

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/24/2022 11:53 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia, Inc. (S282A220006)

**Reader #4:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	28
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	13
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>State Plan</b>		
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	31
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	13
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP1	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP2	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
1. CPP3	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
1. CPP4	3	3

	<b>Sub Total</b>	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>			
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>			
1. CPP5		3	2
	<b>Sub Total</b>	3	2
	<b>Total</b>	110	94

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - State Entities Panel - 7: 84.282A

Reader #4: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia, Inc. (S282A220006)

## 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: 28

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

The plan articulates four clear and interrelated goals on pp e19-e20. These goals explain a rationale that demonstrates a sound approach and which aims to build on an existing effort (Georgia Strategic Charter School Growth Initiative, detailed on p e21). Further, the goals and rationale are supported by three key bodies within the GA charter space: the state department of education, the main charter assistance and advocacy group, and the state's independent charter authorizing board, as detailed on e19. The goals and plans demonstrate attention to multiple efforts necessary for success, including a communications plan, technical assistance programming, and efforts to ensure charter authorizers in GA adhere to established principles and standards of high-quality authorizing. This multi-pronged approach demonstrates a sound theory of action that is based in a coordinated effort across several state entities. The current GEER-funded program has 10 current applications to the replication and expansion program as indicated on page e33, which demonstrates that there is interest in GA in such supports to expand or replicate successful charter schools. Finally, the logic model on p e35 describes a reasonable explanation of how the applicant's inputs and outputs connect.

#### Weaknesses:

While the application addresses some lessons drawn from existing efforts on page e23 and e42, and adjustments the applicants would make going forward to address some of these lessons, the application does not clearly report additional data to substantiate and explain the primary barriers to expansion, opening, and replication of high-quality charters in the state to date.

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)

#### Strengths:

The objectives and SMART goals outlined on pp e43-44, e-49, e-51, and e-52 contain four overarching goals that directly align with the theory of action and overall project design articulated throughout the application. The application contains at least one performance measure that can be reported on annually for each objective. The SMART goals and performance targets align with the overall objectives and provide both quantitative goals such as

**Sub**

the number of new, replication, or expansion charter schools the applicants wish to achieve, as well as qualitative information gathered through use of supporting documents such as the charter school authorizer ratings system implemented by GA. The alignment of these goals with existing guiding documents creates a greater likelihood that the applicants will track and implement resources with fidelity, while monitoring important demonstrable outcomes.

**Weaknesses:**

While SMART goals are included in the application, the performance targets described on page e-52 do not clearly indicate ties to improvement of quantitative outcomes for struggling schools who access the toolkit, rather the only outcome tracked is access to the toolkit. Additionally, the metrics outlined for Objective 2 on page e-49 (educating and engaging communities) are largely based on inputs, and do not incorporate additional specific and relevant output-based measures such as surveys to families and communities to measure the impact of the information sessions, informational website, and other activities.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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 objectives outlined are generally ambitious and reasonable, particularly as relating to Objective Number 1. For instance, the description of Objective Number 1 on page e41 notes a specific goal to open, expand, or replicate 32 new charter schools in the state by 2027. This would increase the number of operating charters in the state by nearly one-third. While this represents an aggressive goal, the fact that there have already been 10 applications to the existing program as outlined on page e33 demonstrates that there is demand at a level which makes the goal of opening 32 additional charters reasonable and attainable. Additionally, the goals for Objective 3 outlined on page e51 focus on enacting and reinforcing standards for charter school authorizers, with a clear goal to ensure at least 70% of charter authorizers improve or maintain high rankings as measures by the GA principles and standards of charter school authorizing. This is a meaningful goal to ensure that helps ensure authorizers hold themselves to high standards and practices, which in turn helps to ensure that schools are held to a strong standard while also retaining autonomy.

**Weaknesses:**

The goals for Objectives 2 (outlined on page e49) and 4 (outlined on e52) lack ambitiousness and focus, as they do not consistently incorporate specific quantitative and qualitative outcome measures to gauge the effectiveness of the proposal's activities. For instance, Objective 2's SMART goals include a goal for at least 10 charters to report increased enrollment interest or applications based on the communications efforts outlined in the application. The applicant does not articulate a plan to analyze and demonstrate a clear link between the communications efforts and the charter's reported increase in enrollment.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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 description of public sentiments and polls around a need for more school options presented on pages e37-e38 demonstrate a majority of parents across several demographic categories believe that there is a need for more quality schools in the state. The number of students—14,000—currently on charter school waitlists in GA (as detailed on page e38) also indicates an unmet demand for seats in high quality schools. The application explains on page e42 the most common barriers to expansion and replication, and the subgrant awards the applicant plans generally tie back to those barriers and attempt to address them; for instance, the applicant would provide subgrantees with

**Sub**

funds to support leader salaries for start-up and planning, which many schools indicate is not something they are able to fund currently based on the barriers identified in the application. The application presents a sound rationale on page e43 as to how the funds would support expansion of school options in rural communities in particular by addressing some common barriers to startup.

**Weaknesses:**

While the application describes the approach to determining subgrant amounts on p e648, indicating that the applicants reviewed budgets from schools who had undergone expansion, replication, or startup, additional evidence could have been presented to substantiate the maximum award amounts the applicants envision. The application does not include specific examples and cost estimates sufficient to demonstrate that the proposed subgrant amounts are reasonable to meet the need of subgrantees.

**Reader's Score: 16**

**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 application describes a relatively robust set of clear mandatory criteria for all subgrant/cohort applicants on pp e54-55, including appropriate assurances around participating in a public hearing and disclosure of any new agreements with CMO/EMO. Further, the priorities for subgrantee applicants align to identified areas of locating in a rural or geographic priority area, opening a high school, or planning a specific collaboration with local public schools or districts to share resources. Page e65 describes a commitment to, and requirement that, subgrantees engage with local communities in planning and developing their charter schools, which is likely to increase the degree to which subgrantees ensure a community-centered approach.

**Weaknesses:**

The application and methods of evaluation described on p e53 did not provide specific methods or description of how the co-applicants would ensure an impartial selection process. The application also did not include details about what objective assessment tool or criteria would be used to assess subgrant applications. The applicants state on page e9 that the SCSC will tailor the charter application process to ensure applicants propose appropriate plans to address transportation challenges, but does not provide additional detail as to how their application process will assure this.

**Reader's Score: 13**

**State Plan - State Plan**

**1. The State entity's plan to--**

**Reader's Score: 31**

**Sub**

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

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

The monitoring process described on pp e62-63 indicates a well developed plan to monitor subgrantees through a combination of site visits and submission of documentation such as budgets. These monitoring activities will occur with adequate frequency and regularity to allow monitoring of the extent to which subgrantees are using grant funds appropriately and to meet the goals envisioned. Monitoring visits on-site will include a focus on the subgrantee's approach to supporting at-risk students, which is likely to help ensure grant funds are used appropriately to provide supports to students who can benefit.

**Weaknesses:**

The monitoring plan lacked details about how monitors would be trained and how specifically the monitoring process will set subgrantees up for long-term sustainability after the grant funds have been used. For instance, while the application says the SCSC and SCSF will provide training on the grant monitoring cycle on p e62, it does not indicate a specific timeline or roles and responsibilities for implementing this training. Further, while the application says on p e63 that the annual report issued to subgrantees will highly needs for sustainability after the grant period, the application could provide additional specific detail as to how the monitoring process will transition toward sustainability over the life of the grant.

**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:**

The application describes clearly on pp e63-64 how the SCSF will work as sole fiscal agent, removing a double burden on schools and GaDOE to review locally-authorized charter school subgrant applications. Additionally, the monitoring process described how on-site monitoring will be folded into other typical comprehensive monitoring visits to avoid duplication and additional burden on schools and the co-applicant entities. There appear to be sufficient structures in place for co-applicants to regularly discuss and share information to avoid duplicative paperwork burdens.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**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:**

The applicant identifies several sources of support from both co-applicant groups and external partners such as Bellwether Education Partners and the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, as detailed on pp e64-65, and in the description of Objective 3 related to improving authorizer capacity on p e51 and the activities described in the outline of Objective 1 related to replication, expansion and opening of new charters in GA on pp e43-44. For instance, the launch of a New School Leader Fellowship program, and the cohort model described for replication and expansion support include programming and technical assistance related to the barriers to opening/expansion outlined on page e42, and seem to contain a clear and well-designed set of topics to set schools up with the knowledge and capacity required. Additionally, the applicant's implementation and dissemination of effective authorizing practices modules from NACSA seem likely to increase the understanding of effective

**Sub**

authorizing practices across the state. The mandatory criteria for all applicants outlined on pp e54-55 indicate a general commitment to ensuring applicants have a plan to recruit a broad range of students with a focus on foster and unaccompanied homeless youth, and a plan to support student retention and discipline practices that do not remove students from the classroom.

**Weaknesses:**

The application lacks specificity as to their methods and systems to follow up and monitor subgrantees success in recruiting and enrolling all students, and in implementing discipline practices beyond simply submitting a plan as required according to p. e54.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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 application describes several commitments and planned activities to solicit input, including holding informational meetings in communities, including rural communities (p e49), and distributing materials to direct community members to the envisioned new website findaGaCharter.org. Additionally, the application states at several points including p e65 that subgrantees will be required to engage with local communities. The applicant further states that feedback from informational sessions will be used to guide the work of the initiative.

**Weaknesses:**

The application lacks detail as to how informational sessions will be planned and conducted in a way that provides a meaningful opportunity for parents and community members to provide feedback. The application refers primarily to these sessions as “informational,” and an opportunity to raise awareness around charter schools as an option, but the application does not a more specific plan detailing how the takeaways from these informational sessions would be turnkeyed in such a way to impact the specific communities where these sessions occur.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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 provisions of GA charter law described on p e66 and elsewhere in the application detail a robust protection of flexibility for charter schools around budgets, expenditures, staffing, procurement, and curriculum, as well as the legal structure to allow the charter school’s board autonomy in management. Additionally, the technical assistance the state entity will provide on topics such as finance, facilities, and practices to support at-risk students will support subgrantees and charters across the state in maximizing the flexibility provided under the law.

**Weaknesses:**

None identified.

**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: 13

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 overall timeline on pp e69-70 presents a realistic and ambitious timeline for implementation, and the combined team effort between the co-applicants creates the conditions for a well-coordinated management plan across three key entities within the GA education/charter sector. Most of the key individuals responsible for pieces of the management plan are already in place, including some who are already dedicating time to the existing GEER-funded project; this existing structure will support the applicants in effectively managing the goals and milestones identified. The timeline indicates that the applicants have considered which entity is responsible for which portions of the work, as well as where there are overlaps to ensure coordination and avoid duplication of efforts.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant describes an adequate reasoning for selecting certain external partners such as Bellwether and NACSA, but lacks additional detail as to who will be responsible for managing those partners' work and efforts, and how the applicants will monitor progress overtime with external partners. In addition, while the overall timeline outlined on pp e69-70 is adequate and captures many of the topline components necessary for the project, it could include more specific milestones and outcomes, especially related to development of pieces implemented with partner organizations such as the cohort model which Bellwether appears to be involved with implementing.

Reader's Score: 9

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

**Strengths:**

On page e77, the applicant describes different audiences from whom they will solicit feedback, including a range of stakeholder voices such as technical assistance providers, subgrant recipients, and communities. The inclusion of an option for the public to provide feedback through the internet (also described on 77e) is likely to ensure all GA members of the public can provide input.

**Weaknesses:**

The plan lacks specificity as to exactly what systems and structures the applicant would use to engage in continuous improvement, and what types of data and feedback the applicants intend to collect.

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 application details 5 staff from the partner applicants on p e-78 who currently devote some amount of time to the existing GEER-funded effort, and indicates one additional current staff member would devote additional time should the application receive funding; this represents a solid team with an appropriate amount of time dedicated to

**Sub**

the project's objectives. Notably, the Program Coordinator is dedicated 100% to management of the project, a positive step to ensure there is at least one person who is wholly dedicated to project management.

**Weaknesses:**

No significant weaknesses.

**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:**

As detailed on page e26, the State Charter Schools Commission ("SCSC") of Georgia is an authorized public chartering agency that is not a LEA. Further, a petitioner denied a charter by a LEA may submit an appeal to SCSC, in accordance with this competitive preference priority.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

**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 application fully explains Title 20 of Georgia Code, the Charter Schools Act of 1998, on pp e26 and e27, which demonstrates how the applicant meets this priority. Title 20 requires equitable financing for charter schools in comparison to traditional public schools. Further, Title 20 ensures that even in cases where state-authorized charter schools which act as single-school LEAs do not receive local revenue, an equitable formula is in place to state charter school supplement funds that provide single-school LEAs with comparable funding for operation.

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses identified.

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 partnership between the GA DOE and Research Education Laboratories described on p e 28 indicates and describes a clear system to examine and disseminate effective practices from charter schools to struggling schools. Page e28 notes several specific examples of identified strong practices, including teacher management practices and instructional practices that align with effective systems and structures in high-quality schools. The application further describes the series of resource allocation coaching sessions offered to struggling school systems based on identified effective practices, as required by this priority.

**Weaknesses:**

None identified.

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 application demonstrates that the Georgia charter schools act established a fund to support charter schools in accessing facilities. These funds are available to both LEA-authorized and state-authorized charter schools. The additional [REDACTED] of funding described and approved in the FY2023 budget in GA seems likely to ensure ongoing availability and provision of facilities funding support in the future. Moreover, specific examples offered on pp e29-e30 demonstrate that there is funding for facilities, access to public facilities, and the ability to share in bonds or mill levies. Additionally, portions of the technical assistance the applicants would provide to subgrantees would include assistance with facilities acquisition, as detailed on pp e46 and e47.

**Weaknesses:**

None identified.

**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 application indicates intention to attempt to further support and encourage schools that serve at-risk students, and some alignment of effort to serve at-risk students as demonstrated by the Office of Whole Child Supports and Strategic Partnerships within the GaDOE on p e30 and e31. The state currently has several authorized charter schools with a mission-focus on serving at-risk students such as those at risk of dropping out of high school, and many charter schools which offer wraparound services and other support services such as health and wellness services, food pantries, and intensive tutoring that may be particularly useful to at-risk students.

**Weaknesses:**

While the application shows the existence of some schools already serving at-risk populations on pp e30-31, the response does not adequately explain details as to how the applicant would provide technical assistance specifically to support the opening, replication, or expansion of schools that focus on supporting at-risk students.

**Reader's Score:** 2

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/24/2022 11:53 AM

Status: Submitted

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## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia, Inc. (S282A220006)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	29
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	12
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>State Plan</b>		
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	34
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	14
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP1	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP2	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
1. CPP3	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
1. CPP4	3	3

	<b>Sub Total</b>	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>			
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>			
1. CPP5		3	3
	<b>Sub Total</b>	3	3
	<b>Total</b>	110	99

# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - State Entities Panel - 7: 84.282A

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

Applicant: State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia, Inc. (S282A220006)

## 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: 29

#### Sub

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

#### Strengths:

This applicant has included a strong case for rationale of the proposed project that included evidence supporting over 50% of parents polled said they wanted more options for public schooling (pg.e37). With many of the charter schools in Georgia located in Atlanta area, many regions in the state have no community based public school of choice (pg. 37). The charter school waitlist is 14,000 students which demonstrates a need for the school (pg.38). According to a 2018 study from Blumstone & Warner of traditional elementary public- school students and charter start up students, charter students were more likely to graduate from high school, more likely to enroll and persist in college for two straight years (pg.e39). Based on the state assessment, charter schools have recovered student achievement faster than traditional public schools in the state (pg.e40). Research has also been conducted around the needs and rationale for charter schools within Georgia since 2016 (pge385-436)

#### Weaknesses:

This application could have provided a logic model that included more detail on how it will overcome barriers such as appropriate budgeting and lack of experience managing multiple campuses as listed on (pg.e42). In addition study details are limited and did not include variable factors (pg.e39).

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)

#### Strengths:

The performance measures listed relate to the outcomes of the proposal which are qualitative and quantitative such as measuring the amount of info sessions held and making sure 2 new schools apply between year 2-5 (pg. e43-44, 49 and 51). This applicant will also continue to use a national authorizer module for overcoming obstacles that are resulting from their annual performance evaluation (pg.e52). This evidence is proof of qualification for meeting this objective.

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

The applicants evaluation plan is lacking the detail of evaluation methods that are clearly identified not just implied (pg.e52). The applicant lacks details entailing how this program will use evaluation methods such as surveys and feedback, tools, resources for ongoing program efficiency

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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:**

This applicant has already been operating programs that support high quality charter schools, they currently have tied TA and support into the subgrants they provide. They plan to expand their reach of charter schools by increasing the amount of schools within the state, throughout the state of Georgia while continuing to impact public education (pg.e61). They also have identified a nonprofit that will be responsible for their fiscal needs that can pay the schools directly instead of funds being sent to local authorizer. This process makes it easier and less complicated for schools to receive funds so no business stoppage occurs (pg.e61). This applicant has proven through this plan and the evidence provided their ambitiousness of the state objectives to be carried out through the CSP program.

**Weaknesses:**

Weaknesses: No weaknesses found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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:**

Subgrant award amounts were based on pre-opening and year one budgets of existing schools, representing mostly start-up costs, facility expense and educational model. The increased demand for charter schools from parent feedback sessions supports the need for CSP funding. The number of subgrantees is based in historical data from previous CSP grants, number of petitions and statewide charter approval (pg.e34). Chart on page e.47 shows amount for subgrants in each phase of the CSP program which meets the needs of this requirement.

**Weaknesses:**

This applicant is lacking detail around how subgrants will fit into CSP plan. This proposal is very specific when detailing the applicants for replication and new schools (such as the number of schools created versus the number of schools replicating and how many students they will serve (pg.e33-34)) but did not provide enough evidence of potential applicants and requirements for subgrant applicants.

**Reader's Score: 16**

**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:**

Subgrant applicants will be a mixture of new schools, replicating school and expanding schools that will receive cohort style TA as a condition of the grant. Schools will be invited to participate in the cohort program and upon completion will be eligible for subgrant (pg. e53-54). Co-applicants of this proposal will manage the selection process of subgrantee applicants that is impartial and equity based that is comprised of representatives of all three collaborating organizations (pg.e53). The proposal lists the criteria and priorities for subgrantees on pages e.54-55 which will meet the state's objective and improve educational results.

**Weaknesses:**

This applicant lacks detailed information around how this plan addresses to improve educational results for students specifically (curriculum and learning) that would include what tools, methods would be used that benefit academic learning.

**Reader's Score: 12**

**State Plan - State Plan****1. The State entity's plan to--**

**Reader's Score: 34**

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

Adequate monitoring of eligible applicants will be conducted numerous ways, by guidance and webinars, monthly monitoring for sub-grants, trainings from co-applicants on grant monitoring cycle, expectations and timelines and procedures for addressing identified risks. Budgets will be examined verses expenditures to ensure fiscal fidelity. These expenditures will be discussed at monthly meetings (pg.e62). Bi-annual subgrant recipients monitoring visits from staff.

**Weaknesses:**

This applicant lacks evidence of monitoring visits frequency or schedule to ensure program accountability.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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:**

To avoid duplication for this proposal a co-applicant will serve as the fiscal agent and disburse all funds directly to the school. This process streamlines the process of receiving funds thus reducing the burden on the state board of education and allowing schools to get funds quicker. Schools will submit information to the partner regarding

**Sub**

monitoring activities which eliminates schools submitting information more than once. All three organizing/authorizing parties will meet consistently to ensure quality oversight without duplicating information (pg. e63).

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses

**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:**

Technical Assistance is tied into the receiving of grant funds (pg. e64). Subgrantees receive numerous TA opportunities such as online training, live sessions and a created manual, from various external partners and the three authorizing organizations. (pg.e64) There is also TA for the authorizer in coordination with the national authorizer and the creation of an authorizer manual (pg.e65).

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses.

**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:**

Charter schools in Georgia are created from community need and input. All subgrantees are required to have community input and feedback. Feedback will be taken from informational sessions throughout the communities and used to guide the work and share out as best practices with other charter schools (pg. e65). They have also created a plan for families in the case a charter school closes that includes discussions of new schools options for displaced students, creating transition teams and ensuring that the community is aware of school closure in ample time and various ways of communication.(pg. e66).

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses.

**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)**

**Sub**

**Strengths:**

In regards to flexibility offered, Georgia charter schools have maximum flexibility as required by state law. TA provided by the collaborating organizations supports flexibility and charter school law for the subgrants (pg.e74-75) Charter schools will control their own budgets, staffing, curriculum. Georgia charter schools are required to have non profit organization status to ensure their board will have complete autonomy for major decision making thus impacting the educational outcomes for students (pg. e66)

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses.

**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 provides a strong measurable and attainable management plan.(pg.e68-69). The combination of the three organizations working collaboratively ensures that milestones and outcomes will be met on time. The roles each organization plays is listed on page e71-75 in addition to the roles of external partnerships. This list is broken down into timeline and the various tasks and benchmarks the co-applicants will be responsible for such as scoring sub grant applications, holding subgrant award TA virtual sessions and replication/expansion cohort program.

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses.

**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:**

Feedback is collected after every training or TA program throughout the initiative. As the program continues and feedback is given it will be evaluated so adjustments can be made to ensure program fidelity and growth (pg. e77).

**Weaknesses:**

The application is lacking detail on what type of system and structures will be used for continuous feedback and evaluation such as surveys, focus groups etc. (pg.e77).

Sub

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:**

Time commitment of staff is already in place to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the program (pg. e77-80). Key personnel listed is adequate to perform the roles listed due to their qualifications listed on their resumes provide. (pg. e94-120).

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses.

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:**

This applicant has a statewide chartering agency in addition to a non LEA commission for denial appeals which makes it applicable for this priority (pg.e26)

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses in this area.

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:**

This applicant allows funding for charter schools the inclusion of state based funding, with the exception of schools authorized by the state. All charter schools within the state can participate in bond financing for facility purchase. The Georgia State law, title 20 of the Charter Schools Act of 1998 ensures that the state requires equitable financing for charter schools in comparison to other public schools in the state. This priority has been met with the evidence stated

from the law.(pg.e26-27)

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses

**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:**

This applicant has partnered with a research lab to study the flexibility of charter schools and how it effects academic performance (pg.e28) They also plan to create a website of best practices that will help failing schools (pg.e29). This priority has been met by the evidence provided.

**Weaknesses:**

No found weakness.

**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 state board of education allows charter schools to access board of education facilities that are not in use for no cost leases (goal C and F). The state board of education has also created and added to the fund they have to help charter schools state and locally funded to acquire facilities thus meeting goals B and A.(pg.e30)

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses

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:**

This applicant has formed a partnership with the states board of education whole child supports department to collaborate and provide resources to at risk students. (pg.e30-31). They also have several specific population charter schools that service at risk students such as high school drop out, credit recovery and disability (pg.e31) These populations are specifically addressed within this application and some are already servicing these students which are at risk students. This application will provide support to these schools through its partnership of the state board department of education charter school department to develop a roadmap that engages the community and provide academic and non academic support to its students (pg.e30).

**Weaknesses:**

No found weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 3

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 08/24/2022 12:13 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/25/2022 10:25 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia, Inc. (S282A220006)

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

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of Project Design</b>		
1. Quality of Project Design	35	32
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
<b>Quality of Eligible Subgrant Applicants</b>		
1. Subgrant Applicants	15	15
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>State Plan</b>		
<b>State Plan</b>		
1. State Plan	35	31
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Quality of the Management Plan</b>		
1. Management Plan	15	14
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Priority Questions</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 1</b>		
1. CPP1	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2</b>		
1. CPP2	2	2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3</b>		
1. CPP3	1	1
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 4</b>		
1. CPP4	3	3

	<b>Sub Total</b>	3	3
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>			
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 5</b>			
1. CPP5		3	3
	<b>Sub Total</b>	3	3
	<b>Total</b>	110	102



# Technical Review Form

Panel #7 - State Entities Panel - 7: 84.282A

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

Applicant: State Charter Schools Foundation of Georgia, Inc. (S282A220006)

## 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:

The application proposes a comprehensive research-based model for supporting new and replicated charter schools with the goal of opening 32 new charter schools enrolling 6,000 students during the grant period.

Research is cited to show demographic and survey data supporting the need for new charter schools. Also, academic performance data indicates charter student performance in Georgia charter schools is superior to traditional public schools, thus providing a reasonable basis for the model which relies on existing high performance charter schools to support new schools by replication or expansion. (e37-41).

The project proposes to bring together three key organizations to support the creation of new schools (The Georgia State Charter Schools Unit, the State Charter School Foundation, and State Charter School Commission) by dissemination of information in a website (e50), public meetings, and reaching out to successful charter schools that want to replicate or expand.

The applicants detailed plans for replication of high performing schools are based on the Texas model and standards from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (e48).

Activities are proposed to encourage collaboration and to use best practice in the improvement of struggling charter and traditional schools. These activities include the dissemination of data from the Georgia Department of Education's partnership with Research Education Laboratories (REL-SE). Another activity is collecting best practices from state charter schools related to its Schools of Wellness Initiative and sharing those best practices with the state department of Georgia to use in their statewide support and training efforts (e53).

#### Weaknesses:

The application does not clearly address how the project will use the establishment of charter schools to improve the achievement in low performing schools or to turn around struggling schools.

Reader's Score: 4

Sub

**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 plan includes smart goals for each of the four project objectives. The goals are designed to be measurable by the meeting of various actions or outcomes. The State Charter Schools Commission, with extensive experience with charter school oversight will be responsible for holding the subgrantee schools accountable for their performance on various measures including academics and finances (e73).

**Weaknesses:**

The timelines for the attainment of the performance measures are not specifically stated as yearly evaluation targets. Since many of the objectives are to be evaluated by the outcomes observable at the end of the project, it is possible that lack of adequate progress may be missed and so the opportunity to make change will be lost. For example, on e49 the evaluation measure of the objective of building a website is the completed website. This measure does not have a timeline to measure progress in the development of the website on a year by year basis.

**Reader's Score: 4**

**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 program intends to increase the number of charter schools is based on a model that uses the strength of currently high performing charter schools. In 2017 the Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies highlights the significant economic benefits of charter schools on both communities and students across the state (e38). For these reasons successful Georgia charter schools will be selected receive funding and technical assistance for replicating or expanding their school model.

The barriers to reaching targeted priority rural communities and high schools is supported by research. Rural schools typically do not have access to existing buildings that are adequate for a school and also, they have difficulty identifying local personnel with expertise to develop charter schools without extensive assistance. (e43). Also, research is cited supporting the strategy of prioritizing community based high performing charter schools for replication and expansion as a means to reaching the ambitious goals of the project(e42).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 5**

**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 demand for new schools is justified and supported by a number of data points, including a survey indicating 50% of community found a need for more charter schools, a waiting list of 14,000 students in the 2020-2021 school year (e36).

The application justifies the demand for charter schools with data which shows the barriers to establishing successful schools in rural areas that currently have few charter schools in Georgia, and High School grades. Most charter schools in Georgia are located in the Atlanta area (e37). Grant amounts generally match the needs, with

**Sub**

allocations [REDACTED] for school expansion of 150 student enrollment and [REDACTED] for expansion to a new High School.

**Weaknesses:**

The application lacks detail needed about the process and criteria for differentiating funding levels of subgrantee according to needs of various location, enrollment levels or grade configuration.

**Reader's Score: 19**

**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 application specifies in detail the number of subgrants and award amounts for each year of the grant period and also provides a comprehensive description of the criteria for selection of subgrantees. Criteria for applicants are clearly listed including an analysis of community needs, a plan to maintain racial and socio-economic diversity, independence from management organization, and public outreach and dissemination of information efforts (e54-58). The process for selection will adequately prioritize applications for rural and High Schools in both new schools and replication of current high achieving charter schools. The applicant has identified a geographic priority area, it will prioritize applicants planning to open high schools, and applications that indicate a partnership with local school districts (e55). Subgrantees in the replication and expansion track as well as those in the start-up charter school track in the second year of planning, prior to opening, will be provided an innovative and extensive 15- week leadership program, as well as financial support to ensure the success of new school development. (e46).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**Reader's Score: 15**

**State Plan - State Plan**

**1. The State entity's plan to--**

**Reader's Score: 31**

**Sub**

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

**Strengths:**

The Georgia department of education (GaDOE) is proposing to work with two statewide partners to provide strong oversight and training to subgrantees. "For all charter school subgrant recipients, a team of SCSF and SCSC staff members will visit each grant recipient bi-annually... For this CSP proposal, the SCSF will serve as the fiscal agent" (e62-63). Subgrantees will appropriately receive an annual report and if there are any deficiencies found the

**Sub**

grantee will be required to schedule additional monitoring and provide an action plan (e62). Expenditures will be extensively monitored during monthly meetings of the state (GaDOE and co-applicant the state charter schools foundation (SCSF) and the state charter schools commission (SCSC).

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant lacks sufficient detail about how the subgrantees will be evaluated as to sustainability after grant funding is no longer available.

**Reader's Score: 9**

**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 application explains that the fiscal agent, the State Charter Schools Foundation, will disburse funds directly to subgrantees, reducing the burden on local authorizers to duplicate efforts by having to apply for funds from the local district and the state charter school fiscal agent for the grant. An innovative example of streamlining to avoid duplication is the plan to align program monitoring with the annual Comprehensive Performance Framework visits by the State Charter Schools Commission (e63).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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:**

Several organizations are mentioned, including Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA), Bellwether Education Partners, and/or Lead with Excellence (new school leader fellowship program) to support subgrantees with programmatic and operational technical assistance and training(e64). In addition, the major partners -the State Charter Schools Foundation (SCSF) and the State Charter Schools Commission (SCSC)- will also schedule training and technical assistance on grant management and legal requirements.

The application describes significant and adequate oversight and training for authorizers, based on authorizing standards which were developed using the National Association of Charter Authorizers (NACSA) guideline and standards (e64).

**Weaknesses:**

The application lacks sufficient detail about plans to increase retention and recruitment of students of economically disadvantaged background in order to avoid disproportionate disciplinary actions.

**Reader's Score: 8**

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:**

The application provides a detailed plan that states that subgrantees will be required to have community meetings in the planning of their program. The state will hold informational meetings and consider comments in the operation of charter schools (e65).

**Weaknesses:**

The process of soliciting input does not provide a timeline and there are not a variety of opportunities for community input other than informational meetings, such as surveys, focus groups or a public comment process.

**Reader's Score: 4**

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 application states that charter schools have control of all aspects of operations, including budgets, personnel, programs and curriculum (e66). The state law requires that charter school boards are to be non-profit organizations with the independence to make decisions. The applicant details adequate support to maximize the flexibility by technical assistance provided by The Georgia Charter Schools Association. An incubator program reviews all aspects of operation including the areas of flexibility to schools to control budgets, personnel and facilities (e74).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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 application presents a detailed plan, including timelines and responsibilities of key participants in the state plan (e68-70). The application clearly describes the roles and qualifications of key personnel which are adequate to the management of the project (71-76).

**Sub**

**Weaknesses:**

The application lacks detail regarding the activities and budget allocations for the management of the monitoring which will be carried out by the various organizations/partners involved in the project.

**Reader's Score: 9**

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

**Strengths:**

The application states that informational meetings will take place to gather input on the management of the projects and in general the charter schools state initiative (e65). The application indicates that one strategy to get feedback from the public and other stakeholders is to post training and technical assistance outcomes on the FindaGaCharter.org website (e77).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses found.

**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 that outlined in the personnel chart of the application are adequate to the project objectives. The application lists key staff with experience in the state program whose funding is ending. The key personnel will continue at the same level for the next five years, the State Charter Schools Foundation director will increase support to the project and become a fulltime position. In addition, the qualification of the two members of the State Charter Schools Commission who will provide in-kind contribution of time to the proposed project are extensive and appropriate to the project objectives.(e77-78).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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 has at least one authorizing agency, the State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia that is not an LEA meeting (a) of the priority (e26).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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 application demonstrates that charter schools are fully funded in comparison to traditional public school in Georgia. The state education law allocates state and federal funding to charter schools with the same formulas (e26). Also, charter schools receive a proxy for local funding, facilities funding and categorical funds for items like transportation and nutrition (e27).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

**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 application clearly demonstrates how the state department of education used best practices from charter schools to improve struggling schools and local educational agencies (LEAs). The Georgia Department of Education has partnered with Research Educational Laboratory (RES-EL) to identify the effect of specific best practices on student achievement, and met with schools which have been identified for improvement to share the results. The state plans to continue this training if successful in receiving federal funds it is currently seeking and to develop a website to further disseminate the best practices state-wide (e29).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

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 application demonstrates several ways that the state provides charter schools in their efforts to secure funding for facilities. For example, the state will provide grants to charter schools to acquire unused school facilities. State law also gives charter schools the ability to share in bonds or mill levies and access to public facilities. Title 20 of Georgia Code, The Charter Schools Act of 1998, provides for facilities funding for charter schools(e29). Another strong aspect of the law is that it requires local boards of education to make unused facilities available to local charter schools with no-cost leases. (e20).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.

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 application demonstrates strong support for at risk students in charter schools. The Georgia department of education has created an office of whole child supports to provide schools with training on mental health and other non-academic needs of students. The charter schools division has worked with the school improvement office and The Office of Whole Child to offer a toolkit of strategies and resources for charter schools. Several charter schools provide extensive and unique programs for at risk students, including schools focused on students of immigrants and low income population, and schools that use culturally responsive instructional models (e31).

**Weaknesses:**

No weaknesses were found.



**Reader's Score:** 3

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 08/25/2022 10:25 AM