

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

Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (S282A220002)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	33
Sub Total	35	33
Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants		
Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	13
Sub Total	15	13
State Plan		
State Plan		
1. State Plan	35	32
Sub Total	35	32
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	15
Sub Total	15	15
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP1	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. CPP3	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. CPP4	3	3

	Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 5			
Competitive Preference Priority 5			
1. CPP5		3	3
	Sub Total	3	3
	Total	110	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - State Entities Panel - 3: 84.282A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (S282A220002)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 33

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale; (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant provides a fully developed narrative that includes supportive research and data to create a high-quality project design. The applicant provides data to compare the performance of charter schools in the state compared to districts that serve high-need populations (pages e30-e35). The data shows that students have consistently performed at a high level and that because of these trends, establishing charter schools in areas that service comprehensive services interventions or CSI schools would provide a benefit to students in the area. A logic model (page e36) depicts in the inputs and resources the applicant is bringing to the project. This includes existing financial resources. With activities such as expanding applications for new charters, the applicant will strive to improve outcomes for students served by its charter schools (page e37).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant provides a fully developed narrative to describe the objectives to be evaluated as part of the project design (pages e38-e46). Three activities include partnering with organizations to develop a pipeline of qualified charter applicants and support existing high-quality charter school expansions/replications; awarding post-charter planning and implementation grants to all newly authorized or expanding charter schools; and providing significantly increased post-charter planning and implementation grant awards for applicants that meet specific design priorities related to low-income at-risk students, and students who have been traditionally underserved. The applicant will also expand funding, provide technical assistance, and examine enrollment patterns. All objectives are provided with measurements to ensure performance targets are met. In other areas, the applicant provides evidence of providing other measures for collecting data. On page e63, the applicant convenes parent focus groups and student focus groups in order to gather evidence about their experience with the charter school. This provides qualitative data to support the methods of evaluation.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. The ambitiousness of the State entity's objectives for the quality charter school program carried out under the CSP State Entities program (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The adequate narrative cites the ambitiousness of the project objectives (pages e44-e46) and is adequate for the project. For example, the applicant cites the objective of improving the renewal process as ambitious. The reasons include the need to seek out improvement each year but increased academic improvement is the tenet of accountability and renewal process. These targets reset in order to increase performance targets for all students.

Weaknesses:

The ambitiousness of some objectives is not clearly stated or defined (pages e44-e45). For example, it is unclear if objective 1c and Project Objective 2 provide measured performance data points on activities such as collaboration. Specifically, there is not a defined number of collaborations to be obtained or an explanation of how existing collaborations are expanded to include designated activities.

Reader's Score: 3

4. The extent to which the number of subgrant awards anticipated for each grant project year is supported by evidence of demand and need, and the proposed average subgrant award amount is supported by evidence of the need of applicants (up to 20 points)

Strengths:

The fully developed narrative sufficiently demonstrates the need for the project through data and other supporting information. For example, approximately 21,110 students have been waitlisted for the 2022-23 school year; thus, presenting a compelling need for additional charters. Families can apply to multiple charter schools, resulting in approximately 38,000 requests for admission that are unmet. This information further supports the need for expansion. To this end, the applicant estimates awarding [REDACTED] dollars to expand existing charter schools (pages e47-e48). The applicant seeks to expand two charter schools each year for the five years of the grant.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants - Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants

1. The likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet the State entity's objectives and improve educational results for students.

Strengths:

The applicant provides well-developed narrative that demonstrates how applicant will meet the objective for expanding charter schools (pages e48-e55). Specifically, all charter applicant groups, both new and existing developers, must establish sufficient evidence of their capacity through the submitted charter application, the capacity interview with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or DESE staff, public comment period, and a public hearing held in the community where the school proposes to locate. The scoring rubric and peer review process is provided and supports a competitive process as peer reviewers will be selected to provide a robust plan for selection. A timeline is provided (pages e196-e198) to detail the process for application submission.

Weaknesses:

The narrative does not clearly explain how the applicant will expand rural charter schools. The narrative does not describe in detail how the subgrant process will support diverse charter models, including models that serve rural communities as well as prioritize the opening of high schools.

Reader's Score: 13

State Plan - State Plan

1. The State entity's plan to--

Reader's Score: 32

Sub

1. Adequately monitor the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program; (up to 10 points)

Strengths:

The well-developed narrative provides an explanation for monitoring subgrants (pages e56-e60). The applicant includes a process for both program and fiscal monitoring within specified timeframes. A team of personnel provide oversight and monitoring from the state level on a continuous basis and visits schools at least twice a year. For example, a new charter school must complete requirements in the handbook via evidence submitted to the state agency in order to open. The state agency then provides resources to support a school's effectiveness in meeting opening procedures requirements, including policy checklists and guidance to ensure equitable enrollment practices; appropriate fiscal policies and procedures; appropriate policies and procedures to serve students with disabilities and English language learners; as well as equitable student discipline policies and procedures (page e56).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide a clear plan for sustainability. Specifically, the applicant does not provide an explanation as to how activities will continue once federal funding has ended. With the use of such a considerable amount of funding, this information is needed for a well-developed narrative.

Reader's Score: 7

2. Work with the authorized public chartering agencies involved to avoid duplication of work for the charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies; (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The fully developed narrative is sufficient to describe how the applicant will avoid duplication as the applicant is the sole authorizer (page e61). Specifically, the applicant uses their systems for management systems (i.e., fiscal and assessment) for reporting and other assistance. There is no duplication as all tasks are assigned within the agency.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Sub

3. Provide technical assistance and support for--

- i. The eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program; and**
- ii. Quality authorizing efforts in the State; (up to 10 points)**

Strengths:

(i) The fully developed narrative substantially describes how the applicant will provide technical assistance to entities before and during the awards process (pages e62-e64). For example, if a charter school closes, the applicant works with the closing charter school to ensure students and families are able to transition to other high-quality schools via direct mailings to families or hosting school fairs at closing school site. As part of technical assistance during administration, the applicant will provide training sessions will focus on: meeting needs of all students, recruitment and retention, governance, participation in federal programs and receipt of federal funds, school culture and discipline, replication and expansion, school leadership, community engagement, and school operations.

(ii) The fully developed narrative is strong to support this factor (pages e64-e65). As the sole authorizer, the applicant will maximize the flexibilities that charter schools are afforded under the law. In terms of academics, charter schools are given both the flexibility and the encouragement to innovate and provide diverse educational options to families (page e65). Additionally, statute supports quality authorizing through best practices. The applicant issues charters for a term of 5 years, with a high-stakes renewal decision required every 5 years, unless poor academic performance or lack of operational viability dictate an earlier decision (page e17). Additionally, administrative reporting or requirements from other offices across Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or DESE are carefully examined to ensure that they do not create duplicative work for charter schools.

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses noted.

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

4. The State entity's plan to solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of charter schools in the State; and (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The fully developed narrative is strong to support how the applicant will solicit and consider input from parents and community members (pages e63-e64). For example, the applicant convenes parent focus groups and student focus groups in order to gather evidence about their experience with the charter school in alignment to the criteria. Parent and student input is frequently cited in resulting site visit reports as evidence of strong charter school practices as well as areas for improvement. Massachusetts Charter Public School Association or MCPSA, Democrats for Education Reform, Stand for Children, and Families for Excellent Schools, National Parents Union organize parents for engagement.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Sub

Reader's Score: 5

5. The degree of flexibility afforded by the State's charter school law and how the State entity will work to maximize the flexibility provided to charter schools under such law. (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The fully developed narrative is sufficient to describe the flexibility particularly under the state's charter school law (page e63-e65). For example, charter schools have the autonomy to construct and set their own curricula for each grade. Additionally, state law ensures that charter school boards of trustees are afforded complete autonomy to control their funds. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or DESE respects the fiscal autonomy of charter schools and is not involved in the regular day-to-day management of funds but monitors a charter school's overall fiscal health annually by collecting independently audited financial reports.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

1. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (up to 10 points)

Strengths:

The fully developed narrative is of high quality to provide the plan for management (pages e66-e72). A detailed timeline is provided with designated responsibilities and dates for completion. The applicant also has a history of sufficiently managing grants by holding boards of trustees accountable for the oversight and control of the charter school, including arrangements with for-profit management organizations (page e54); and all key staff are listed with responsibilities.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project (up to 3 points)

Strengths:

The process for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement is sufficient for the project activities (pages e72-e74). For example, the project will utilize all feedback regularly. Specifically, data will be analyzed during the fall

Sub

months, and findings will be presented to the Project Team during a Project Meeting in November. The narrative is fully developed to cover all necessary information to support this sub factor.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

- 3. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

The time commitments of the project director and other key personnel are sufficiently explained (page e75). The project director will be 80% to conduct activities. All key personnel have experience delivering project activities. The narrative is fully developed to cover all aspects of this sub factor.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1

- 1. At Least One Authorized Public Chartering Agency Other than a Local Educational Agency, or an Appeals Process. (0 to 1 points)**

To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that it is located in a State that--

(a) Allows at least one entity that is not a local educational agency (LEA) to be an authorized public chartering agency for developers seeking to open a charter school in the State; or

(b) In the case of a State in which LEAs are the only authorized public chartering agencies, the State has an appeals process for the denial of an application for a charter school.

Strengths:

The applicant sufficiently addresses this competitive preference priority. Specifically, the applicant indicates that it is the only charter school authorizer (page e21) meeting (a) of the priority. Specifically, the sole public charter authorizer ensures reliable oversight and employs comprehensive practices as part of a state-wide strategy to close all proficiency gaps.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the State in which it is located ensures equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner. (up to 2 points)**

Strengths:

The applicant provides a sufficient explanation of its equitable funding formula for charter schools (pages e21-e23). Specifically, charter schools are paid tuition from the state each month based on actual student enrollment and the law authorizes and directs the state treasurer to deduct a district's total charter school tuition amount from the total state school aid. Charter Schools have access to emergency COVID relief funds via formula.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Competitive Preference Priority 3

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the State in which it is located uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and LEAs. (up to 1 points)**

Strengths:

The applicant provides extensive evidence to support this competitive preference priority to share best practices for improving struggling schools of local education agencies (pages e23-e25). The applicant indicates that it will promote additional partnerships between charter schools and struggling schools, provide additional convening, and update its resources to showcase successful partnerships between charter schools and struggling schools. By doing so, resources are shared with struggling schools and local education agencies.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Competitive Preference Priority 4

- 1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located provides charter schools one or more of the following: (up to 3 points)**

- a) **Funding for facilities**
- b) **Assistance with facilities acquisition**
- c) **Access to public facilities**
- d) **The ability to share in bonds or mill levies**
- e) **The right of first refusal to purchase public school buildings**
- f) **Low- or no-cost leasing privileges.**

Strengths:

The applicant adequately addresses this competitive preference priority to provide support to charter school facilities (pages e25-e26). For example, the FY2023 state budget increased the per-pupil facilities component to [REDACTED] (an increase of 16%) (a). The state also provides assistance for facilities acquisition. Specifically, tax-exempt bond financing and guarantee programs that charter schools' access for capital projects including purchasing, building and renovating school buildings (c and d).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority 5 - Competitive Preference Priority 5

- 1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which it supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services. (up to 3 points)**

Strengths:

The applicant sufficiently addresses the competitive preference priority for serving at-risk students (pages e26-e29). Specifically, the applicant provides necessary base funding and funding for students in at-risk categories. For example, charter schools have also benefitted from the the state's many resources that support dropout prevention, dropout recovery and career counseling.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (S282A220002)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	33
Sub Total	35	33
Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants		
Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	11
Sub Total	15	11
State Plan		
State Plan		
1. State Plan	35	32
Sub Total	35	32
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	14
Sub Total	15	14
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP1	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. CPP3	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. CPP4	3	3

	Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 5			
Competitive Preference Priority 5			
1. CPP5		3	3
	Sub Total	3	3
	Total	110	100

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - State Entities Panel - 3: 84.282A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (S282A220002)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 33

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale; (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant proposes a project that demonstrates a rationale. The applicant's fully developed logic model includes creating an additional 3,000 high-quality seats at new and expanding charter schools to improve student outcomes in the charter schools, especially for low-income students, at-risk students, and students that have been historically underserved (pg e36-e37). The applicant presents data showing that on average, charter school students perform better academically than their peers in traditional schools, which leads to more students attending institutions of higher education (pg e32-e35). The applicant fully describes activities within the logic model. For example, the applicant will require replication and expansion subgrantees to form district/charter collaborations and will encourage, but not require, new schools to do the same (pg e42).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant has adequately developed methods of evaluation that include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcome of the project. The applicant includes measurable performance measures that include quantitative measures. For example, the applicant states a performance measure that each year progress towards proficiency/meeting expectations on the state assessment will increase from prior year for all charter school students as well as low-income students. This is important to the project because increased academic improvement is the basis for the accountability and renewal process. (pg e44-e46)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Sub

Reader's Score: 5

3. The ambitiousness of the State entity's objectives for the quality charter school program carried out under the CSP State Entities program (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant presents one State entity objective that is well developed. The applicant presents an objective to increase the number of high quality seats in the state with an estimated 600 seats per year for a total of 3,000 seats for the project. This is attainable and ambitious considering the rigorous charter school and expansion application process. Due to enrollment caps in higher population areas, the expansion will have to occur in areas where charter school enrollment is a smaller proportion of public school enrollment. This objective is well developed and tied to the project. (pg e44)

Weaknesses:

The applicant presents one State entity objective that is poorly developed. The applicant presents an objective to promote the sharing of the state's charter school best practices by requiring or encouraging collaborations. The ambition and attainability is difficult to ascertain because of the lack of measurable data provided. The applicant notes the ambitiousness correlates with the improvement in measurable student outcomes, but it is not clear how this relates to the objective. (pg e46)

Reader's Score: 3

4. The extent to which the number of subgrant awards anticipated for each grant project year is supported by evidence of demand and need, and the proposed average subgrant award amount is supported by evidence of the need of applicants (up to 20 points)

Strengths:

The applicant proposes the number of subgrant awards anticipated for each grant project year supported by evidence of demand and need. The applicant's plan is fully developed and includes two subgrants each project year for a total of 10 subgrants over the project's lifespan (pg e47-e48). The proposed 10 subgrants are supported based on historical trends of growth, partnerships providing support, and continued demand for new seats at high-quality charter schools (pg e47). Additionally, the applicant includes the formula for the average funding amounts per subgrant of between [REDACTED] 0 and [REDACTED] 00, dependent upon if the subgrant is for a new charter school or an expansion (pg e742). The applicant notes the average per pupil expenditure for the state of \$17,058 is higher than the national per pupil expenditure average of \$12,612 (pg e741-e742). The applicant provides a detailed explanation for the demand and need of charter schools in the state (pg e710-e713). Furthermore, the applicant breaks down the funding for subgrants and provides a detailed explanation for the funds (pg e40-e41). For example, expansion subgrants will receive a base award of [REDACTED] per pupil expenditure with a maximum of [REDACTED] 0 while the new and replication subgrants will receive a [REDACTED] base award.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants - Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants

1. The likelihood that the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet the State entity's objectives and improve educational results for students.

Strengths:

The applicant presents an adequate plan for applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet the State entity's objectives and improve educational results for students. The applicant adequately describes the activities and details for

applying for subgrants (pg e34-e35; e196-e198). For example, the applicant notes that subgrantees are required to submit a letter of intent and applicant information sheet via email. Additionally, the applicant requires expansion subgrants to demonstrate a proven track record of success. The applicant provides the process, requirements, and peer review process for subgrantees of both new or replicating schools and for new schools (pg e50-e55). For example, the applicant will use a panel of trained reviewers that includes applicant staff and peer experts for the new and replicating schools subgrantees and expanding school peer reviewers will additionally include charter school board members or school leaders as part of the peer review team. Furthermore, the applicant explains the requirements of subgrantees to address input from families and other community members, transportation services, and a comprehensive action plan during the planning, development, and implementation of the charter school or expansion (pg e54-e55).

Weaknesses:

The applicant fails to clearly describe how the subgrant process will support diverse charter school models, particularly ones that serve rural communities . While the applicant presents information for the peer review process and family engagement, the applicant fails to provide details on the activities for these groups.

Reader's Score: 11

State Plan - State Plan

1. The State entity's plan to--

Reader's Score: 32

Sub

1. Adequately monitor the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program; (up to 10 points)

Strengths:

The applicant presents a well developed plan to monitor eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program. The applicant includes a thorough monitoring timeline that includes annual reports, an accountability plan, site visits, and yearly financial audits (pg e427-e430). For example, charter schools will be required to submit an annual report on or before August 1st of each school year, and this will be used by the applicant to review the school's performance and progress for the past academic year. Additionally, the applicant will use the annual report to inform the public of the past academic year (pg e393). The applicant will monitor subgrantees financial performance by requiring them to have an independent annual financial audit and submit the results to the applicant, which allows the applicant to monitor the financial health and identify potential risks (pg e58).

Weaknesses:

The applicant notes in the Charter School Performance Criteria that the members of the board of trustees provide governance to ensure the success and sustainability of the school. However, the applicant lacks details to clearly ascertain how it will ensure subgrantees can sustain once funds are no longer available.

Reader's Score: 7

2. Work with the authorized public chartering agencies involved to avoid duplication of work for the charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies; (up to 5 points)

Sub

Strengths:

The applicant has a fully developed plan to work with authorized public chartering agencies to avoid duplication of work. Since the applicant is the sole authorizer for charter schools in the state, duplication of work and effort will not be an issue (pg e61). Additionally, the applicant is cognizant of its reporting requirements for charter schools to avoid requiring submission of duplicative information (pg e61).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. Provide technical assistance and support for--

- i. The eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program; and**
- ii. Quality authorizing efforts in the State; (up to 10 points)**

Strengths:

(i) The applicant presents a fully developed plan to provide technical assistance and support for subgrantees. The applicant will ensure subgrantees participate in Federal programs in which the school and students are eligible to participate (pg e61). Additionally, the applicant will ensure that subgrantees are meeting the needs of all students, including students with disabilities and English learners. Furthermore, the applicant provides a Charter Analysis and Review Tool (CHART), which allows charter schools to monitor progress of enrolling demographically comparable population by providing multi-school, multi-year demographic comparison data in enrollment percentages by subgroup, attrition percentages by grade level and subgroup, and student indicator statistics (pg e62).

(ii) The applicant presents a fully developed plan to support quality authorizing efforts. The applicant provides a plan to work with students and families that are in closing charter schools to transition to other high-quality schools (pg e61). Additionally, the applicant monitors charter schools' accountability plans, annual reports, and financial stability through audits. The applicant also requires every charter school to go through a rigorous renewal process during its final year (pg e429).

Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

4. The State entity's plan to solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of charter schools in the State; and (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant presents a fully developed plan to solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of charter schools in the state. The applicant's plan includes parent and student focus group to provide evidence on their experiences with the charter schools (pg e63). Additionally, the applicant has implemented a clear, accessible complaint system for family and community members who are concerned about violations of students' educational rights (pg e63). Furthermore, there are multiple parent organizing and advocacy groups, such as Democrats for Education Reform, that empower communities to provide their experiences with charter school implementation and operations (pg e64). The applicant's plan will successfully provide parents and the community with input regarding charter schools.

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

5. The degree of flexibility afforded by the State's charter school law and how the State entity will work to maximize the flexibility provided to charter schools under such law. (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant presents a fully developed plan to provide flexibility to charter schools. The state's statute provides charter schools with broad operational flexibility and autonomy. With the greater autonomy, the applicant requires increased accountability (pg e64). The state's law allows for charter school boards of trustees the independence to control their funds. Additionally, the state's laws give charter school the legal and business powers to operate independently, including acquiring or leasing real estate, contracting for services, and be exempt from state procurement laws. The state allows for charter schools to control teacher contracts and not follow union contracts for the district in which the school resides. Furthermore, the state allows for charter schools to organize around curriculum, a specific theme, teaching method, and/or educational program (pg e65). The applicant provides flexibility to charter schools to operate autonomously with the charter schools increased accountability.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 14

Sub

1. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (up to 10 points)

Strengths:

The applicant presents a strong management plan to achieve objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The applicant includes a detailed timeline that provides tasks, when the tasks will be completed by, and the person(s) responsible for the tasks (pg e69-e73). The key personnel for the project have demonstrated qualifications to contribute to the project's success. The applicant provides resumes for key personnel to demonstrate qualifications (pg e715-e729). Additionally, the applicant includes a detailed description of managing the work of external partners, such as Class Measures, who have extensive experience in school evaluation and charter schools (pg e68).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project (up to 3 points)

Strengths:

The applicant presents adequately developed procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. The applicant will conduct interviews, focus groups, and survey of key constituencies, including Project Team members, representatives from grant-funded schools, parents, and community members (pg e74). The applicant will analyze data during the fall months and present findings during a November meeting, which will ensure adequate time to make adjustments for the next grant cycle. Additionally, the applicant notes the Project Director and Program Manager will have the primary responsibility to determine how the project should be modified.

Weaknesses:

The applicant lacks details for the way the project personnel will use the feedback to make improvements in subsequent years.

Reader's Score: 2

3. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Strengths:

The applicant presents a fully developed plan for the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel, and the time commitments are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project. The applicant presents a table that includes the key personnel, role, and time commitment (pg e75). The time commitments range from 5% to 80%. For example, the Project Director will commit 80% time. The time commitments noted by the applicant are sufficient for the project's objectives.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. At Least One Authorized Public Chartering Agency Other than a Local Educational Agency, or an Appeals Process. (0 to 1 points)

To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that it is located in a State that--

(a) Allows at least one entity that is not a local educational agency (LEA) to be an authorized public chartering agency for developers seeking to open a charter school in the State; or

(b) In the case of a State in which LEAs are the only authorized public chartering agencies, the

State has an appeals process for the denial of an application for a charter school.

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates that at least one entity that is not an LEA is the public chartering agency for developers seeking to open a charter school in the state. The applicant details that the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) is the sole public charter authorizing entity in the state. The applicant notes that Local Education Agencies cannot authorize charter schools in the state. (pg e21)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the State in which it is located ensures equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner. (up to 2 points)**

Strengths:

The applicant clearly presents a plan to ensure equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner. The applicant utilizes a charter school funding formula that reflects a per pupil spending that aligns with what would be expended if the students attended a traditional district school. Additionally, the formula includes funding for low-income and English learners. Furthermore, the applicant requires school districts to provide transportation for charter school students, at no cost to the charter schools, who live in the district on the same basis as it provides for students attending district schools; however, if a charter school wishes to provide transportation, the applicant will provide funding based on ridership. The applicant will reimburse Commonwealth charter schools on a monthly basis and will reimburse Horace Mann charter schools through a submission of an annual budget request. The applicant's strategy allows for equitable financing of charter schools compared to traditional schools. (pg e21-e23)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Competitive Preference Priority 3

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the State in which it is located uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and LEAs. (up to 1 points)**

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates that that it uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools. The applicant requires that all charter schools disseminate their best practices to other public school in order to earn renewal of their charter. The applicant will promote partnerships between struggling schools and charter schools. Additionally, the applicant has incorporated best practices from charter schools as strategies that struggling schools may select in the applicant's Sustainable Improvement Plan template. The applicant has identified multiple ways to share best practices to help improve struggling schools. (pg e23-e25)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Competitive Preference Priority 4

1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located provides charter schools one or more of the following: (up to 3 points)

- a) Funding for facilities
- b) Assistance with facilities acquisition
- c) Access to public facilities
- d) The ability to share in bonds or mill levies
- e) The right of first refusal to purchase public school buildings
- f) Low- or no-cost leasing privileges.

Strengths:

The applicant has clearly addressed four ways it will provide charter schools with facilities access. (pg e25-e26)

(a) The applicant describes how the formula for charter school tuition has increased funding for per-pupil facilities to [REDACTED] which allows charter schools to acquire property for use as a school facility.

(b) The applicant describes the partnership with the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency (MDFA) in which charter schools have access to tax-exempt bond financing and guarantee programs for capital projects.

(c) The applicant describes the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between the Horace Mann charter schools and district schools in which services and facilities must be defined or the district's responsibility to fund any non-district facility needs. According to state law, charter schools may be located in part of an existing public school building, in a public building, or any other suitable location.

(d) The applicant notes that charter schools have access to tax-exempt bond financing through the applicant's partnership with the MDFA.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority 5 - Competitive Preference Priority 5

1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which it supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services. (up to 3 points)

Strengths:

The applicant fully supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, and comprehensive career counseling services. The applicant notes that currently six charter schools are specifically chartered to serve at-risk student populations. The applicant has developed accountability plan guidelines to measure academic and school engagement gains by the at-risk student populations. The applicant utilizes the My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP) to provide training, templates, and grants to aid schools with preparing students for college, career, and civic readiness. Additionally, the applicant has developed an Early Warning Indicator System to help identify students who are at-risk of not meeting academic goals and aid them with getting back on track. The applicant is committed to charter schools serving the at-risk student population. (pg e26-28)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: **3**

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/19/2022 09:21 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/22/2022 02:24 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (S282A220002)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	32
Sub Total	35	32
Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants		
Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	13
Sub Total	15	13
State Plan		
State Plan		
1. State Plan	35	33
Sub Total	35	33
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	15	15
Sub Total	15	15
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. CPP1	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. CPP2	2	2
Sub Total	2	2
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
Competitive Preference Priority 3		
1. CPP3	1	1
Sub Total	1	1
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
Competitive Preference Priority 4		
1. CPP4	3	3

	Sub Total	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 5			
Competitive Preference Priority 5			
1. CPP5		3	3
	Sub Total	3	3
	Total	110	103

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - State Entities Panel - 3: 84.282A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (S282A220002)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 32

Sub

1. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale; (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) proposes two objectives in its application and logic model, which are to (1) increase the number of high-quality seats for low-income, at-risk, and underserved students and (2) promote the sharing of charter school best practices to other public schools through district-charter collaborations (pgs. e14 and e44 – e45). Research cited in the application supports the assertion that Massachusetts charter schools provide excellent educational opportunities for students, especially students identified as low-income and traditionally underserved (pg. e30), inspiring confidence the project is highly likely to realize its outcomes.

Massachusetts DESE provides application materials and expectations for new charter school operators (pgs. e193 – e236) and existing operators seeking to replicate (pgs. e562 – e604) or expand high-quality charter schools (pgs. e548 – e561), describes activities to develop or strengthen a cohesive statewide system that supports charter schools, how the state will share best practices for effective family engagement and recruitment and retention of students of color and teacher diversification (pg. e43), as well as the requirement for expanding and replicating charter schools to create a collaboration with a district school (pgs. e28, e37, e42).

Between the research-backed logic model and state-specific research cited in the application, the applicant's proposed project strongly demonstrates a rationale.

Weaknesses:

Massachusetts DESE did not explain how it will specifically support charter schools in LEAs with a significant number of schools identified by the State for comprehensive support and improvement.

Reader's Score: 4

2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and (up to 5 points)

Sub

Strengths:

The methods of evaluation are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. All performance measures are clearly related to the intended project outcomes and include both qualitative and quantitative measures, such as tracking enrollment numbers, analyzing student performance on state assessments, and collecting survey data (pgs. e44 – e46, e63, and e74). Each objective includes at least one performance measure that can be reported on annually.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. The ambitiousness of the State entity's objectives for the quality charter school program carried out under the CSP State Entities program (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provided objectives tied to the project and performance measures that describe a convincing rationale for why each is ambitious (pgs. e44 – e46). Each explanation for why a specific performance measure is ambitious uses existing data as a baseline and provides the specific unit of growth that will be used to measure subgrantee performance.

Weaknesses:

Performance measures 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F, 1G, and 1H indicate expectations for 'all charter school students' and low-income students (and alternative high school students in the case of 1H) in the areas of progress toward proficiency, median student growth percentile, rate of grade nine students completing and passing all courses, high school graduation rates for non-alternative high schools, high school graduation rates for alternative charter high schools, and college enrollment rates, respectively (pgs. e45 – e46). It is unclear what the term "all charter school students" references (i.e., a subgroup referenced 'all charter school students', a measure for each charter school student, a subgroup including all students except for low-income students, etc.).

Reader's Score: 3

4. The extent to which the number of subgrant awards anticipated for each grant project year is supported by evidence of demand and need, and the proposed average subgrant award amount is supported by evidence of the need of applicants (up to 20 points)

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) proposed a specified number of subgrants for each project year and provided average funding amounts per subgrant supported by a detailed explanation (pgs. e25 – e26, e48). Specifically, Massachusetts DESE plans to award two subgrants for each year of the award years 1 – 5 (pg. e48) to new, replicating, and expanding schools authorized by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. The applicant indicated ten new subgrantees in five years is ambitious given the historical growth of charter schools and charter student enrollment since 2010 (pg. e47) and the two largest cities in the state reaching its respective enrollment caps (pg. e44). Massachusetts DESE included supporting documentation regarding the methodology and calculations used to determine the additional amounts awarded to for subgrant proposals that include equitable access to high quality public education and establish high school and post-secondary success (pgs. e40 – e41). In addition, Massachusetts DESE indicated the maximum grant amount for expansion subgrants (pg. e41) and new and replication subgrants (pg. e40).

Sub

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants - Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants

1. The likelihood that the Eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the program will meet the State entity's objectives and improve educational results for students.

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provided a detailed description of activities specific to the subgrant application process, which is integrated in the application for a Massachusetts Charter Public School (pgs. e48 – e55, e70, e194 – e236, e562 – e604). Massachusetts DESE provided a complete and appropriate timeline for the subgrant process (pgs. e196 – e198 and e70). In addition, the applicant provided sufficient information to determine the awarded subgrantees will improve education results for students, including MCAS achievement levels of charter school students from the five districts identified as performing in the lowest 10 per cent of districts (pgs. e32 – e35).

Weaknesses:

There was no description of how the subgrant process will support diverse charter models, including models that serve rural communities as well as prioritize the opening of high schools (note: There is additional grant funds available for applicants choosing to establish high school success on pgs. e40 – e41). Although the applicant describes the peer reviewer training after reviewers are selected, the applicant did not address how the peer reviewer selection process initially occurs (e.g., interview, application, review of resume and experience, random selection, invitation, rotation of responsibility, etc. (pgs. e51 – e52).

Reader's Score: 13

State Plan - State Plan

1. The State entity's plan to--

Reader's Score: 33

Sub

1. Adequately monitor the eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity's program; (up to 10 points)

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provided the state's comprehensive charter school accountability process, which is the same process for monitoring subgrantees (pgs. e424 – e430). Portions of this accountability process occur annually (i.e., annual report and financial audit) for the five years of the charter agreement, whereas other components only occur in specific years (e.g., full site visit in year 2, full site visit by DESE in year 3, potential visits in other years, etc.) (pg. e431 – e469). Schools receive a draft report from the site visit team approximately eight weeks following the site visit and has one week to review and request corrections or a conversation about a finding and/or rating (pg. e440). The site-visit monitoring team receives written guidelines

Sub

specific to site visit protocol (pgs. e468 – e469). Massachusetts DESE explained clearly that each charter school’s financial dashboard and faithfulness to its charter is publicly available (pg. e58).

Weaknesses:

Massachusetts DESE indicated each subgrantee would be visited at least twice in a five-year charter term (pg. 41). This timeframe for review does not appear to identify risk quickly outside of the area of finance, which is reviewed annually via an external audit. It is also not clear how subgrantee deficiencies will be addressed, other than financial deficiencies, which is clearly identified in the charter audit guide (pgs. e122 – e173). Massachusetts DESE does not address how they will evaluate the subgrantees’ plan for sustainability once the funds are no longer available.

Reader's Score: 8

2. Work with the authorized public chartering agencies involved to avoid duplication of work for the charter schools and authorized public chartering agencies; (up to 5 points)

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) presented reasonable evidence that duplication of work efforts is never an issue, as the sole charter school authorizer is Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and proposed project staff are also staff of the authorizer (pg. e61).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

3. Provide technical assistance and support for--

- i. The eligible applicants receiving subgrants under the State entity’s program; and**
- ii. Quality authorizing efforts in the State; (up to 10 points)**

Strengths:

i. Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) presented a comprehensive plan to provide technical assistance to support subgrantees. Technical assistance includes the Massachusetts DESE working with charter schools to ensure they access all Federal Funds they are eligible to receive, an opening procedures handbook for new charter schools (pgs. e246 – e363), monitoring that ensures subgrantees meet the needs of students with disabilities and English learners, charter school closing procedures handbook (e535 – e545), policy development, a handbook for enrollment processes (pgs. e237 – e345), feedback on a school’s Recruitment and Retention Plan, Charter Analysis and Review Tool (pg. e423), and monitoring of disciplinary processes.

ii. Massachusetts DESE’s plan to promote quality authorizing includes assessing annual performance data of schools (e.g., graduation rates, student academic growth, rates of attrition, etc.), reviewing independent audits of financial statements, and holding charter schools accountable to items specified in the charter agreement (pgs. e45 – e46, e57, e78, e122 – e173, e174 – e188, e189 – e191, e390 – e420, e421 – e422, e423, and e424 – e430).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

- 4. The State entity’s plan to solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of charter schools in the State; and (up to 5 points)**

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) includes focus groups of parents and students during site visits, which occur at least two times in a five-year period (pg. e63). Massachusetts DESE also solicits parent input for special education, civil rights, and English learner education requirements (pg. e63). New law, the Student Opportunity Act, requires charter schools to include parent input into their specific plants to narrow opportunity gaps (pg. e64). The collected data is shared in the site visit reports to school leaders.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

- 5. The degree of flexibility afforded by the State’s charter school law and how the State entity will work to maximize the flexibility provided to charter schools under such law. (up to 5 points)**

Strengths:

The applicant provides charter schools with broad operational flexibility and autonomy (pgs. e64, e84 – e96). Examples provided in the application include charter school freedom to organize around a core mission, flexibility over budgets, and autonomy to determine rules of governance (pg. e64). Additional exemptions include public procurement laws and protections in certain lawsuits (pg. e65).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:**

Reader's Score: 15

Sub

- 1. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (up to 10 points)**

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) presented a management plan with a clear timeline and milestones that are realistic and appropriate for the two project objectives (pgs. e69 – e73). The proposed budget aligns with the management of the grant and provides adequate resources for all project tasks (pgs. e740 – e742, e748). The responsibilities and milestones are adequate to ensure project success. All key project personnel, including the Project Director, identified DESE staff, and identified Office of Charter Schools and

Sub

School Redesign staff, have qualifications to contribute to the proposed project's success.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project (up to 3 points)

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will use data from formative evaluations based on the project logic model to monitor the efficacy and fidelity of project implementation (pg. e74). Data will include interviews and focus groups, surveys, document review, and analysis by the Research and Evaluation Office (pg. e74). The Project Director and Program Manager will determine any modifications and mid-course improvements based on data analysis (pg. e74).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

3. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Strengths:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education details the specific percentage of time the key personnel will participate in the program, including the project director, project manager, and other specifically identified staff (pgs. e75). It appears appropriate and adequate to meet the goals and objectives of the grant.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. At Least One Authorized Public Chartering Agency Other than a Local Educational Agency, or an Appeals Process. (0 to 1 points)

To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that it is located in a State that--

(a) Allows at least one entity that is not a local educational agency (LEA) to be an authorized public chartering agency for developers seeking to open a charter school in the State; or

(b) In the case of a State in which LEAs are the only authorized public chartering agencies, the State has an appeals process for the denial of an application for a charter school.

Strengths:

Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education is the sole, statewide public charter authorizing entity which meet (a) of this priority (pg. e21).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Competitive Preference Priority 2

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the State in which it is located ensures equitable financing, as compared to traditional public schools, for charter schools and students in a prompt manner. (up to 2 points)**

Strengths:

The charter school funding formula reflects the actual per pupil spending amount in the district the student would have attended, including additional funding for low-income students and English learners (pg. e21). Charter schools receive monthly tuition directly from the state based on student enrollment (pg. e21). State law also requires school districts to provide no cost transportation for charter school students on the same basis as provided to district school students (pg. e22).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 2

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - Competitive Preference Priority 3

- 1. To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the State in which it is located uses best practices from charter schools to help improve struggling schools and LEAs. (up to 1 points)**

Strengths:

State statute obligates charter schools to disseminate their best practices to other public schools to earn renewal of their charter (pg. e23). Currently, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) integrates charter school best practices as strategies in its Sustainable Improvement Plan template (pg. e24). During their current grant, DESE has held two Dissemination Fairs showcasing charter school best practices. Survey results pointed to a highly successful and collaborative event (pg. e24).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 1

Competitive Preference Priority 4 - Competitive Preference Priority 4

1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which the State in which it is located provides charter schools one or more of the following: (up to 3 points)

- a) Funding for facilities
- b) Assistance with facilities acquisition
- c) Access to public facilities
- d) The ability to share in bonds or mill levies
- e) The right of first refusal to purchase public school buildings
- f) Low- or no-cost leasing privileges.

Strengths:

Charter schools have access to: (1) state funding for facilities to acquire real property by lease, option to purchase, or gift (pg. e25); (2) assistance with facilities acquisition through tax-exempt bond financing and guarantee programs (pg. e25); (3) public facilities for Horace Mann charter schools as outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding with the district in which they are located (pg. e25); and existing public school buildings in whole or in part (pg. e26).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority 5 - Competitive Preference Priority 5

1. To be eligible to receive points under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the extent to which it supports charter schools that serve at-risk students through activities such as dropout prevention, dropout recovery, or comprehensive career counseling services. (up to 3 points)

Strengths:

Massachusetts charter schools serve a greater proportion of high needs students, English learner students, and low-income students that statewide average in part attributable to statute that requires access to charter schools be prioritized for traditionally underserved students (pg. e26). Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education identified six charter schools specifically chartered to serve an at-risk population of students with missions and educational programs that incorporate dropout prevention, dropout recovery, and comprehensive career counseling services (pg. e27).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/22/2022 02:24 PM

