

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** California School Finance Authority (U282D090007)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Overall Comments</b>		
<b>Overall Comments</b>		
1. QUESTION 1	0	0
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Capacity to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need</b>		
1. QUESTION 2	10	7
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for facility funding</b>		
1. QUESTION 3	30	27
<b>Quality of plan</b>		
1. QUESTION 4	30	22
<b>The grant project team</b>		
1. QUESTION 5	15	11
<b>The budget</b>		
1. QUESTION 6	15	10
<b>State experience</b>		
1. QUESTION 7	10	10
<b>Total</b>	110	87

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel One: 84.282D

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

Applicant: California School Finance Authority (U282D090007)

## Questions

### Overall Comments - Overall Comments

#### 1. Overall Comments

##### General:

none|

Reader's Score: 0

### Competitive Preference Priority - Capacity to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need

#### 1. The capacity of charter schools to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need for this choice based on--

- (1) The extent to which the applicant would target services to geographic areas in which a large proportion or number of public schools have been identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), 20 U.S.C. 7221a(e);
- (2) The extent to which the applicant would target services to geographic areas in which a large proportion of students perform poorly on State academic assessments; and
- (3) The extent to which the applicant would target services to communities with large proportions of low-income students.

##### Strengths:

The state has developed a 110 point preference matrix and is adjusting its point value to award up to 60 preference points (55% of total) to sub grantee applicants based on the percentage of low income students the school serves. (page e-11 and e 25-27)

The proposed preference point matrix also includes awarding up to 10% for charter schools operating within three miles of a traditional school not meeting AYP for the most recent year, and 10% for schools operating within three miles of a traditional school not meeting the state API Growth Target.

##### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not address Competitive Preference Priority (1) on how it will award preference to schools who target services to a geographic area in which a large proportion or number of public schools have been identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under Title 1 of the ESEA.

Reader's Score: 7

### Selection Criteria - Need for facility funding

1. (1) The need for per-pupil charter school facility funding in the State.  
(2) The extent to which the proposal meets the need to fund charter school facilities on a per-pupil basis.

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#### Criterion Maximum Point Value - 30

**26-30**  
**Excellent**

**21-25**  
**Good**

**16-20**  
**Fair**

**0-15**  
**Poor**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant illustrates the need for per pupil charter school facility funding based on growth predictions and estimated costs of new facilities' financing through 2014. (page e-19)

Despite the state's strong commitment to assisting charter schools with facilities funding, the projected 7.5% per year charter school enrollment growth will require a projected \$741 million annual need by FY 2014. The amounts provided by current facilities financing mechanisms do not appear to be able to absorb the magnitude of the growth demand. (pages e 19-21)

#### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant describes the multiple funding mechanisms for charter schools as distributed by state and federal general purpose and categorical funding for operations, but it fails to clearly define how the requested grant amount will be leveraged against the state's current facilities financing mechanisms. It is not clear the extent of the impact the requested amount will have on per pupil funding of charter school facilities. Given the current financial crisis facing the state, it is not clear if the monies generated from the grant will enhance the current charter school facility finance program or just make up for the loss of tax generated support.

Reader's Score: 27

### Selection Criteria - Quality of plan

1. (1) The likelihood that the proposed grant project will result in the State either retaining a new per-pupil facilities aid program or continuing to enhance such a program without the total amount of assistance (State and Federal) declining over a five-year period.  
(2) The flexibility charter schools have in their use of facility funds for the various authorized purposes.  
(3) The quality of the plan for identifying charter schools and determining their eligibility to receive funds.

(4) The per-pupil facilities aid formula's ability to target resources to charter schools with the greatest need and the highest proportions of students in poverty.

(5) For projects that plan to reserve funds for evaluation, the quality of the applicant's plan to use grant funds for this purpose.

(6) For projects that plan to reserve funds for technical assistance, dissemination, or personnel, the quality of the applicant's plan to use grant funds for these purposes.

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#### Criterion Maximum Point Value - 30

**26-30**  
**Excellent**

**21-25**  
**Good**

**16-20**  
**Fair**

**0-15**  
**Poor**

#### **Strengths:**

Since 2004 the applicant has relied upon funding through the state's Charter School Facilities Program and the Charter Schools Facility Grant Program. It is projected that the total amount of assistance from these two programs will increase from \$6 million the first year to roughly \$15 million for the next three years, thus increasing the state's share in relation to the annual request of \$10 million through the federal grant program. (page e 22)

Successful charter school grantees have the flexibility to use funds towards the cost of rent, lease, mortgage, debt service, and the purchase design, construction or renovation of facilities. (page e 23)

#### **Weaknesses:**

Although the applicant states its intention to modify the current eligibility requirements for all charter school applicants to ensure that all charter school applicants have a high likelihood of success (page e 24), in reviewing the Program regulations provided in Attachment 3, there is no definition of what qualifies a school as having a likelihood of success. The state will also add a 110 preference point maximum matrix to target charter schools in need yet there is no mention of how many total points are possible and what percentage the 110 points represent in the overall application scoring.

Although the application includes the preference point matrix there is no data provided as to what percentage of schools fall under the category of having the greatest need and serving the highest proportion of students in poverty. The application could have been stronger had it provided details as to the strategies the applicant will use to target its resources to schools in those communities with the greatest need for choice.

The applicant does not include any plan for a project evaluation.

It is unclear what, if any, technical assistance will be provided, what dissemination services are to be performed, and what personnel is being covered under personnel costs.

**Reader's Score: 22**

#### **Selection Criteria - The grant project team**

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project manager and other members of the grant project team, including employees not paid with grant funds, consultants, and**

subcontractors.

(2) The adequacy and appropriateness of the applicant's staffing plan for the grant project.

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**Criterion Maximum Point Value - 15**

**14-15  
Excellent**

**11-13  
Good**

**8-10  
Fair**

**0-7  
Poor**

**Strengths:**

The project manager and other members of the grant project team were in place for 2004 Federal Facilities Grant Program and have the relevant training and expertise to carry out the proposed plan. (pages e 30-32)

Given the applicant's experience in carrying out the 2004 Grant program the existing staffing level appears to be sufficient to implement and administer the new grant program. (page e 32)

**Weaknesses:**

The staffing plan provided covers just the upcoming 12 months. (page e 29) The applicant refers to its plan to phase out the Program over the next three years and existing staff members will be in place and immediately available for the Program. (page e 32) It is difficult to ascertain the adequacy of the future staffing without a staffing plan that covers more than the immediate 12 months.

**Reader's Score: 11**

**Selection Criteria - The budget**

1. (1) The extent to which the requested grant amount and the project costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed grant project.
- (2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of students served and to the anticipated results and benefits.
- (3) The extent to which the non-Federal share exceeds the minimum percentages (which are based on the percentages under section 5205(b)(2)(C) of the ESEA), particularly in the initial years of the program.

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**Criterion Maximum Point Value - 15**

**14-15  
Excellent**

**11-13  
Good**

**8-10  
Fair**

**0-7  
Poor**

**Strengths:**

The costs associated with administering the proposed project appear reasonable in relationship to the amount requested for the grant. Requesting approximately 1% of grant amount for administration of programming is significantly lower than the Federal government's allowance of up to 5%. (page e 28)

The applicant plans to meet the non-federal matching requirements by utilizing appropriations made pursuant to the state's Charter School Facilities Grant Plan (SB 740) and its Charter School Facilities Plan. The applicant projects the state matching funds will exceed \$50 million and \$295 million for the CSFP and SB 740, respectively during the grant period. (page e 34)

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant states that the state's objectives and design for a renewed State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants Program are largely the same as for the 2004 grant project. (page e 33) No description of the current program objectives is included in the grant application. It is difficult to determine to what extent the total requested amount and the proposed costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design and potential significance of the proposed grant project.

The applicant did not provide sufficient data to determine how many students it anticipates to serve under the proposed project or how much the per pupil expense portion of the requested funds equal and therefore it is difficult to determine the reasonableness of the costs in relation to the number of students served.

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - State experience**

- 1. The experience of the State in addressing the facility needs of charter schools through various means, including providing per-pupil aid, access to State loan or bonding pools, and the use of Qualified Zone Academy Bonds.**

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**Criterion Maximum Point Value - 10**

**10  
Excellent**

**8-9  
Good**

**6-7  
Fair**

**0-5  
Poor**

**Strengths:**

The state demonstrates its extensive experience in addressing the funding needs of charter schools through the development of a Charter School Facilities Program, a Facilities Grant Program, an Incentive Grants Program, a revolving

loan fund, and the use of QZAB and QSCB programs. (page e 34-38)

**Weaknesses:**

None

**Reader's Score:** 10

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** California School Finance Authority (U282D090007)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Overall Comments</b>		
<b>Overall Comments</b>		
1. QUESTION 1	0	
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Capacity to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need</b>		
1. QUESTION 2	10	7
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for facility funding</b>		
1. QUESTION 3	30	27
<b>Quality of plan</b>		
1. QUESTION 4	30	20
<b>The grant project team</b>		
1. QUESTION 5	15	10
<b>The budget</b>		
1. QUESTION 6	15	10
<b>State experience</b>		
1. QUESTION 7	10	10
<b>Total</b>	110	84

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel One: 84.282D

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

Applicant: California School Finance Authority (U282D090007)

## Questions

### Overall Comments - Overall Comments

#### 1. Overall Comments

Reader's Score:

### Competitive Preference Priority - Capacity to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need

#### 1. The capacity of charter schools to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need for this choice based on--

- (1) The extent to which the applicant would target services to geographic areas in which a large proportion or number of public schools have been identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), 20 U.S.C. 7221a(e);
- (2) The extent to which the applicant would target services to geographic areas in which a large proportion of students perform poorly on State academic assessments; and
- (3) The extent to which the applicant would target services to communities with large proportions of low-income students.

#### Strengths:

In its proposal, the applicant proposes changes to its program regulations to more align with this competitive preference priority. Previously, it has allocated up to 60 of a possible 110 preference points (55% of the total points) to be based on the percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunches. It will propose to its Board to reduce this low-income allocation slightly to 50% of total preference points and allocate 10% of total preference points for the subgrantee operating within three miles of a traditional school not meeting AYP for the most recent year and for not meeting the "API Growth Target" for the most recent year. [p11, 26-27; see table]

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant did not explain how the allocation of up to a total of 70% preference points toward the competitive preference criteria would actually impact subgrant decisions when another 30% of preference points (for nonprofit status, overcrowding, and general student achievement) may be enough to influence the outcome of a decision to award a subgrant. [p11, 26-27; see table]

Reader's Score: 7

## Selection Criteria - Need for facility funding

1. (1) The need for per-pupil charter school facility funding in the State.  
(2) The extent to which the proposal meets the need to fund charter school facilities on a per-pupil basis.

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### Criterion Maximum Point Value - 30

**26-30**  
**Excellent**

**21-25**  
**Good**

**16-20**  
**Fair**

**0-15**  
**Poor**

#### **Strengths:**

The applicant demonstrates that it is already answering much of the need for charter school facility funding in the state, but there is an underfunded component brought on in part by the rapid expansion of the charter school population (with 7.5% growth) compared to the traditional school population (with less than 1% growth). [p12, 18] The applicant explains that the host of recent State-enacted programs of per-pupil and other facility aid. [p18] On the basis of certain assumptions about these aid programs and the school facility cost structures on average in the State, the State determines unfunded up-front facility costs of \$96 million in 2010 and \$648 million over five years. [p21]

#### **Weaknesses:**

The applicant includes data to demonstrate that its proposal helps, but does not fully meet the need to fund charter school facilities on a per-pupil basis. The applicant did not show how its \$50 million request over five years would be further leveraged beyond existing programs to meet the full unfunded costs that it computes at \$648 million over the same period. [p12-21]

**Reader's Score: 27**

## Selection Criteria - Quality of plan

1. (1) The likelihood that the proposed grant project will result in the State either retaining a new per-pupil facilities aid program or continuing to enhance such a program without the total amount of assistance (State and Federal) declining over a five-year period.  
(2) The flexibility charter schools have in their use of facility funds for the various authorized purposes.  
(3) The quality of the plan for identifying charter schools and determining their eligibility to receive funds.  
(4) The per-pupil facilities aid formula's ability to target resources to charter schools with the greatest need and the highest proportions of students in poverty.  
(5) For projects that plan to reserve funds for evaluation, the quality of the applicant's plan to use grant funds for this purpose.  
(6) For projects that plan to reserve funds for technical assistance, dissemination, or personnel, the quality of the applicant's plan to use grant funds for these purposes.

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### Criterion Maximum Point Value - 30

**26-30**  
**Excellent**

**21-25**  
**Good**

**16-20**  
**Fair**

**0-15**  
**Poor**

**Strengths:**

The State is likely to retain or enhance its per-pupil facilities aid program as the State's programs are formula-based and will increase with charter school population growth. Increases are forecasted at \$6M in 2010 and by roughly \$15M during each of the next three fiscal years. [p21-22] The level of per-pupil aid varied on the basis of whether the subgrantee is using funds for leasing payments (\$750/pupil) or for facility purchase, construction, or renovation (\$1,000/pupil). [p12] The Federal support is depicted as being in the range of 11 to 18 percent throughout the proposal period, which is below the maximum match. [table 3]

It is good that eligible charter schools will be screened on preference points that are significantly aligned with the competitive preference priority.

Under the applicant's proposal, charter schools have the flexibility to use facility funds in a variety of ways. As a current grantee, the applicant noted that \$49M in per-pupil awards have been granted to 128 charter schools serving over 42,000 students for the following purposes: 109 for annual lease or debt service; 9 for facility purchase; and 5 for renovating an existing facility. [p21]

The applicant is devoting less than one percent of the grant request each year (\$120,000 in year 1, growing to \$135,000 in year 5) to recover administrative costs of technical assistance, dissemination, and personnel. The planned expenses are far below the allowable 5 percent to be set aside for this purpose. [p28]

**Weaknesses:**

The quality of the plan for identifying charter schools and determining their eligibility to receive funds could serve to be strengthened. For example, the applicant was ambiguous in what it would consider to be subgrantees that have a "high likelihood of success." [p24]

The applicant's plan addresses the evaluation of subgrant applications rather than an evaluation of the implementation of the Program and its impact on supporting the acquisition of charter school facilities in the State. [p28]

More explanation is needed to assess the potential that the applicant's per-pupil facilities aid formula has to target resources to charter schools with the greatest need. It discusses allocating up to 70 percent of preference points in the subgrant application process to criteria aligned with the competitive preference criterion; however, it is not clear if this level of preference points is sufficient to impact actual subgrantee award decisions. [p25-27]

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Selection Criteria - The grant project team**

- 1. (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project manager and other members of the grant project team, including employees not paid with grant funds, consultants, and**

subcontractors.

(2) The adequacy and appropriateness of the applicant's staffing plan for the grant project.

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**Criterion Maximum Point Value - 15**

**14-15  
Excellent**

**11-13  
Good**

**8-10  
Fair**

**0-7  
Poor**

**Strengths:**

The applicant has a staff of four permanent analysts and three part-time retired annuitants. The project director has 17 years of municipal financing experience and has been associated with the applicant since 2000. She has overseen the current State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants program. The two staff from the Treasurer's office that have been tasked to the project have provided support to the applicant since 2007 and 2002 respectively. [p29-32]

**Weaknesses:**

More clarification is needed about the roles of and reporting relationships among team members and clarity about how the evaluation and technical assistance will be supported. The team lacks anyone with direct operational experience with charter schools, which would be useful in terms of providing support to subgrantees. The applicant's staffing plan would be strengthened if it provided an organizational chart to visually depict the interactions between project team members, internal and external, and how functions will be managed. [p29-32]

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - The budget**

1. (1) The extent to which the requested grant amount and the project costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed grant project.
- (2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of students served and to the anticipated results and benefits.
- (3) The extent to which the non-Federal share exceeds the minimum percentages (which are based on the percentages under section 5205(b)(2)(C) of the ESEA), particularly in the initial years of the program.

--

**Criterion Maximum Point Value - 15**

**14-15  
Excellent**

**11-13  
Good**

**8-10**

**Fair**

**0-7**

**Poor**

**Strengths:**

The applicant operates on low overhead, with administrative costs amounting to less than one percent of the grant request; from this standpoint, its project costs are reasonable in relation to the Program design. [p28]

The minimum percentages for the non-Federal share are exceeded for all the years. [p34 and table 3]

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant does not articulate objectives for the grant, except to represent them as "largely the same as for the current program." This makes it difficult to assess the Program in relation to the objectives or significance of the proposal. The applicant does not clearly delineate the number of students to be served under the Program. It discusses current results under the existing grant, but not the future benefits. The applicant did not address contingencies for how the State is prepared to ensure the continued appropriation of funds amid a widely reported fiscal crisis in state government. [p33]

**Reader's Score: 10**

**Selection Criteria - State experience**

- 1. The experience of the State in addressing the facility needs of charter schools through various means, including providing per-pupil aid, access to State loan or bonding pools, and the use of Qualified Zone Academy Bonds.**

--

**Criterion Maximum Point Value - 10**

**10**

**Excellent**

**8-9**

**Good**

**6-7**

**Fair**

**0-5**

**Poor**

**Strengths:**

The State has enacted a number of initiatives to support the facility needs of charter schools. In addition to the three state per-pupil programs referenced throughout the grant application (amounting to \$900M), it has another facility grant program devoted to serving exceptionally high proportions of economically-disadvantaged students (\$56.6M to date), a revolving loan fund that has provided 130 charter school loans totaling \$34M in four years, a conduit bond issuer program since 2007, and QZAB and QCSB programs that includes a 10% set aside for a financing pool through which charter schools may access capital markets. [p34-38]

**Weaknesses:**

None

**Reader's Score:** 10

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 02/11/2010 02:04 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** California School Finance Authority (U282D090007)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Overall Comments</b>		
<b>Overall Comments</b>		
1. QUESTION 1	0	0
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>		
<b>Capacity to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need</b>		
1. QUESTION 2	10	7
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Need for facility funding</b>		
1. QUESTION 3	30	23
<b>Quality of plan</b>		
1. QUESTION 4	30	20
<b>The grant project team</b>		
1. QUESTION 5	15	11
<b>The budget</b>		
1. QUESTION 6	15	9
<b>State experience</b>		
1. QUESTION 7	10	10
<b>Total</b>	110	80

# Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - Panel One: 84.282D

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

Applicant: California School Finance Authority (U282D090007)

## Questions

### Overall Comments - Overall Comments

#### 1. Overall Comments

##### General:

Requesting \$10 million to continue program launched in 2004 when the California School Finance Authority (CSFA) began to receive grants from the U.S. Department of Education. Since 2004, it has been awarded \$49.25 million from the U.S. Department of Education - five rounds of grant awards. 125 schools serving more than 42,000 students have benefited from the program.

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Reader's Score: 0

### Competitive Preference Priority - Capacity to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need

#### 1. The capacity of charter schools to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need for this choice based on--

- (1) The extent to which the applicant would target services to geographic areas in which a large proportion or number of public schools have been identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), 20 U.S.C. 7221a(e);
- (2) The extent to which the applicant would target services to geographic areas in which a large proportion of students perform poorly on State academic assessments; and
- (3) The extent to which the applicant would target services to communities with large proportions of low-income students.

##### Strengths:

The applicant describes that it has used a 110-point preference matrix, awarding 60 points to schools based on a percentage of low-income students attending the school and 20 points for the percentage of overcrowding in the district. Twenty more points are allocated based on a school's non-profit status and another 10 for student achievement.

The applicant is revising its evaluation criteria, now proposing to allow for 50% of total preference points allocated for low income status, only 10% for over-crowding, 5% for non-profit status, 15% for school performance, and 10% for schools operating within three miles of a traditional school not meeting AYP for the most recent year plus 10% for schools operating within three miles of a traditional school not meeting API Growth Targets for the most recent year (page 27). This strategy is an improvement over the past in terms of better meeting the Federal guidelines for allocating funds to students with the greatest need.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant only currently sets a preference of 54.5% of the total 110 points for low-income students.

**Reader's Score: 7**

**Selection Criteria - Need for facility funding**

1. (1) The need for per-pupil charter school facility funding in the State.  
(2) The extent to which the proposal meets the need to fund charter school facilities on a per-pupil basis.

--

**Criterion Maximum Point Value - 30**

**26-30  
Excellent**

**21-25  
Good**

**16-20  
Fair**

**0-15  
Poor**

**Strengths:**

The applicant does a thorough job of describing the current facility aid programs made available by the state on page 18 and continues by explaining the significant shortfall and funding inequities that remain.

The applicant does a good job of explaining the current funding available to charter schools in California for facilities support. It quantifies the need on page 21 after calculating support from existing state facilities aid programs. The total over the next five years is \$648,217,000.

Senate Bill 740 (SB 740) is the state legislated, per-pupil aid program which has been in existence for several years. In fiscal year 2009, the SB 740 funds were \$24 million and are expected to increase by \$6 million in 2010 and by almost \$15 million thereafter. This combined by the Charter Schools Facilities Program (CSFP), which will make \$50.9 million available in 2010 demonstrates a strong matching effort from the state of California. The fiscal crisis in CA may materially threaten the ability of the state to continue these appropriations in 2010, however.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant could have provided a stronger analysis of the gap in funding to public charter schools in California by calculating a per-pupil deficit instead of either the total deficit between monies available and actual charter school facility costs or the total funding deficit when compared to traditional public schools.

**Reader's Score: 23**

**Selection Criteria - Quality of plan**

1. (1) The likelihood that the proposed grant project will result in the State either retaining a new per-pupil facilities aid program or continuing to enhance such a program without the total amount of assistance (State and Federal) declining over a five-year period.
- (2) The flexibility charter schools have in their use of facility funds for the various authorized purposes.
- (3) The quality of the plan for identifying charter schools and determining their eligibility to receive funds.
- (4) The per-pupil facilities aid formula's ability to target resources to charter schools with the greatest need and the highest proportions of students in poverty.
- (5) For projects that plan to reserve funds for evaluation, the quality of the applicant's plan to use grant funds for this purpose.
- (6) For projects that plan to reserve funds for technical assistance, dissemination, or personnel, the quality of the applicant's plan to use grant funds for these purposes.

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**Criterion Maximum Point Value - 30**

**26-30  
Excellent**

**21-25  
Good**

**16-20  
Fair**

**0-15  
Poor**

**Strengths:**

The applicant describes a strong history of support through several initiatives and clearly explains the need for schools as they struggle with inequitable funding for facilities. These programs are budgeted in most cases to grow. See page 18 and then 21-22.

The applicant outlines very strong flexibility under which schools may use the support of \$750/student (total) for leasing, rent and mortgage, or debt service plus \$1,000/student for schools purchasing, designing, constructing, or renovating facilities (each with annual caps and a three-year limit).

The applicant does explain that it will notify eligible schools and that it will use its four preference criteria for selecting those to receive funding.

The applicant does name dollar amounts to be used for evaluation, \$56,600 in 2010.

The applicant does state that it will spend \$30,500 for technical assistance.

**Weaknesses:**

The fiscal crisis in CA may materially threaten the on-going appropriations of the state legislated programs.

The applicant does not explain how schools in greatest need will receive support given its preference criteria. For instance, one wouldn't know if charter schools operated by charter management organizations benefit more from the program than free-standing schools, all else being equal.

While the applicant aims to propose changes to its preference criteria on page 26 and 27, it has not yet made those changes.

The applicant does not explain how it will use the grant for evaluation in any detail.

The applicant does not explain how it will spend the money on technical assistance.

**Reader's Score: 20**

**Selection Criteria - The grant project team**

1. (1) **The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project manager and other members of the grant project team, including employees not paid with grant funds, consultants, and subcontractors.**
- (2) **The adequacy and appropriateness of the applicant's staffing plan for the grant project.**

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**Criterion Maximum Point Value - 15**

**14-15  
Excellent**

**11-13  
Good**

**8-10  
Fair**

**0-7  
Poor**

**Strengths:**

The applicant has significant experience managing the programs within the California School Finance Authority - five years experience.

Individual staff members have significant experience in school and municipal finance.

The applicant describes the staff of four permanent analysts and three, part-time retired support.

The applicant makes the case that the staffing level is appropriate given the fact that the current staff have managed the prior program (the 2004 Department award).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant makes a statement on page 32 that "the Program will be phased out over the next three years and Authority staff members with experience and expertise in federal grant administration are already in place and would be immediately available for the 2009 Program." The meaning of this statement is unclear.

**Reader's Score: 11**

## Selection Criteria - The budget

1. (1) The extent to which the requested grant amount and the project costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed grant project.  
(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of students served and to the anticipated results and benefits.  
(3) The extent to which the non-Federal share exceeds the minimum percentages (which are based on the percentages under section 5205(b)(2)(C) of the ESEA), particularly in the initial years of the program.

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### Criterion Maximum Point Value - 15

14-15  
Excellent

11-13  
Good

8-10  
Fair

0-7  
Poor

#### Strengths:

The applicant claims that the state contributions through SB 740 and the CSFP exceed the \$50 million being requested thus far.

The applicant demonstrates in Table 3 that the Federal grant is no more than 18% of the total combined state plus Federal support (in project year 2).

#### Weaknesses:

The applicant does not make the case for the amount requested being reasonable.

It is difficult to assess the certainty with which the state of California will continue to make the appropriations stated in Table 3 and elsewhere in the proposal given the enormous, fiscal crisis there. The amounts budgeted are appropriations and are negotiated annually.

Reader's Score: 9

## Selection Criteria - State experience

1. The experience of the State in addressing the facility needs of charter schools through various means, including providing per-pupil aid, access to State loan or bonding pools, and the use of Qualified Zone Academy Bonds.

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### Criterion Maximum Point Value - 10

10  
Excellent

**8-9**  
**Good**

**6-7**  
**Fair**

**0-5**  
**Poor**

**Strengths:**

The state of California has arguably the most experience nationally in supporting public charter schools access facilities. The applicant makes a strong case for its and the state's experience.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses.

**Reader's Score: 10**

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 02/11/2010 02:04 PM