

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/04/2015 10:33 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Mathematics, Science and Technology Charter School (U282B160034)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Curriculum and Instructional Practices		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	10
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Achievement Standards	5	5
Assessing Achievement of School Objectives		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	10
Community & Parental Support & Comm. Involvement		
1. Community Support	10	8
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	22	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	10
Existence & Quality of Charter or Performance Con.		
1. Existence of Charter	15	12
Degree of Flexibility Afforded by the SEA/LEA		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	0
Sub Total	100	75
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Supporting High-Need Students - 1		
1. CPP 1	3	1
Supporting High-Need Students - 2		
1. CPP 2	3	0
Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments		
1. CPP 3	2	1
Sub Total	8	2
Total	108	77

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Mathematics, Science and Technology Charter School (U282B160034)

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:

MaST II will use the STREAM model (Science, Technology, Robotics, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics), which has proven successful in MaST I. MaST I has been able to achieve 100% graduation rate with 94% of students going to college. MaST I is also a Title I High Achievement School and has many accolades (p. 3). Thus, the connection can be made that using the same educational program has a high likelihood of yielding the same results. The applicant included a detailed description of how the program would look at MaST II, and mentioned achievement of grade level standards (p. 14).

Weaknesses:

Applicant did not make a clear link to how STREAM will enable the students to meet the challenging State standards. This could have been strengthened by clearly linking each part of STREAM to the challenging State standard. Additionally, MaST II will serve students in grades K-5. It was not clear in this section. how will stream look with that population. These details were omitted and would have contributed to a stronger narrative.

Reader's Score: 10

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:

This section provided much insight that was lacking in the previous section. It was more detailed, robust, and painted a descriptive picture of how students would be educated at MaST II. MaST will embed PA Common Core standards into each grade curricula (p. 11), will use DIBELS three times per year to ensure a strong focus on early literacy (p. 13), and will use blended learning and progress monitoring (p. 15). MaST II will also employ the use of universal screenings three times a year (p. 19) to provide teachers with data. The teachers will review data and then provide individualized interventions.

MaST II will also use 3 tiers of support (p. 27) to reach students, including universal supports, secondary supports, and intensive supports. All of this, in addition to a focus on student health and mental health (p. 30-31), will provide for a very well rounded educational setting for all students, especially those educationally disadvantaged students.

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:

MaST II will conduct an annual review of curricula that will ensure that standards are state-aligned and meet or exceed the standards of industry demands (p. 33). Student performance is assessed regularly; teachers are given on-going professional development, and will use data-driven instruction. Applicant describes processes around team meetings and attendance review (p. 34).

Weaknesses:

This section would have been stronger had MaST II listed each project-specific performance measure and target as listed in their approved charter, and then detailed how the initiatives described would meet these requirements. It is unclear if what has been described will meet the project specific performance measures and targets. Further, there is no discussion of how the program will be assessed, and what will happen should mid-course corrections be needed.

Reader's Score: 10

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:

Weaknesses:

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

Sub Question

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:

MaST II has support from local Congressmen, civic groups, and families through letters "asking us to replicate" (p. 36). Further, the long waitlist demonstrates a demand for the program.

Weaknesses:

This section could have been strengthened by detailing how many parents wrote letters, the number of community meetings held, and providing quantifiable details to demonstrate community support.

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 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:

MaST II has an association of parents that fundraise, host events, and meet to discuss needs of the school (p. 36). Parents are also invited to join Parent Liaison Committee to address parent concerns, discuss curriculum, etc. (p. 37)

Weaknesses:

Other than the social events and fundraisers, it is unclear how parents will contribute input into the curriculum.

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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 20

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:

Current key personnel are from a wide variety of professions and backgrounds. Applicant demonstrated how each person is uniquely qualified to assist the school in some way. (p. 38)

Weaknesses:

No statement was provided that indicated that 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." This was a requirement of this particular element.

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:

Many of the key staff listed already work at MaST I and have proven results. The applicant strengthened the narrative by demonstrating each Board Member's qualifications, effectiveness, and potential to provide key services to the school. (p. 42)

Weaknesses:

It would have been helpful if the applicant had provided details regarding the relevant training for each person listed and identified how that training would assist the school.

Reader's Score: 19

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:

MaST-Byberry (MaST I) will handle all aspects of management support to MaST II. (p. 43). Because MaST I has already proven effective, this is considered a strength. MaST II will have a proven group providing oversight.

Weaknesses:

Because all responsibilities are with MaST I, it is unclear what the impact will be at their location. It would be helpful to know if MaST I has the capacity to provide management and oversight to MaST II. Also, timelines and objectives to meet all goals would have strengthened this narrative. The applicant should have described which campus will take priority in the event of multiple deadlines. Additional details on the structure would have been helpful.

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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 12

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:

MaST II provides statement that, "The official Charter is attached and can be found in the "Other Attachments" section Appendix D." (p. 48)

Weaknesses:

It would have been helpful if MaST II had provided a statement detailing that a charter exists and provided relevant context.

Reader's Score: 8

2. The Secretary considers--

Sub Question

(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:

MaST II provides statement that, "The official Charter is attached and can be found in the "Other Attachments" section Appendix D." (p. 48)

Weaknesses:

MaST II could have explained the particulars of how this element is met, described how student performance will be measured, etc.

Reader's Score: 4

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:

Applicant states, " The official Charter is attached and can be found in the "Other Attachment" section Appendix D. MaST follows and abides by all State and local charter laws set forth." (p. 48)

Weaknesses:

This area is not really addressed by MaST II. There is simply a direction to review the charter. MaST II could have strengthened this section by detailing the relationship with the authorizer under the State's charter school law. This is especially important for those who are not familiar with the charter climate in Pennsylvania. Are charter schools exempt from State/local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools? It is unclear if MaST is stating that they will follow all State and local rules because that is their choice.

Reader's Score: 0

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:

On page 6, the applicant states that "MaST II's mission is to support quality education to all students, with an expectation of focusing on supporting high-need students, low-income, ELL, and special education ..."

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided demographic details of the area and stated the expectation to serve the groups of students outlined in this competitive priority, however, MaST II did not detail how they would attract and serve the students with disabilities or ELL students (they are not in a rural area). The statement that they expect to serve these groups is not enough to receive full points.

Reader's Score: 1

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:

None. Applicant did not address this section.

Weaknesses:

None. Applicant did not address this section.

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:

Applicant provided information about serving early learning students.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this criterion independently. It was part of a larger description of the educational program.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/05/2015 09:18 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Mathematics, Science and Technology Charter School (U282B160034)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Curriculum and Instructional Practices		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	13
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Achievement Standards	5	5
Assessing Achievement of School Objectives		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	11
Community & Parental Support & Comm. Involvement		
1. Community Support	10	10
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	22	20
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	10
Existence & Quality of Charter or Performance Con.		
1. Existence of Charter	15	15
Degree of Flexibility Afforded by the SEA/LEA		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	0
Sub Total	100	84
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Supporting High-Need Students - 1		
1. CPP 1	3	3
Supporting High-Need Students - 2		
1. CPP 2	3	0
Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments		
1. CPP 3	2	0
Sub Total	8	3
Total	108	87

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Mathematics, Science and Technology Charter School (U282B160034)

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 Mathematics, Science, and Technology Charter School will be relying on the STREAM model which will help to promote a well-rounded child. The Pennsylvania Common Core Standards is embedded into each grade curricula with Science playing a significant role in the education program. The curriculum and programmatic components will support the academic goals of the school. The additional instructional staffing will certainly support the curriculum and learning initiatives.

Page E23, E31-40

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that the school included life like experimental zones called learning neighborhoods. However, no additional details were presented on this concept and what is entailed.

Reader's Score: 13

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 Mathematics, Science, and Technology Charter School will provide each child with an independent learning plan which will incorporate the Stem Model, Robotics, and Arts K-12. The school anticipates a poverty rate higher than 60% based on recent analysis of the area and results from recruiting efforts. Specialized programs will be implemented to provide services to high-need, low-income, and ELL students. The applicant plans to provide counseling services, push-in and pull-out services for ESE and ELL students, utilize technology and differentiated instruction, and foster a relationship with parents to ensure expectations are consistent at home and at school. Pages:E23-E28

Weaknesses:

None 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 states that the Dibels Next Online Program Monitoring Software and AIMSWEB, an online curriculum based measurement progress monitoring system used to track and report IEP progress and goals, will be utilized to assess student achievement. The charter application notes, that the school will also administer all required state and federal standardized tests in compliance with all applicable laws.

Pages E34-35

Weaknesses:

The applicant failed to address or provide evidence of how they would utilize the outcomes of the identified assessments.

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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 10

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

Sub Question

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 states that the school will host parent teacher meetings, communicate through the website, conduct weekend and evening workshops, and more. In addition, there are two parent committees at the school. One of the groups focuses on events and fundraisers.

Page E29

Weaknesses:

None Noted

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:

An existing parent advisory committee participates in forums, address parent concerns, discuss curriculum, and other programmatic items.

Page E50, E51, E52

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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:

Weaknesses:

Reader's Score: 20

Sub Question

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:

Based on the background experience of their key project personnel, it is evident that a quality group of board members has been developed to support start-up goals, project management.

Page E53-58

Weaknesses:

None Noted

Reader's Score: 2

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:

Key Personnel Members possess experience in board governance, finance, operations, non-profit organizations, and education.

Pages E57-E59, E65

Weaknesses:

It would have been helpful had the governing board included someone with experience in the arts and science to support strategic planning efforts.

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 organizational chart provided indicates many layers of personnel to provide to support with the implementation of the project. The chart reflects that the Principal will be seen as the academic leader with a majority of the tasks being carried out by existing MAST personnel.

Weaknesses:

An outline of tasks, timelines, and milestones were not provided.

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:

Weaknesses:

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 approved charter application was provided by the applicant for review.

Page E67-E160

Weaknesses:

None 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 grant and charter application both provided information on the assessments that will be utilized and measured to gauge student performance.

E83

Weaknesses:

None 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 did not address this criterion.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this criterion.

Reader's Score: 0

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 purpose of the charter school is to replicate a successful teaching model and school with a waiting list of over 7000 students, to provide additional learning opportunities for a community where the average poverty rate ranges between 50-90%. The application mentions that the local church where the school would be housed hosts 5 different Masses in different languages which reflects the diversity in that area. Throughout the application there is evidence of programs designed to support ELL and ESE populations, and students served by Rural Local Education Agencies.
Pages E13, E26, E28, E39-E40

Weaknesses:

None noted.

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:

The applicant did not address this criterion.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this criterion.

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 applicant did not address this criterion.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not address this criterion.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 11/05/2015 09:18 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 11/04/2015 09:51 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Mathematics, Science and Technology Charter School (U282B160034)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Curriculum and Instructional Practices		
1. Quality of Curriculum	15	13
Assisting Educationally Disadvantaged Students		
1. Achievement Standards	5	4
Assessing Achievement of School Objectives		
1. Assessing Achievement	15	8
Community & Parental Support & Comm. Involvement		
1. Community Support	10	10
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	22	19
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	10
Existence & Quality of Charter or Performance Con.		
1. Existence of Charter	15	8
Degree of Flexibility Afforded by the SEA/LEA		
1. Degree of Flexibility	3	0
Sub Total	100	72
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Supporting High-Need Students - 1		
1. CPP 1	3	2
Supporting High-Need Students - 2		
1. CPP 2	3	0
Improving Early Learning Outcomes and Developments		
1. CPP 3	2	1
Sub Total	8	3
Total	108	75

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Mathematics, Science and Technology Charter School (U282B160034)

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 group proposes to replicate its successful STEM model in Philadelphia. MaST I is currently a Title I High Achievement school, was named a P21 STEM school, the top charter school in Pennsylvania and the 41st best school by US News and World Report. Additionally, MaST I had a 100% graduation rate in the past with 94% of students enrolling in a 2 or 4 year college (Pg. e21). MaST II will mimic MaST I's science focus and it will have life-like experimental zones called "learning neighborhoods". These learning zones will allow students to progress from one level to another and promotes cross-grade advancement opportunities (Pg. e24). Science and technology will flow naturally from elementary school through high school with Robotics, Lego WeDo to foundational engineering in high school. In addition to science and technology, the school will integrate arts (visual and performing) into core subject areas.

The school will ensure that all students meet academic achievement and content standards by focusing on literacy, low student-teacher ratio, part-time instructional assistants, small group instruction and an assessment system that will drive instructional delivery (Pg. e27).

MaST II will implement a push-in and pull-out SPED and ELL model, with counseling and social services available as needed.

Weaknesses:

Unclear how all students will benefit from the STREAM program, especially those in the lower grades.

Reader's Score: 13

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 school seems to have a strong presence in Philadelphia, and according to the narrative the school district asked them to move the location to an academically diverse community. At the time of submission, the school received 1279 applications for 400 available seats.

Key to assisting educationally disadvantaged students and others in meeting achievement standards, is MaST II's use of technology. Blended Learning, Student Progress Monitoring and Student Data Track, Access Supports (online textbooks, and Learning Ally for visually impaired students) are just a few of the technologies that will be used to assist students with meeting standards (Pp. e30-31). The school will offer a SAIL classroom for children with autism and those with moderate-to-severe disabilities and all students will be engaged with a level of personalized instruction in literacy and math (Pp. e31-33). Additionally, the school will administer universal screening 3 times a year in literacy and math (using DIBELS) along with PSSA and Keystone testing data to identify children scoring in the lowest 20% of each grade level. This process will lead to data meetings and plans to provide interventions services as needed (Pg. e35). Specifically, students with disabilities will receive instruction from both general education and special education teachers, and when needed will receive pull-out small group instruction from SETS (Pg. e38). As with students with disabilities, MaST I has established programs of instruction for English language learners. They will be screened and a qualified teacher will provide planned instruction and support with adaptations and modifications in general education classrooms (Pp. e39-40). Finally, there is a plan to support and encourage homeless students to attend the school (Pg. e42).

Weaknesses:

There is no demographic data on the current population of students attending MaST I; nor data on the racial, ethnic, economic or educational needs of the proposed population. It is noted that the narrative states that the average poverty rate of the surrounding schools range from 50 – 90%. (Pg. e17)

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:

MaST I will use data (DIBELS, WIDA, Fountas & Pinnell, Wilson Foundation, Study Island, etc.) to assess the achievement of school-wide academic objectives (Pg. e49). Lesson plans will be reviewed by the principal and weekly and monthly team meetings will be devoted to data analysis.

Weaknesses:

It is unclear how each student's performance path will be designed to grow interest in careers, matching skills with job market opportunities; nor was any evidence presented to suggest that the identified assessments (Pp. e48-49) can be used to predict interest in careers. It is unclear how the board will assess the school's performance. There is no discussion of project-specific performance measures and targets.

Reader's Score: 8

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:

Community – MaST II have and will use a number of strategies to inform the Tacony community and to gain their support (Pg. e19). They have outreached through weekly newspapers, the Tacony Civic Association, a multi-language website (goes live in January 2016), and a current mailing list with over 10,000 contacts.

MaST II has support from a range of community leaders and stakeholders – Somerton Civic Association, ██████████, ██████████, Community College, and the Fraternal Order of Police.

Family – There are two active parent groups working with MaST I. One group is responsible for fundraising activities for the school; and the Parent Liaison Committee is used as a direct line of communication between families and school administration (Pg. e52). MaST II will use the same parental involvement as MaST I.

All parents will be invited to technology, literacy, and math involvement nights, parent-teacher conferences, and open houses (Pg. e53).

Weaknesses:

No significant weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

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:

MaST II have and will use a number of strategies to inform the Tacony community and to gain their support (Pg. e19). They have outreached through weekly newspapers, the Tacony Civic Association, a multi-language website (goes live in January 2016), and a current mailing list with over 10,000 contacts.

MaST II has support from a range of community leaders and stakeholders – Somerton Civic Association, Congressman Brendan Boyle, Community College, and the Fraternal Order of Police.

Weaknesses:

No significant 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:

There are two active parent groups working with MaST I. One group is responsible for fundraising activities for the school; and the Parent Liaison Committee is used as a direct line of communication between families and school administration (Pg. e52). MaST II will use the same parental involvement as MaST I.

All parents will be invited to technology, literacy, and math involvement nights, parent-teacher conferences, and open houses (Pg. e53).

Weaknesses:

No significant weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

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:

The group responsible for implementing the proposed project is highly skilled and qualified. [REDACTED] has a wealth of experience in the charter school world and is the founder and Board President of MaST I. [REDACTED] is the CEO of MaST Community Charter School and has served in many capacities at the school since 2004. It has been his vision to think outside of the box and advance the current programmatic direction (Pg. e53). [REDACTED] is the school leader for MaST II and has worked as the Director of Instruction and Dean of Students. [REDACTED] is the Head of Community Relations and Innovative Projects and has also worked as a Curriculum Design and Technology Specialist. [REDACTED] is the MaST Technology Specialist and a former 4th grade teacher. [REDACTED] served as Director of Financial Systems for the School District of Philadelphia. [REDACTED] is the Lower School Head of Academics, and [REDACTED] is the Head of School Operations. The identified Board members also seem to have the skillsets to manage and oversee the proposed project (Pg. e57-58).

Weaknesses:

Unclear how identified personnel will be able to perform additional duties and ensure that the existing school's (MaST II) program remains strong.

Reader's Score: 19

Sub Question

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

Sub Question

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:

The group responsible for implementing the proposed project is highly skilled and qualified. [REDACTED] has a wealth of experience in the charter school world and is the founder and Board President of MaST I. [REDACTED] is the CEO of MaST Community Charter School and has served in many capacity at the school since 2004. It has been his vision to think outside of the box and advance the current programmatic direction (Pg. e53). [REDACTED] is the school leader for MaST II and has worked as the Director of Instruction and Dean of Students. [REDACTED] is the Head of Community Relations and Innovative Projects. She has also worked as a Curriculum Design and Technology Specialist. [REDACTED] is the MaST Technology Specialist and a former 4th grade teacher. [REDACTED] served as Director of Financial Systems for the School District of Philadelphia. [REDACTED] is the Lower School Head of Academics and [REDACTED] the Head of School Operations. The identified Board members also seem to have the skillsets to manage and oversee the proposed project (Pg. e57-58).

Weaknesses:

No significant weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

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 management plan is strong and includes curriculum design and implementation training, extensive technology infrastructure, upgrades to the data management system, oversight of human resources and hiring practices, in-depth technology integration, special education training, professional development, board development, mentoring and coaching for administrative staff, community outreach, and grant writing (Pp. e59-62).

Weaknesses:

Unclear how identified personnel will be able to perform additional duties and ensure that the existing school's (MaST II) program remains strong.

Reader's Score: 17

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 management plan is strong and includes curriculum design and implementation training, extensive technology infrastructure, upgrades to the data management system, oversight of human resources and hiring practices, in-depth technology integration, special education training, professional development, board development, mentoring and coaching for administrative staff, community outreach, and grant writing (Pp. e59-62).

Weaknesses:

On pg. e61 there is reference to construction management, which is an unallowable cost under this grant. There is a concern about the capacity of the existing staff manage MaST I and the second campus. As such, there are no discussions about developing a pipeline for new or current employees to manage multiple campuses.

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:

There is a charter contract between MaST II and the authorized public chartering agency of Philadelphia.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 8

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 charter contract between MaST II and the authorized public chartering agency of Philadelphia.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide an overview of the contract between the school and its authorizer.

Reader's Score: 8

2. The Secretary considers--

(ii) The extent to which the charter or performance contract describes how student performance

Sub Question

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:

None noted.

Weaknesses:

A discussion about the chartering agency's flexibility was not included in the submission.

Reader's Score: 0

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:

No significant strengths noted.

Weaknesses:

A discussion about the chartering agency's flexibility was not included in the submission.

Reader's Score: 0

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:

There are programs and academic outcomes in place for students with disabilities and English Learners. Notably, the school proposes to implement a project-based learning program specifically for English Language Learners (Pp.6-7 of Project Narrative).

Weaknesses:

Although the application addresses how the school would support all high needs students, it would have been helpful to have some evidence of how MaST's high needs students performed on state and school assessments. This information would lend validity to the applicant's claims that the proposed plans are indeed, effective for the target population.

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:

None noted.

Weaknesses:

Applicant did not respond to this competitive priority.

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 applicant intends to serve students in grades K-12, which includes some early childhood grades (Pp. 6-7 of Project Narrative).

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not specifically address this priority, though the school will serve K-12 students. More information is needed on how STEM/STREAM will look for K-3 students, the types of assessments that will be used to determine progress and achievement, and evidence that matriculation through the earlier grades equate to success in the upper grades.

Reader's Score: 1

Status: Submitted

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