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Sources: Public Charter Schools Program Title V, Part B, Subpart 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001; Charter Schools Program Title V, Part B Non-Regulatory Guidance July 2004, updated 2008.
Key Words: Public Charter Schools Program, grant, rubric
Summary: Items that will be evaluated and scored by grant readers during a competitive grant read to determine the strongest applications for funding.

Community Schools Funding Application
Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP) Grant Evaluation Rubric

This rubric consists of 15 items that correlate to the headings in the PCSP funding application. The first item is worth a maximum of 12 points; the others are worth a maximum of six points. In three cases a CCIP heading has a second item also worth up to six points.

Under each item are bullets that suggest potential components in the answer. Not all bullets will apply to every school. Bullets do not have a specific point value, nor indicate the sequence that the answer must follow. Additional facts may be included if they are considered relevant. Grant readers will score the answer's overall strength and comprehensiveness. As the CCIP provides a limited amount of space for answers, concise, clear writing is best.

Grant Read Process. Without discussion with any other reader, three grant readers will read and score the entire application. Then, as a group, they will fill in a comment sheet on the application's strengths, as well as suggestions for improvement. These comments may be requested by the grant applicant after grant scoring is finished.

Each answer is rated on a scale that moves from vague/unclear to strong evidence/ exemplary. The score is based on the overall strength of the answer.

1 Confused and weak answer; poor evidence; missing critical information; unlikely to succeed in improving student learning
2 Minimal evidence; limited potential; vague; weak concepts; probably won't promote significant gains; limited likelihood of success
3 Some evidence; partially developed concepts; some potential for effectiveness; some inconsistencies; needs work
4 Good concepts with enough examples of evidence to indicate a good chance for success
5 Very good application with strong examples of evidence throughout; high potential
6 Excellent concepts; exceptional evidence; well thought-out with a high likelihood of success, exemplary

1. Integration into Continuous Improvement Plan (12 pts.)

Describe the educational program of your proposed community school, focusing on how your program will enable all students to meet state student academic achievement standards. What curriculum and instructional practices will be used?

- Is there a detailed description of the educational program, its design, curriculum and the rationale for its effectiveness?

- Is there convincing evidence that this curriculum and its practices will enable students to meet state academic standards? Is this evidence from third-party, objective studies?
- What is the role of the teacher? Does the proposed curriculum have strong teacher support?
- Will students show accelerated progress? Will students progress steadily at the fourth and ninth grades?
- Are data available that show college readiness/success and/or job readiness/success using this curriculum and educational program?
- How will this curriculum help the students discussed in the following needs assessment?

2. Student Population (6 pts.)

Based on your needs assessment, describe the students your school will serve. How will you inform these students about your school and give them an equal opportunity to attend? What are their specific needs or issues? What programs will address these needs? How will you school comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(3)(1)(B) of the individuals with Disabilities Education Act?

- Is there current student data, with break out of subgroups, so that programs can address specific needs, including LEP and students with disabilities?
- Is the plan for students with disabilities well thought-out, coherent and likely to be helpful?
- Does the school program seem like a "cookie-cutter" model that assumes little adaptation needs to be made for student populations?
- If the school has already opened, are the results for all students, including subgroups, showing improvement? What special measures have already been implemented?

3. Community Outreach (6 pts.)

This is a continuation of the previous topic.

- Has a complete plan for informing the community been developed?
- Is a marketing plan described that includes a market assessment of the need for this school?
- Why does the developer assume the school model will be appropriate for the community?
- Is there evidence of community interest in the school model?
- How will equal choice and opportunity to attend be insured?
- Why will students leave their current school to attend this one?

4. Partnership Commitment: Stakeholder Involvement/Collaboration (6 pts.)

Describe how parents, businesses and other community organizations or members will be or were involved in the planning, program design and implementation of the school. Describe each partner's continuing role and your plans to include them actively in the school's program.

- How will parents be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the community school? Have parents already been contacted?
- Are many different community groups or members cited, and their involvement in the new school detailed? Are their roles clearly developed and critical to the school?
- Will stakeholders continue to play important roles in the future of the school? Are these continuing roles described?

- For a school that is already open, what specifically have the different partners already done? What are they committed to do in the future?

5. The funding application must contain <u>one or two goals with one or two strategies per goal</u>. (6 pts. for goal/s and strategy/ies.)

Note to applicant: Goals, strategies and action steps are in the school's District/Agency plan, which is on the Planning Tool side of the CCIP application.

- Do the goal(s) and strategies reflect the purpose of the PCSP grant, which is to increase student achievement and close the achievement gap?
- Does the plan have no more than two well-conceived goals, with no more than two well described strategies per goal? (Having more probably indicates lack of focus or improper goal selection.)
- Are the goals and strategies focused? Are they aligned and consistent with other parts of this application?

6. The funding application must contain <u>one annual action step per strategy for each year of the award.</u> <u>The benchmark option is below the action step description and will increase the score for this section.</u> (6 pts. for action steps with appropriate benchmarks)

Note to applicant: Be sure that an action step/grant relationship is established, or the action step will not show up in the final application. If the action step with its benchmarks does not show up, it will reduce the final score.

- Does each strategy have two action steps for a two-year grant or three action steps for a three-year grant?
- How accurately does each action step reflect what will be accomplished during one year of the grant?
- Is the action step focused, measurable and likely to produce positive results?
- Is an appropriate benchmark used?
- Does the action step enable the school to be held accountable for student achievement?
- Can the school use the action step to document its progress during the year?

7. Scientifically Based Research (6 pts.)

Describe any promising practice or scientifically based research your school will use. Explain why your school population will benefit. Cite examples of other successful school using these practices.

- Is the research-based or promising practice that will be implemented through the curriculum described in detail?
- Is the research current? What is the source of the research? Is there any affiliation between those who conducted the research and the proposed school model?
- Is the research the basis for successful schools in Ohio or elsewhere?
- How appropriate and convincing are the described student benefits?
- Are the other schools cited as models academically strong and fiscally stable, with superior student achievement profiles, either AYP or value added?
- Have student rankings in those schools been provided in the answer?

8. Professional Development (6 pts.)

Describe your school's plan to ensure continuing professional development (PD) and assessment of all staff, including aspects such as: insuring staff participation in the school's vision,

mentoring, aid to teachers to achieve HQT status or appropriate licensure, cultural sensitivity training, LEP issues and special needs requirements. What funding sources will you use?

- Describe the school's PD plan for all school personnel. Does it include specific goals and assessments that cover the initial and subsequent years at the school?
- Does the school's policy manual support broad and continuing PD within the school, especially for such issues as LEP, special needs and cultural sensitivity?
- How will the school ensure participation of all personnel in the school's vision and mission?
- How will all personnel be enabled to implement the school model or best practice?
- Will teachers and others mentor new staff to help increase their training (HQT status, higher degrees, additional licensure)?
- Will new teachers have help with reporting and accountability responsibilities?
- Are multiple funding sources cited for current and future PD?
- Does the amount of PD funding in the budget grid reflect its importance for the school?

9. Program Evaluation (6 pts.)

Describe how you will monitor and evaluate your progress in achieving your goals and objectives. What data will be collected? How will your school use this data to support needed changes? How will your sponsor, teachers, staff and parents be included in this process?

- Does a detailed description show convincingly how the school will monitor and evaluate progress toward its goals?
- Is the student assessment model a validated, standard model that is fully explained, along with the rationale for its acceptance?
- What kinds of assessments does the student data include? How often will they be administered?
- Is program evaluation aligned with the benchmarks used to measure action step outcomes?
- How will data be used to support change?
- How will the sponsor, school personnel, governing authority and parents be included?
- Will those involved in program and school evaluation be trained in the use of process, outcome and perception data to make decisions?
- For a school that is open, what data has been collected, and what changes have been made based on the data? What is the attitude of stakeholders to this data?

10. Budget Amounts/Narrative (6 pts.)

The CCIP budget is for one year. For a planning year, the budget cannot exceed $50,000. For an implementation year, the amount is $225,000. Provide a detailed budget narrative that identifies expenditures for each object code for the one-year budget.

- Has PCSP budget guidance been followed?
- Has no funding been used for nonpermissible expenditures, such as salaries or operating costs, including under purchased services?
- Does the budget use Uniform School Accounting Standards (USAS) object codes correctly and follow the Auditor of State's manual?
- Does the budget use Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) purpose codes correctly? These are defined on the Help menu of the CCIP budget grid.

- Does a detailed one-year budget narrative clearly identify how the requested funding will be used? Are there no large sums that lack detail about their intended use?

11. Budget/Allocation of Resources/Budget Integration (6 pts.)

Explain how this grant will support student achievement for either a three-year or two-year period. What will be the focus of your expenditures from this grant? When the school is eligible, how will you use other Federal programs administered by the U.S. Secretary of Education?

- Are the uses of the PCSP money clearly tied to the main goals of the PCSP program, which are to increase student achievement and close the achievement gap?
- Is there a clear, efficient and effective explanation how PCSP money will support the plan's goals, strategies and action steps during the two- or three-year grant period?
- What anticipated funding sources, especially other federal programs administered by the U.S. Secretary of Education, will be used? How will these be used?
- Is PCSP money aligned with and complementary to other federal or state money that may be received, especially during the period of the PCSP award (either two or three years)?

12. Governance of the Community School (6 pts.)

Who are the members of the governing authority? Give their titles, responsibilities for your school and affiliations with other community schools. Who are the operator and the sponsor of the school, and what are their roles? Will a management company provide services? Describe their services, name their personnel who will be involved with the operation of the school, and list the other schools they serve.

- Is the role of the Governing Authority (GA) described, including its legal and ethical duties and responsibility for final fiscal oversight?
- Is the GA diversified with at least five representatives from different stakeholders (but none from the sponsor or a management company)?
- Are specific details about intended members, their previous experience, and their anticipated role on the GA provided?
- Do these members provide the depth and breadth of knowledge to successfully oversee implementation of the grant and to help ensure the long-term success of the school?
- What is the GA's plan for evaluating its own role and effectiveness? What PD will the members receive?

13. Sponsor's Role and School Autonomy (6 pts.)

This is a continuation of the Governance question.

- Is the school's sponsor named? Is the sponsor's role discussed, including the services to be provided, and any payments to the sponsor?
- Is the sponsor's previous experience with community schools described, including whether the sponsor had former schools that were closed and the reason for their closure?
- Is there an operator for the school? Is the operator's role described, including previous experience?
- Will a management company be used? Are all their personnel identified, their roles in the school's operations explained, and their involvement with other schools listed?
- How will the school's autonomy from its sponsor (and any management company employed) be insured?
- Are different people in the critical roles of superintendent and treasurer for the

conversion community school and its sponsor--a school district, ESC or JVS?

14. Timeline (6 pts.)

Describe activities of the planning year and two implementation years, or only the latter if you are not seeking planning funds.

- Does a detailed two- or three-year timeline provide a thoughtful analysis of the different stages a school goes through in its initial years of operation?
- Are activities focused on achieving student success?
- Do the activities of the planning year (first year of a three-year grant) show that PCSP guidance has been read and understood? Will personnel who will be involved with the school be attending the required trainings and submitting the required documents in a timely fashion? Are the school's two years of implementation also covered in detail?
- Does an implementation application (two years only) show that the school is ready to open by September, (or has opened within the past year or two) and that responsible staffing, curriculum, record-keeping, reporting, etc., will be available by that time (or are already in place)? Are the activities during the two years of the award detailed and convincing? For a school that has just opened, is there already evidence of students performing at higher levels? Is what has already been accomplished at the newly opened school additional evidence of the school's quality?

15. Continuation (6 pts.)

How will your school fund its operations when this grant is finished? What level of student enrollment will enable it to be fiscally viable? What other dependable sources of funding will be available?

- Are other sources of funding—federal state, local, private, grants, etc., listed—along with the reasons why this school would be eligible for this funding?
- What level of student enrollment is needed for fiscal stability? Has this level been reached, or when will it be reached and why?
- Do other aspects of the school's five-year budget forecast show the school's fiscal potential to survive?
- Will other factors, such as strength of community involvement and exceptional student academic/career achievement, be crucial to the school's long-term success?
- Is the role of the governing authority in ensuring the continued operation of this school explained?
- How does the school's mission distinguish it from other schools, thereby attracting parent/student interest and helping to ensure its continuation?