7221c(b)(3); 20 U.S.C. 7221b(b)(3)(E)).**

**Strengths:**

See responses below.

**Weaknesses:**

See responses below.

**Reader's Score:** 8

#### **Sub Question**

**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--**

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

**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.**

**Strengths:**

Applicant has included letters of support from local businesses and organizations, most of whom it has contracts and partnerships with at its existing school (e82-99).

Applicant details 7 community partnerships they have already secured to enhance the educational program, including organizations focused on teacher learning and innovation, literacy, social services, advanced learning, speech, and mentoring. The applicant has also identified a plan for securing more community partnerships as they go through the planning and implementation phases of their management plan (e36-38).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 5

**Sub Question**

2. **The Secretary considers the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school. In determining the extent of community support for, and parental and community involvement in, the charter school, the Secretary considers--**

**(ii) How parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school (up to 5 points).**

**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.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant documents a variety of community outreach measures to introduce parents and the community to the school, including neighborhood introductions, open houses, personalized learning forums, college credit opportunities, and job forums (e37-38). These activities also reiterate the school's vision for the Center for Personalized Learning.

**Weaknesses:**

Applicant has not demonstrated sufficient evidence that parents or the community have been involved with the planning, program design and implementation to date. All of the outreach activities mentioned reflect the founding team's existing trajectory for the school (i.e. job forums, digital learning workshops), not one that has been refined with parent and community input (e37-40).

**Reader's Score: 3**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel**

1. **Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.**

**The quality of project personnel (34 CFR 75.210(e)(1), (e)(2), and (e)(3)(ii)).**

**Strengths:**

See responses below.

**Weaknesses:**

See responses below.

**Reader's Score: 19**

**Sub Question**

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

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide evidence of the key project personnel 's training and experience in activities related to the planning, program design, and initial implementation of a charter school.**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

The project personnel are people from groups that have traditionally been underrepresented (pictures are included in the application), as well as being members of the school's actual community (e40-41).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not indicate how they will recruit and hire members of traditionally underrepresented groups moving forward.

**Reader's Score:** 1

2. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 20 points).

**Note: The Secretary encourages the applicant to provide evidence of the key project personnel 's training and experience in activities related to the planning, program design, and initial implementation of a charter school.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant adequately describes the background and qualifications of all key personnel, and includes their resumes. Key personnel experience include education, public policy, operations management, instructional leadership, social services, project management, curriculum design, and professional development design. The team possesses the relevant experience to successfully implement the goals and objectives alluded to in the application (e62-80).

**Weaknesses:**

All key project personnel are current employees of Knowledge Academies, Inc. and it is unclear who will remain with the organization or transition to the school once it opens (e62-80).

**Reader's Score:** 18

**Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan**

1. The quality of the management plan (34 CFR 75.210(g)(1) and (g)(2)(i)).

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

**Strengths:**

The implementation steps presented by the applicant are thorough and demonstrate a distinction between planning year and implementation year objectives (e43-44).

In the management plan, the applicant accounts for various objectives pertaining to community involvement, student achievement and enrollment, and talent development (e43-44).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant has not explained if their implementation plan will be supplemented by the larger MNPS pre-opening checklist deadlines, or not, and who will be responsible for the successful completion of each task. Therefore the timeliness of the management plan becomes vague (e43-44; e193).

**Reader's Score:** 7

**Selection Criteria - Existence & Quality of Charter or Performance Con.**

**1. Please provide your responses in the sub-questions.**

**The existence and quality of a charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency (20 U.S.C. 7221i(1)(L)).**

**Strengths:**

See responses below.

**Weaknesses:**

See responses below.

**Reader's Score:** 15

**Sub Question**

**1. The Secretary considers--**

**(i) Whether a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency exists (up to 10 points);**

**Note: In considering whether there is a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency, the Secretary will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether the school has received preliminary, conditional, or other intermediate approval to operate from the authorized public chartering authority, if applicable. An applicant should submit documentation regarding the status of any such approval and clearly describe the authorizer 's approval process under applicable State law.**

**Strengths:**

There is a written and signed charter agreement between Knowledge Academies, Inc. and the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, approving Knowledge Academies at the Crossings (e101).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score:** 10

**2. The Secretary considers--**

**(ii) 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 (up to 5 points)**

**Note: In considering whether there is a written charter or performance contract between the charter school and its authorized public chartering agency, the Secretary will consider, on a case-**

#### Sub Question

**by-case basis, whether the school has received preliminary, conditional, or other intermediate approval to operate from the authorized public chartering authority, if applicable. An applicant should submit documentation regarding the status of any such approval and clearly describe the authorizer 's approval process under applicable State law.**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant includes its signed charter agreement and performance framework, which does describe in detail how student performance will be measured pursuant to State assessments (e101; e213).

#### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

#### **Selection Criteria - Degree of Flexibility Afforded by the SEA/LEA**

- 1. The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school (20 U.S.C. 7221c(b)(2)).**

**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.**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant provides a clear description of the TN Charter School Law and the resulting level of autonomy, which is also detailed in the signed charter agreement, MNPS pre-opening accountability workbook, and MNPS performance framework attachments (e101-236).

#### **Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses noted.

**Reader's Score: 3**

#### **Priority Questions**

##### **Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students - 1**

- 1. Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Supporting High-Needs Students (Rural Students, Students with Disabilities, English Learners)**

**Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes and learning environments for one or more of the following groups of students:**

- (a) Students served by Rural Local Educational Agencies**
- (b) Students with disabilities**
- (c) English learners**

**Note: 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 explanation of Nashville, TN-- where the proposed school will be located, including student demographics that include high percentages of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, 12% students with disabilities, and 18% English language learners (e15). The applicant explicitly states its proposed school will be targeting these populations to provide a high-level educational experience.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant has no clearly explained how ELL and/or SPED students will be identified, monitored, or transitioned out of their respective designation based on their academic progress.

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Supporting High-Need Students - 2****1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Supporting High-Needs Students (Federally Recognized Indian Tribes)**

**Projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes and learning environments for students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.**

**Strengths:**

No strengths noted.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not indicate their proposed project is designed to improve academic outcomes and learning environments for students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments****1. Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments**

**Projects that are designed to improve early learning and development outcomes across one or more of the essential domains of school readiness for children from birth through third grade (or for any age group within this range) through a focus on including preschool, whether offered in school or community-based settings, as part of elementary education programs and systems in order to expand opportunities for preschool students and teachers.**

**Strengths:**

No strengths noted.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not make any indication that their proposed project will include preschool.

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 11/06/2015 12:46 PM