

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

Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany (U215P110135)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need for Project	15	15
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	20	19
<b>Quality of Project Services</b>		
1. Qual. of Project Services	20	19
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Qual. of Management Plan	45	44
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>CPP4 Early Learning</b>		
1. CPP4 Early Learning	2	2
<b>CPP5 Internet Access</b>		
1. CPP5 Internet Access	1	
<b>CPP6 Arts and Humanities</b>		
1. CPP6 Arts and Humanities	1	1
<b>Competitive Preference Priorities</b>		
<b>CPP7 Affordable Housing</b>		
1. CPP7 Affordable Housing	1	
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
<b>Adult Education</b>		
1. Adult Education	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel - 7: 84.215P

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

Applicant: Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany (U215P110135)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Need for Project.

Reader's Score: 15

#### Sub Question

1. The magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators identified in part by the needs assessment and segmentation analysis.

#### Strengths:

The magnitude of the needs is thoroughly addressed and includes all components of the educational, community, and family indicators. Excellent format and description of details include educational indicator needs as children's lack of kindergarten readiness skills, low academic proficiencies in math and English/language arts, students' school misconduct, lack of adult education, and low college graduation rates. Community and family needs are adequately identified as child poverty, unemployment, lack of access to transportation, lack of affordable housing, limited access to health care, homelessness, child abuse, juvenile delinquency, and lack of quality child care. (pp. 1-6, 43-45)

Documentation of the needs is accompanied by strong local statistics as compared to New York statistics which lends validity to the identification of the need. A good example of the use of strong statistics to document a need is high school graduation rate for the target neighborhood high school is 59% as compared to the New York state's graduation rate of 80%. (pp. 1, 5)

Details are given for the area's population size, loss of businesses, and unemployment in area factories and businesses such as McGuire's Dock/Loading Equipment and Kaz Factory. (p. 2) Lack of transportation for families is thoroughly defined with details of the "transportation roadblocks" for providing services and programs since there are only personal nonpublic local modes of transportation. Accessibility to colleges is difficult for people in the area since public transportation is not readily available. (p. 3) Another need is described for the lack of early learning programs since the capacity is already reached and only provides "no more than 40% of the children" with such programs. (p. 4) Twenty-first century learning tools are established as needs to be assessed. Data will be collected and analyzed for residents' internet access and access to other technological devices. (p. 55)

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. The extent to which the geographically defined area has been described.

### Sub Question

#### Strengths:

The applicant adequately defines the geographical area of the rural area of Columbia County, New York area and properly represents it with map details. The entire Hudson City School District of four schools is contained in this region as identified as the Promise Neighborhood region. (pp. 1-2, 42) Population demographics and family income median levels are presented. Community strengths are also outlined and include more than 30 religious institutions and a regional farmers' market. (p. 6)

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score: 5**

### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

#### 1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Quality of Project Design.

**Reader's Score: 19**

### Sub Question

#### 1. The extent to which the continuum of solutions will be aligned with an ambitious, rigorous, and comprehensive strategy for improvement of schools in the neighborhood.

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides good detail of the alignment of the continuum of the Promise Neighborhood solutions and the rigorous school improvement strategies underway at all four of the schools in the designated area. All four schools are "undergoing ambitious, comprehensive, rigorous" school reform using the "transformation model" which was initiated in 2006. (p. 6) The high school and intermediate school are identified as "low performing" schools. (p. 1) Reform efforts that are being implemented include rigorous strategies such as expansion of quality professional development for teachers; support for young children to read, increasing expectations for teachers, principals, and students; examining the use of time and resources; curricular realignment to focus on Common Core standards using the Rubicon Atlas software; a more cohesive K-6 reading curriculum; increased emphasis on writing across all content areas; and a more cohesive math curriculum K-6. (pp. 7, 9)

Catholic Charities' connections and support for school reform include participation on District Leadership Team and school building teams, continued director leadership with the school-based substance abuse prevention program, and promotion of school readiness. (p. 7) A working group is formed to include Catholic Charities and the school district to collaborate and formulate solutions to integrate school reform with other family and community improvements without gaps in services or duplication in services. (p. 8) A Promise Neighborhood School Reform Coordinator will work closely with school staff and the Assistant Superintendent Suttmeier. (p. 8) Specific efforts will focus on supporting strategies to teach young children to read and strategies for a more successful transition of young people at all stages of their lives into adulthood (pp. 9-11)

The school improvement reform design includes data collection and program enhancements for students with disabilities. (pp. 26-27, 52)

#### Weaknesses:

School improvement strategies and alignment to the Promise Neighborhood project are not connected to educational improvements for children and young people with limited English proficiency language skills. (pp. 6-10)

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 9

2. The extent to which the applicant describes a proposal to plan to create a complete continuum of solutions, including early learning through grade 12, college- and career-readiness, and family and community supports, without time and resource gaps that will prepare all children in the neighborhood to attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career.

**Strengths:**

The applicant thoroughly describes a planning process which includes several factors to ensure that the solutions include early learning through college readiness and successful family and community endeavors. The continuum is created by "age and topic" and includes "overlapping governance" structures to break down silos. (p. 10) Plans also include strategies for decreasing gaps in services and resources.

An excellent design model is described to ensure a complete continuum of solutions. Components are assessment of needs and unmet needs in the district, development of solutions by age and setting for in-school and out-of-school time, targeting segmentation analysis for very specific demographic needs, creation of fundraising plan for solutions, and evaluation. (pp. 11-12)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. The extent to which solutions leverage existing neighborhood assets and coordinate with other efforts, including programs supported by Federal, State, local, and private funds.

**Strengths:**

The applicant presents strong neighborhood assets that will coordinate well with the Promise Neighborhood solutions. Assets are described and include staff for existing youth programs, young people in the designated geographical area, parents, and organizations. (p. 12) Organizations include Head Start and Early Start, and 21st Century Community Learning Center Program which are all Federally funded. A locally funded program which is an asset is Blue Hawk Nation After-School Program. (pp. 6, 12-13) Youth assets include young people serving on the Youth Advisory Board who will also be critical participants in an expanded youth work group for the planning in this new grant initiative of Promise Neighborhoods. (p. 13-14) Key residents are staged to assist with efforts in communicating with residents and students with limited English proficiencies. (p. 14)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services**

1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Quality of Project Services.

**Reader's Score: 19**

**Sub Question**

- 1. The extent to which the applicant describes how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis, including identifying and describing indicators, will be used during the planning phase to determine each solution within the continuum.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant explains to a great extent how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis will be used to determine solutions within the continuum for children. Very specific information is included in a timeline of workgroup meetings, reports, networking activities, retreats, and deliverables. Specific data use includes public source data analysis, neighborhood survey, student survey, data from pilot programs, school and provider records assessments, segmentation analysis, data and analysis shared with the public, and documentation/evaluation. (pp. 15, 50) The segmentation analysis includes numerous variables including poverty, limited English language, educational attainment, school enrollment, disconnected youth, utilization of public assistance, and employment. (p. 16) Data for educational indicators are also adequately included and include early childcare and learning, student mobility rates, post-secondary activities of students, attendance rates, and graduation rates. Confidentiality of data sharing is adequately addressed as the applicant describes measures to ensure privacy in accordance with HIPPA and FERPA. (pp. 16-18)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score: 10**

- 2. The extent to which the applicant describes how it will determine that solutions are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence, and ensure that solutions drive results and lead to changes on indicators.**

**Strengths:**

One strength is the complete overall structure of creating solutions for positive educational and family/community change based on moderate evidence and research as applicable to the population needs of Hudson. (p. 20) Research bases to be utilized include the Harvard Family Research Project, AED Center for Youth Development and Engagement, Urban Institute, local pilot test program results for in-school and after-school programs, and Communities of Practice. (pp. 20-22) The applicant presents a reasonable plan for the studying of research prior to the designing of solutions. Each Working Group will "research databases such as the Harvard Family Research Project and the AED Center for Youth Development and Engagement to identify promising practices." (p. 20) The applicant describes the existing reform efforts to be built upon evidence presented in the Washington, D.C.'s Promise Neighborhood Principal's Council. (p. 8)

**Weaknesses:**

Additional research evidence is needed to support the model of school improvement. Even though the applicant states that the reform efforts are built upon the structure of Washington D.C.'s Promise Neighborhood Principal's Council, much more detail is needed for evidence of research which has already taken place. (pp. 6-9, 19-22)

**Reader's Score: 9**

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

- 1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Quality of the Management Plan.**

Sub Question

1. **Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of the applicant's management team and project director in working with the neighborhood and its residents; the schools described in paragraph (2) (b) of Absolute Priority 1; the LEA in which those schools are located; Federal, State, and local government leaders; and other service providers.**

**Strengths:**

Catholic Charities and the proposed Program Director have strong relationships with the neighborhood residents, governmental officials, and the LEA. (p. 33) Long-term relationships and initiatives include Communities That Care in Columbia and Greene Counties, Healthcare Consortium, Columbia Memorial Hospital, Breastfeeding Coalition, school reform efforts of the LEA, and the 21st CCLC. Numerous community partnerships exist and include The Hudson Opera House, Columbia Greene Community College, City of Hudson, Columbia County, the New York State Volunteer Fireman's Home, and the Columbia Mental Health Association. (p. 23) Federal connections are established as the Project Director (also leader of Catholic Charities) participated in a Catholic Charities national conference in Washington, D.C. and has interacted with New York's Congressmen for project support. (p. 24)

The project director displays a strong educational background and extensive experience of over twenty years in the region and in working with both Catholic Charities as the current Coordinator of the Kinship Caregiving Program. (p. 24, e85-e88) An acceptable governance structure is presented with appropriate Advisory Board, working groups, and Promise Neighborhood Staff completing a planning project. (pp. 25, 49) Key staff positions are described as Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood Director, School Reform Coordinator, Early Learning Coordinator, Community Coordination, and Data Coordinator. (pp. 25, 33, 49, e84) A commitment is evident to work with the National Evaluator for the sharing of project data and planning design work. (p. 22)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. **Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of applicant's management team and project director in collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making, learning, continuous improvement, and accountability.**

**Strengths:**

Catholic Charities thoroughly explains its past successful experiences in collecting, analyzing, and using data in decision making and providing solutions for improvements. Evidence of such accomplishments includes work with the WIC Program, Supervised Parent Visitation Program, and a homeless project with Columbia Opportunities, Inc. (pp. 25-26) The management group, including the schools, plans to utilize educational longitudinal data and build upon the middle schools' national accreditation self-assessment. (p. 27) An excellent explanation is provided for the use of the primary data analyst, Dr. Powlick, in the planning of the continuum of solutions with her approach of collaborative research. Other strengths include participation of Dr. Casto to drive the communities of practice as this person is an expert in school and community partnerships in rural school districts. The use of CitySpan is a strength as this contractor will design, host, and maintain the project database. (pp. 28-29)

**Weaknesses:**

The proposed Program Director has a limited amount of experience in overseeing large projects and only a limited amount of experience in collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making and continuous improvements. She has only two years experience at Catholic Charities, and her prior career experiences are not fully explained to include vast experience in data processes and project continuous improvements. Even though the applicant cites three recent examples of this individual's work with data collection and review, those examples over the two years do not create an extensive pattern. (pp. 26, 87)

## Sub Question

Reader's Score: 14

- 3. Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of applicant's management team and project director in creating formal and informal partnerships, including the alignment of the visions, theories of action, and theories of change described in its memorandum of understanding, and creating a system for holding partners accountable for performance in accordance with the memorandum of understanding.**

### Strengths:

Promise Neighborhood project partners are clearly identified and include more than ten various representatives of the neighborhood including the schools, the government, religious community, residents, businesses, and commercial enterprises. (pp. 30, MOU) Executive directors of partners and high level governmental leaders have met for over a year in planning this Promise Neighborhood Planning Grant and have attended the Promise Neighborhood conference in Harlem in 2010. (p. 30) Catholic Charities and the partners show evidence of a shared vision, common theory of action and change, and a system of accountability for communication and program success. (pp. 30, MOU) As gaps in services and programs were identified in these planning sessions, some remedies were implemented using existing resources which shows a spirit of determination and aggressiveness to solve problems in the neighborhood. (pp. 32-33)

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

- 4. Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of applicant's management team and project director in integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources, including its proposal to leverage and integrate high-quality programs in the neighborhood into the continuum of solutions.**

### Strengths:

The Promise Neighborhood's funding streams are adequately described and include sources for Federal and non-Federal funds. In-kind matching donations are described for Catholic Charities, Hudson City School District and the Hudson Bluehawk After school Program, Columbia City Department of Human Services, the Mental Health Association of Columbia-Greene Counties, Columbia Opportunities, Inc., Candace LaRue and Associates, and Columbia-Greene Community College. Actual monetary donations are also identified to be given by partners and include donations from Columbia Opportunities, Inc. The partners provide fiscal commitment to the project with a community funding level of the required \$125,000 match. (p. 11)

### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 10

## Priority Questions

### Competitive Preference Priority - CPP4 Early Learning

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must propose in its plan to expand, enhance, or modify, an existing network of early learning programs and services to ensure they are high-quality and comprehensive for children from birth through the third grade.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant adequately describes the expansion of "under-utilized" services as the Early Learning Network Working Group completes a census, develops early learning professional development, develops a network of enrichment opportunities, and pilots strategies. (p. 36-39) Children from birth through to kindergarten are included in the strategies, and all domains are addressed in a developmentally and age appropriate manner. (pp. 36-37) Quality day care programs will be addressed since there is a severe need for high quality programs in the Promise Neighborhood area. (p. 38) Improvements will be aligned to state childcare licensing standards, state academic standards, and New York State QUALITYstarsNY system, a rating strategy for early learning. (p. 38) The hiring of a quality licensed early childhood coordinator is defined for the project. An adequate job description is provided, and it contains licensure requirements of state credentials in early childhood education and management (p. e89) Provisions are made to include strategies to address the learning needs of all children including those with disabilities and limited English language. The early children engagement will be presented in multiple formats/ platforms and in multiple locations. (p. 37)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

**Reader's Score:** 2

**Competitive Preference Priority - CPP5 Internet Access**

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must ensure that almost all students in the geographic area proposed to be served have broadband Internet access at home and at school, the knowledge and skills to use broadband internet access effectively, and a connected computing device to support schoolwork.**

**Strengths:**

Not Scored

**Weaknesses:**

Not Scored

**Reader's Score:**

**Competitive Preference Priority - CPP6 Arts and Humanities**

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must include in its plan opportunities for children and youth to experience and participate actively in the arts and humanities in their community so as to broaden, enrich, and enliven the educational, cultural, and civic experiences available in the neighborhood.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant adequately addresses the expansion plan to include opportunities for arts and humanities activities for children and youth in the Hudson neighborhood. A working group will plan the programs, and representatives of arts groups and businesses include Etsy, the Hudson Opera House, and Club Helsinki. (pp. 39-40) Plans address transportation needs for children since many of the arts opportunities are conducted outside the rural Promise Neighborhood zone. Another strength is that opportunities will include those children and youth with disabilities and limited English proficiencies. (p. 40)

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 1

#### Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP7 Affordable Housing

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must propose to serve geographic areas that were the subject of an affordable housing transformation pursuant to a Choice Neighborhoods or HOPE VI grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development during FY2009 or later years.

**Strengths:**

Not Scored

**Weaknesses:**

Not Scored

Reader's Score:

#### Invitational Priority - Adult Education

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must include a plan that is coordinated with adult education providers serving neighborhood residents, such as those funded through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, as amended. Coordinated services may include adult basic and secondary education and programs that provide training and opportunities for family members and other members of the community to support student learning and establish high expectations for student educational achievement. Examples of services and programs include preparation for the General Education Development (GED) test; English literacy, family literacy, and work-based literacy training; or other training that prepares adults for postsecondary education and careers, or supports adult engagement in the educational success of children and youth in the neighborhood.

No

Reader's Score:

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany (U215P110135)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need for Project	15	15
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	20	17
<b>Quality of Project Services</b>		
1. Qual. of Project Services	20	20
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Qual. of Management Plan	45	45
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>CPP4 Early Learning</b>		
1. CPP4 Early Learning	2	2
<b>CPP5 Internet Access</b>		
1. CPP5 Internet Access	1	0
<b>CPP6 Arts and Humanities</b>		
1. CPP6 Arts and Humanities	1	1
<b>Competitive Preference Priorities</b>		
<b>CPP7 Affordable Housing</b>		
1. CPP7 Affordable Housing	1	0
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
<b>Adult Education</b>		
1. Adult Education	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel - 7: 84.215P

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

Applicant: Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany (U215P110135)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Need for Project.

Reader's Score: 15

#### Sub Question

1. The magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators identified in part by the needs assessment and segmentation analysis.

#### Strengths:

The application is for rural Hudson City School District, a small rural city that the applicant states has big city problems. Once a thriving port city it is now the site of wide spread poverty. Over one-third of the families with children live in poverty, more than double the state wide average with over 50% of the families with children under 5 years old living in poverty, on page 1. The number of families reported homeless has also risen and the county has the highest rate of reported abuse and maltreatment of children in the state, on page 3.

The unemployment rate has also risen in the recent past with the closing of three important employers in the area and another one scheduled to close in the near future, on page 2. The unemployment rate has a direct effect on household incomes, also effecting access to medical and dental care because of a lack of insurance coverage usually tied to employment.

Student mobility is a problem and will be added to the list of problems to be addressed as stated on page 3. Transportation is a huge challenge with public transportation recently cut causing more problems for those without a car able to seek medical, dental, adult education and other services.

Early learning programs do not have the capacity to serve all of the children that need the services, especially infants and toddlers. This compounds the challenge of children arriving at kindergarten with the age appropriate skills. The delays are in areas of cognitive abilities, communication, physical and social development and adaptive behaviors, on page 4. Local principal reported that over 60% of the children are un-served in early learning activities.

At the other end of the education spectrum the graduation rate of only 59% (state average is 80%) when disaggregated by race, economic status, or disability status depicts a huge inequality. The rate of those student who graduate and go on to a four year college is only 25% and 57% to a two year college.

The retention rate or completion rate is not known.

Although the AYP was made at the district level disaggregation of the data shows another picture similar to the graduation rate data. Students in the following subgroups did not make AYP; African American, economically disadvantaged, or students with disabilities.

## Sub Question

Additional information supporting the applicant's need for this project are discussed on page 5-6 and include; unsafe environment for students before and after school, higher than state reported cases for youth drug and alcohol related problems in the community, family dysfunctional issues, school conduct problems, risky sexual behavior, violence and bullying.

Busing is another challenge with many children traveling over an hour each way. The cost of the bussing will be an additional challenge when 21st Century grant ends 2012 for after school programming supported by the 21st Century grant.

On page 6 the applicant states that they know they do not have all of the data they need for all key indicators, especially disaggregated for the required segmentation analysis and that they will address this through the planning grant activities.

### Weaknesses:

None noted

**Reader's Score: 10**

## 2. The extent to which the geographically defined area has been described.

### Strengths:

The map provided is very clear and depicts area to be served. It also shows where public schools are located in relation to the library and community college. Population density is depicted by shades of gray making it very clear where the most densely populated area is located and proximity to the schools.

### Weaknesses:

None noted

**Reader's Score: 5**

## Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

### 1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Quality of Project Design.

**Reader's Score: 17**

## Sub Question

### 1. The extent to which the continuum of solutions will be aligned with an ambitious, rigorous, and comprehensive strategy for improvement of schools in the neighborhood.

## Sub Question

### Strengths:

The four schools targeted for this project started a school reform process using the transformation model in 2006. Catholic Charities and HCSD already have a strong working relationship; they will work with the district to promote school readiness, successful transitioning from school to career, training in skillful parenting, better access to health services, and support an environment where young people are supported in their desire to participate in the arts and humanities, on page 7.

The focus will be on increasing key outcomes in the following areas; graduation rates, participation in school activities, increase in test scores and performance outcomes for students, on page 7.

HCSD has recently aligned its curriculum to the Common Core Standards and adopted a new reading curriculum in K-6 and K-2 in math, they have plans to expand these changes to grades 3-6 in the coming school year (2012-2013) and adding writing skills development to all content areas. HCSD is also working to increase teacher training in all of these areas. They have been collecting data and analyzing it to determine targeted topics for PD development such as, anti-bullying, classroom management and understanding poverty.

The assistant Superintendent will serve as the school reform liaison and on the Advisory board along with the director of the after school program director. The director of the substance abuse prevention program will align their work to serve as the GHPN School Reform Coordinator working closely with the assistant superintendent, the DLT and individual building level leaders. This person will coordinate activities among these groups, facilitate communication and to synthesize and report on school reform district-wide including needs assessment and segmentation plan.

A solutions plan will be created by end of planning year that will address key issues already identified and additional issues added during the planning year.

### Weaknesses:

The plan is not described in detail; the application does not provide specific strategies that will be used to meet needs. Figure 3 is referred to but details of what each of the pieces of the puzzle are not explained.

Resumes of Assistant Superintendent and after school program director are not included. A person is not named for substance abuse director and the job description is not included in attachments. Resume of Theresa Lux does not give any information about managing grant projects with this size funding stream.

**Reader's Score: 7**

- 2. The extent to which the applicant describes a proposal to plan to create a complete continuum of solutions, including early learning through grade 12, college- and career-readiness, and family and community supports, without time and resource gaps that will prepare all children in the neighborhood to attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career.**

### Strengths:

Plan is organized by age and by topic. The applicant states that both educational programming and family and community support are needed for plan to succeed on page 10.

They will also be creating an overlapping governing structure to ensure gaps are eliminated in addition to duplication by working groups.

Figure 4 explains how staff, governing structure and the working groups will create a continuum from

**Sub Question**

cradle to career. The two critical areas they have identified are the early learning period (birth - 3rd grade) and transition from high school to career/post-secondary education.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 5**

**3. The extent to which solutions leverage existing neighborhood assets and coordinate with other efforts, including programs supported by Federal, State, local, and private funds.**

**Strengths:**

The applicant already has a strong history of partnering with agencies in the area to provide programs and use resources as efficiently as possible, on page 12. They will be building on existing relationships, acknowledge the young people as community assets and build on existing programs such as WIC, Early Head Start, Head Start, Universal Pre-K, and the BHN afterschool program.

They will also work with the staff of these organizations to help bridge the gap to parents, local leaders and other people in the community to become part of the process. They will plan a trip with active planning members and their children to the Harlem Children's Zone. They will actively seek the input of the young people stating they are our greatest asset. They will be conducting focus groups with rising high school freshman and sophomores. They also plan to use bilingual students to help facilitate the participation of parents.

They address the fact that there are many strong programs already in existence but they do not communicate and coordinate their efforts.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 5**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services**

**1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Quality of Project Services.**

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Sub Question**

**1. The extent to which the applicant describes how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis, including identifying and describing indicators, will be used during the planning phase to determine each solution within the continuum.**

**Strengths:**

### Sub Question

The applicant discusses how they will use data to identify the most important needs for the young people living in the proposed service area, which needs are not being met, and any specific individual needs of the children. They will also use the data to create solutions and specifically identify those they believe will work for the population they will be serving.

They will develop their own needs assessment but at the same time review and build upon the needs assessments and segmentation analysis processes already used by other PN grantees, on page 15. Data will be gathered from a variety of sources and will be both quantitative and qualitative. They will work with an Institutional Review Board to ensure privacy according to HIPPA and FERPA requirements. They plan on making data available on their website and also by publishing it at the end of planning year as stated on page 16.

They will prepare an atlas using Geographic Information Systems and data from the 2010 census with the variables identified earlier as needs to be addressed. This will be a beginning point for conversations on the development of hard data collections and agendas for the working groups, on page 16.

There is a thorough discussion of additional data collection techniques and processes that will be utilized including possible sample sizes and the topics the surveys will cover, on page 17. They will seek consent forms from parents to include many different types of data from the schools that will be extremely important to creating an accurate depiction of the status of school achievements and lend credibility to establishing the needs to be addressed, on page 17.

### Weaknesses:

None noted

**Reader's Score: 10**

- 2. The extent to which the applicant describes how it will determine that solutions are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence, and ensure that solutions drive results and lead to changes on indicators.**

### Strengths:

The applicant will be developing a complete plan that starts from cradle to career by sustaining and enhancing existing services and creating new solutions, on page 20.

The solutions will be chosen to meet the needs identified and each solution will go through a screening process. They will use research bases such as Harvard Family Research Project, and the AED Center for Youth Development and Engagement to review best practices. They will pilot test proposed solutions when possible through their various partners.

Participation in Communities of Practice will assist them in the facilitating the choices of solutions, on page 21. They will be working with two scholars, Dr. Powlick and Dr. Hope Casto and are open to working with other grantees.

They will also be using a rigorous evaluation process throughout the planning and into the implementation of each proposed solution. They will work with the national PN evaluator and use both quasi-experimental and experimental design to evaluate certain links in the chain as recommended by the Urban Institute.

### Weaknesses:

None noted

Sub Question

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Quality of the Management Plan.

Reader's Score: 45

Sub Question

1. Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of the applicant's management team and project director in working with the neighborhood and its residents; the schools described in paragraph (2) (b) of Absolute Priority 1; the LEA in which those schools are located; Federal, State, and local government leaders; and other service providers.

**Strengths:**

Catholic Charities has a strong history of working with community partners, schools and the school district. They have been a partner with Communities that Care, Health Care Consortium, Twin Counties Recovery Services and the Mental Health Clinic. They also have many years of working with the schools and participated in the recent school reform work.

There is an extensive list of additional partners they have worked with on page 23 and many of the projects. The Catholic Charities also has experience working with leaders at many different levels of government State, local and Federal. Many examples of the different governmental agencies are listed on page 24. The current director has worked in the region for more than 20 years and has an excellent relationship with many of mentioned organizations and the leaders within them.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

Reader's Score: 10

2. Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of applicant's management team and project director in collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making, learning, continuous improvement, and accountability.

**Strengths:**

The Catholic Charities organization has a proven track record of being able to collect, analyze and use data to identify needs and create solutions based on data driven decision making. They collect outcome data on a variety of existing programs this data is used to provide objective information to determine the success of the programs, on page 25.

Other data they collect is used in a country-wide project to reduce homelessness and plan services designed to meet the specific needs of the homeless population and target programs in needed areas.

Program Director has integrated data for decision making and continuous improvement in the programs she is currently supervising. HCSD has been using data to drive ongoing school reform and improvement and the assistant superintendent works closely with Questar III Data Analyst to prepare summary reports. Each building Principal analyzes and prepares a detailed summary of area of

**Sub Question**

improvement to track success and make changes where needed.

12st Century programs work with an outside evaluator to continually make improvements to program quality and asses outcomes. They also have experience working with an outside evaluator for their annual reports to the Federal Government.

They have listed many other examples of their experience with using data to driven the decision making process on page 27. Additional partners they will be working with are listed and discussed on page 28 and 29.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 15**

- 3. Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of applicant's management team and project director in creating formal and informal partnerships, including the alignment of the visions, theories of action, and theories of change described in its memorandum of understanding, and creating a system for holding partners accountable for performance in accordance with the memorandum of understanding.**

**Strengths:**

This proposal is built on the partnership of 10 organizations all of whom will be working to leverage community assets toward the goal of improving the level of success in the schools and living conditions in the community, on page 30.

They have engaged outreach activities to gather input from the community and have discussed how they will reach out to subgroups usually not included. Because of rural small town setting the leaders of the organizations lead by example because everyone knows everyone. A vision will be developed at initial meetings and the vision for the project discussed with everyone in the community. The theory of change to be used is the result of early conversations with the partners and is in the MOU.

At the initial meetings they affirmed that the area residents have a long and deep history of involvement in the arts and agreed that many of the pieces of pipeline already exist but they are disconnected, on page 32.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 10**

- 4. Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of applicant's management team and project director in integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources, including its proposal to leverage and integrate high-quality programs in the neighborhood into the continuum of solutions.**

**Sub Question**

**Strengths:**

Throughout the application the experience of the Catholic Charities managing multiple funding streams has been discussed. Examples of the federal programs they have managed are listed on page 34 WIC, Supervised Visitation, Parent Aide and Parent Classes Programs are a few. Locally funded programs from many different sources are used to support their Emergency Assistance Program. They also have private donations and county-level funding for more programs.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - CPP4 Early Learning**

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must propose in its plan to expand, enhance, or modify, an existing network of early learning programs and services to ensure they are high-quality and comprehensive for children from birth through the third grade.**

**Strengths:**

The application addresses the need to expand the existing programs with data that shows the number of children not being served. Children are lacking in readiness skills when they come to Kindergarten.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score: 2**

**Competitive Preference Priority - CPP5 Internet Access**

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must ensure that almost all students in the geographic area proposed to be served have broadband Internet access at home and at school, the knowledge and skills to use broadband internet access effectively, and a connected computing device to support schoolwork.**

**Strengths:**

Applicant did not answer this question.

**Weaknesses:**

Applicant did not answer this question.

**Reader's Score: 0**

**Competitive Preference Priority - CPP6 Arts and Humanities**

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must include in its plan opportunities for children and youth to experience and participate actively in the arts and humanities in their community so as to broaden, enrich, and enliven the educational, cultural, and civic experiences available in the neighborhood.

**Strengths:**

The application discusses the need to increase the accessibility of the arts and humanities to the area residents but cites the transportation issues as a huge barrier. They discuss establishing additional partnerships to create programs and involve the young people in the activities.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted

**Reader's Score:** 1

**Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP7 Affordable Housing**

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must propose to serve geographic areas that were the subject of an affordable housing transformation pursuant to a Choice Neighborhoods or HOPE VI grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development during FY2009 or later years.

**Strengths:**

The applicant did not address this priority.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant did not address this priority.

**Reader's Score:** 0

**Invitational Priority - Adult Education**

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must include a plan that is coordinated with adult education providers serving neighborhood residents, such as those funded through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, as amended. Coordinated services may include adult basic and secondary education and programs that provide training and opportunities for family members and other members of the community to support student learning and establish high expectations for student educational achievement. Examples of services and programs include preparation for the General Education Development (GED) test; English literacy, family literacy, and work-based literacy training; or other training that prepares adults for postsecondary education and careers, or supports adult engagement in the educational success of children and youth in the neighborhood.

No

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 10/24/2011 05:57 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/17/2011 05:44 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany (U215P110135)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for Project</b>		
1. Need for Project	15	15
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	20	16
<b>Quality of Project Services</b>		
1. Qual. of Project Services	20	20
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Qual. of Management Plan	45	41
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>CPP4 Early Learning</b>		
1. CPP4 Early Learning	2	2
<b>CPP5 Internet Access</b>		
1. CPP5 Internet Access	1	
<b>CPP6 Arts and Humanities</b>		
1. CPP6 Arts and Humanities	1	1
<b>Competitive Preference Priorities</b>		
<b>CPP7 Affordable Housing</b>		
1. CPP7 Affordable Housing	1	
<b>Invitational Priority</b>		
<b>Adult Education</b>		
1. Adult Education	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>95</b>

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - Panel - 7: 84.215P

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

Applicant: Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany (U215P110135)

## Questions

### Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Need for Project.

Reader's Score: 15

#### Sub Question

1. The magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators identified in part by the needs assessment and segmentation analysis.

#### Strengths:

The application provides a substantial amount of data to illustrate the problem areas to be addressed. Indicators of need are include for several areas, including poverty in general, homelessness, child abuse, juvenile delinquency, lack of transportation, lack of early learning activities to cover all children in need, and lack of coordination of each childhood services, as well as the unsafe environment as a result of the local housing climate. Data on educational needs pertain to inequality in performance among subgroups of students as measured by AYP, the relatively low percentage of students scoring below proficiency, behavior data (e.g., school suspension rates), high school graduation rates, college enrollment and retention in postsecondary. Some data are also provided on school violence and drug and alcohol use among youth (pages 2-6).

#### Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 10

2. The extent to which the geographically defined area has been described.

#### Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed description of the specific area to be included in the project. It indicates that the Promise Neighborhood will include the entire Hudson City School District (HCSD) and provides a description of where the area is located within the state, along with some general characteristics of the area, including its rural location, small size, low-density population, and general lack of resources relative to other areas within the state (pages 1-3).

#### Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 5

## Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

### 1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Quality of Project Design.

Reader's Score: 16

#### Sub Question

#### 1. The extent to which the continuum of solutions will be aligned with an ambitious, rigorous, and comprehensive strategy for improvement of schools in the neighborhood.

##### Strengths:

The application states that all four schools included in the Promise Neighborhood are undergoing rigorous reform through the transformation model. It also states that the vision of school reform in Hudson focuses on increases in graduation rates, participation in school activities, test scores and performance outcomes. The application states that various aspects of school improvement are already being planned or are underway and that the project will partner with others to identify needs and create a plan for improvement during the project's planning phase. Two examples of identified needs in the area of school improvement are professional development for teachers and principals and additional support for young children in learning to read (pages 6-9).

##### Weaknesses:

The application discusses various aspects of school improvement that are either planned or underway, but the discussion of school improvement appears to be, at least to some extent, on the goals of the school improvement efforts rather than a description of the strategies being used and why those particular strategies were selected for use.

Reader's Score: 7

#### 2. The extent to which the applicant describes a proposal to plan to create a complete continuum of solutions, including early learning through grade 12, college- and career-readiness, and family and community supports, without time and resource gaps that will prepare all children in the neighborhood to attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career.

##### Strengths:

The application provides a complete description of how it plans to create a continuum of solutions. More specifically, it indicates that the project, in developing its plan, has organized a continuum by age and by topic (i.e., area of need) and created an overlapping governance structure to avoid gaps and duplication among groups, programs, etc. The project also emphasizes targeting all settings in which young people spend time, including the family, community, school, and out of school programs and has established target working groups that focus on critical periods such as early learning and transition to adulthood. A figure is also provided to illustrate how the project intends to cover the complete cradle through college to career continuum, with information broken out by age groups (pages 10-12).

##### Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 5

#### 3. The extent to which solutions leverage existing neighborhood assets and coordinate with other efforts, including programs supported by Federal, State, local, and private funds.

#### Sub Question

##### **Strengths:**

The application provides a detailed discussion of how it will leverage existing assess and coordinate with other efforts. It describes several long-standing partnerships in the area and numerous existing services, including Head Start program, afterschool programs, and others. Various organizations will be brought together, including Catholic Charities, Columbia Opportunities, Inc., HCSD, and others such as the local Department of Social Services. The application also references existing data collection efforts that it can build on. An additional strength of the application is its discussion of securing buy-in and input from parents, young people, and other stakeholders, which is mentioned at several points (pages 12-15).

##### **Weaknesses:**

It would be useful to see a description of the fiscal support for existing organizations/program within the community that are included in this effort.

**Reader's Score: 4**

#### Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Services

##### **1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Quality of Project Services.**

**Reader's Score: 20**

#### Sub Question

##### **1. The extent to which the applicant describes how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis, including identifying and describing indicators, will be used during the planning phase to determine each solution within the continuum.**

##### **Strengths:**

The application provides a detailed explanation of how the needs assessment and segmentation analyses will be conducted. For the needs assessment, it emphasizes how it will utilize data on an ongoing basis and from multiple sources, including feedback from partners, focus groups, and interviews to both assess progress and adjust the project s approaches. It also provides a comprehensive list of indicators to be used, which are aligned with the main areas of the cradle to career continuum to be emphasized by the project (e.g., school reform, early learning, and transition to adulthood). The application also describes how it will take into consideration issues of privacy and deal with other potential barriers (e.g., parental consent) to developing a useful and complete set of data to guide the project. A detailed description of the steps to be used in conducting a rigorous segmentation analysis is also provided (pages 15-20; 51-56).

##### **Weaknesses:**

None.

**Reader's Score: 10**

##### **2. The extent to which the applicant describes how it will determine that solutions are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence, and ensure that solutions drive results and lead to changes on indicators.**

##### **Strengths:**

The application provides a detailed description of how it will build on data collected as part of the needs assessment and segmentation analysis to prioritize the needs that are identified within the neighborhood. A description of the specific procedures to be used in using data to determine solutions is also provided. For example, it indicates that each proposed solution will go through a screening

### Sub Question

process, in which proposed solution will be compared to the population in Hudson and be judged on the basis of existing research. It also discusses pilot testing proposed solutions, where feasible, and evaluating the results of those pilot tests. In addition, the application states that the project's participation in Communities of Practice (CoP), which involves sharing knowledge, data, and promising practices, will also facilitate the use of best evidence for determining solutions (pages 20-22).

#### Weaknesses:

None.

Reader's Score: 10

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

#### 1. Please respond to the sub-questions regarding the Quality of the Management Plan.

Reader's Score: 41

### Sub Question

1. **Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of the applicant's management team and project director in working with the neighborhood and its residents; the schools described in paragraph (2) (b) of Absolute Priority 1; the LEA in which those schools are located; Federal, State, and local government leaders; and other service providers.**

#### Strengths:

The application includes examples of how the key partners in the project have already been involved in prior efforts at working with and providing services to residents in the area. Examples of how partner organizations have partnered with each other are also included. For example, it indicates that Catholic Charities has worked with schools in HCSD, including on the issue of school reform, and that HCSD has a record of success partnering with a wide variety of community organizations, as demonstrated by its 21st Century Learning programs. In addition, the experience of Catholic Charities in working with local government leaders is also discussed (pages 22-25).

#### Weaknesses:

A weakness of the application in this area is that the description of prior experiences refers to those of the organizations involved and not the specific members of the management team or other individuals involved in the effort (i.e., other than the proposed Program Director).

Reader's Score: 8

2. **Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of applicant's management team and project director in collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making, learning, continuous improvement, and accountability.**

#### Strengths:

The application provides strong evidence for the partner organizations and project director capacity to utilize data. It cites the experience of Catholic Charities in collecting, and analyzing, and using data for the purposes stated above and includes examples of specific types of outcome data that have been collected and how it has informed the areas of decision-making and improvement. Examples of HCSD's use of data to drive its school improvement efforts are also discussed. In addition, the application provides similar examples of experience with data and examples of data utilization for the proposed Program Director and provides explanations of how specific individuals' expertise in the area of data will strengthen the project (pages 25-29).

**Sub Question**

**Weaknesses:**

None.

**Reader's Score: 15**

- 3. Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of applicant's management team and project director in creating formal and informal partnerships, including the alignment of the visions, theories of action, and theories of change described in its memorandum of understanding, and creating a system for holding partners accountable for performance in accordance with the memorandum of understanding.**

**Strengths:**

The application and Memorandum of Understanding provides evidence of commitment from each of the proposed partner organizations. For example, it states that project leaders have been meeting and communicating formally and informally for more than a year to plan the project and align their respective visions regarding how to build on existing community assets. The application also refers to accountability being built into every step of the process of project s efforts so far, which consisted of distributing the minutes of meetings and attaching names to specific action items. An organizational chart for the project is also presented (pages 30-34).

**Weaknesses:**

Although the application includes an organization chart, it is somewhat limited in its discussion of whose responsibility it is to make decisions concerning the project and in what ways the project will hold partners accountable for performance.

**Reader's Score: 8**

- 4. Experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of applicant's management team and project director in integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources, including its proposal to leverage and integrate high-quality programs in the neighborhood into the continuum of solutions.**

**Strengths:**

The application provides a description of the lead partner s experience in integrating multiple funding streams, as well as the stability of the participating partner organizations in maintaining funding streams over time. Examples cited include federal programs, as well as others funded through local government agencies and private foundations, etc. It references a plan to create a fundraising team, which will promote sustainability of existing programs, create new programs, and establish additional partnerships within the community. The MOU and attached letters of commitment provide information on matching funds for several of the project partners (pages 34-36).

**Weaknesses:**

None.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Priority Questions**

**Competitive Preference Priority - CPP4 Early Learning**

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must propose in its plan to expand, enhance, or modify, an existing network of early learning programs and services to ensure they are high-quality and comprehensive for children from birth through the third grade.**

**Strengths:**

The application presents a detailed plan for modifying its existing network of early learning programs to increase the coordination of services in this area. It plans to establish an early learning working group, which will develop a comprehensive solution plan that includes aligning programming with state standards, implementing assessments, professional development, and other elements. The application also emphasizes the importance of early learning to the overall project effort by stating, for example, that the subject of early learning has been the most widely discussed during the planning period so far (pages 36-37).

**Weaknesses:**

None.

**Reader's Score:** 2

**Competitive Preference Priority - CPP5 Internet Access**

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must ensure that almost all students in the geographic area proposed to be served have broadband Internet access at home and at school, the knowledge and skills to use broadband internet access effectively, and a connected computing device to support schoolwork.**

**Strengths:****Weaknesses:**

**Reader's Score:**

**Competitive Preference Priority - CPP6 Arts and Humanities**

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must include in its plan opportunities for children and youth to experience and participate actively in the arts and humanities in their community so as to broaden, enrich, and enliven the educational, cultural, and civic experiences available in the neighborhood.**

**Strengths:**

The application indicates that the decision to apply under this CPP is driven by the vibrant arts community that exists in the local area. The project plans to create a working group aimed at encouraging participation in the arts and building partnerships among arts organizations in the community and individuals. The project's plans in this area also include pilot test events and projects with youth.

**Weaknesses:**

**Reader's Score:** 1

**Competitive Preference Priorities - CPP7 Affordable Housing**

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must propose to serve geographic areas that were the subject of an affordable housing transformation pursuant to a Choice Neighborhoods or HOPE VI grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development during FY2009 or later years.**

**Strengths:**

**Weaknesses:**

**Reader's Score:**

**Invitational Priority - Adult Education**

1. To meet this priority, an applicant must include a plan that is coordinated with adult education providers serving neighborhood residents, such as those funded through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, as amended. Coordinated services may include adult basic and secondary education and programs that provide training and opportunities for family members and other members of the community to support student learning and establish high expectations for student educational achievement. Examples of services and programs include preparation for the General Education Development (GED) test; English literacy, family literacy, and work-based literacy training; or other training that prepares adults for postsecondary education and careers, or supports adult engagement in the educational success of children and youth in the neighborhood.

**Reader's Score:**

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**Status:** Submitted  
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