

# **New Hampshire Department of Education**

## **Application for CFDA 84.282A**

**Submitted By**

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## Competitive Preference Priorities

New Hampshire qualifies for points for all four Competitive Preference Priorities:

### **Priority 1--Periodic Review and Evaluation**

New Hampshire charter school law, RSA 194B was changed this legislative session to require that all charter schools in New Hampshire be reviewed and evaluated at least once every five years. This review and evaluation is used to determine whether the school is meeting the terms of the school's charter, and is meeting or exceeding the student academic achievement requirements and goals for charter schools as set forth under State law. Previously charter schools were authorized for an initial five year term and then reauthorized every seven years thereafter. RSA 194B, section B:3 (X) has been changed to state: *(a) A school's renewal term shall be for a period of 5 years.*

No later than one year before the end of its five year term, the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) will arrange to conduct a comprehensive on-site review and evaluation of the charter school before renewal. The reauthorization process will begin by July 1 of the fourth year of operation and culminate in the State Board of Education's decision by April 1 of the fifth year of operation. The NHDOE considers the growing body of evidence from each year of the school's operation, along with the on-site renewal evaluation, to determine if the school has adequately fulfilled the promises of its original charter as it processes and reviews each charter school's renewal application.

Each charter school is held accountable by the State to the same academic achievement standards expected of all public schools. The NHDOE reviews all public

schools, including charter schools, annually to determine their progress toward the State's four Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) objectives. The NHDOE identifies charter schools that do not make annual yearly progress in reaching state goals and benchmarks for all students for two or more consecutive years. The list of districts and schools that do not make AYP is posted annually on the Bureau of Accountability and Assessment section of the NHDOE website.

RSA 194-B:16 defines the conditions for renewal of a New Hampshire Public Charter School, as well as the multiple components of the reauthorization process. RSA 194-B:16 (VI) specifies that, *“By the end of its final contract year, the chartered public school shall meet or exceed the objective academic test results or standards and goals as set forth in its application. If the school does not meet these results or standards and goals, it shall not be eligible for renewal of its charter.”*

Authorization of a charter school in New Hampshire requires an extensive application as well as submission of an accountability plan by December 1 of the opening year. This plan must follow the guidelines documented in the New Hampshire Department of Education's publication [The New Hampshire Charter School Accountability Process](#). This publication is posted and available to the public on the NHDOE website.

As part of the accountability process, all New Hampshire charter schools are required to report board minutes on a monthly basis, quarterly financial statements, and annual accountability evaluations to the NHDOE, which in turn is required to report to the New Hampshire State Board of Education. Four questions serve as the framework for assessment of New Hampshire charter schools:

- Is the school making progress toward achieving its mission?

- Is the school responsibly using public funds?
- Is the school promoting student attainment of expected knowledge/skills?
- Is the school sustainable?

By collecting information throughout the year from charter school periodic reports and annually in the charter schools' yearly progress report, the NHDOE is able to monitor schools' performance throughout the term of their charters.

Moreover, in compliance with New Hampshire charter school law, the NHDOE (or its agent) must also conduct "first-year and periodic subsequent program audits" of charter schools (RSA 194-B:10). The NHDOE conducts these audits and evaluates the periodic reports submitted by each charter school in order to present an accurate summary of the school's performance to the New Hampshire State Board of Education.

### **Priority 2--Number of High-Quality Charter Schools**

New Hampshire has continued to steadily add new charter schools that must adhere strictly to New Hampshire's Charter School and Open Enrollment Act, RSA 194-B. This statute was amended by the legislature in June 2006 to require charter schools to send the aforementioned monthly, quarterly, and annual reports to the NHDOE for regular review, which by their nature promote and strengthen the quality of the schools. These accountability provisions are discussed further in Selection Criteria (iv).

In addition, the NHDOE has established Grade Level Expectations (GLE) at the elementary level and Grade Span Expectations (GSE) at the high school level as part of the New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks. Charter schools must meet or exceed these academic requirements, ensuring that all charter schools in New Hampshire maintain a high level of quality. All public schools as well as charter schools must administer the

[New Hampshire Statewide Assessment](#) (New England Common Assessment Program, or NECAP), per RSA 104-B:3, II(h); 8, V; 10, II; 16, VI. These results are available to the general public on the NHDOE [website](#).

There are currently eleven charter schools open at twelve locations with one charter school serving at-risk students in two locations covering a geographic area of 4,000 square miles. One new school is scheduled to open later this year and at least three other groups are proceeding through the local authorization process. The goal of the NHDOE is to open twenty new high quality charter schools during the life of this grant.

**Priority 3--One Authorized Public Chartering Agency Other than a Local Educational Agency (LEA), or an Appeals Process**

The State--

(a) Provides for one authorized public chartering agency that is not an LEA, such as a State chartering board, for each individual or entity seeking to operate a charter school pursuant to State law; or

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

(a) New Hampshire charter school law RSA 194-B was amended in 2003 by the New Hampshire Legislature to create a second authorizer, the New Hampshire State Board of Education. This change in the charter school statute, coupled with the federal grant awarded by the Federal Charter School Program, were the catalysts which enabled charter schools to begin opening in New Hampshire. Prior to New Hampshire receiving its first and only Charter School Program grant, six charter schools were approved, but

none were able to open because of funding issues. By law, a maximum of twenty charter schools may be authorized by the New Hampshire State Board of Education. There are no restrictions however on the number of charter schools that may be authorized locally through LEAs.

It should be noted that senate bill SB386 submitted this session would remove the cap of twenty “state authorized” charter schools and has received strong bi-partisan support in the Senate Education Committee. This bill is expected to pass either this session or next.

### **Appeals process**

(b) RSA 194-B:3 (IV) specifies the appeals process for the denial of a charter school application if a local school legislative body denies an application. The State Board is responsible for assuring the completeness and compliance of all charter school applications with review standards specified under RSA 104-B:3 (II). Applicants may then resubmit applications when the reasons for denial have been rectified. *“RSA 194-B:3 (IV) The state board shall conduct a review of the proposed chartered public school application, using review standards as specified under RSA 194-B:3, II. The state board shall be authorized to suggest amendments or additions to the proposed application to both parties including, but not limited to, deficiencies identified by the local school board and the trustees, as the state board deems necessary to assure its completeness and compliance with this chapter. Application disapprovals by the state board shall include a written statement specifying areas deemed deficient or in the case of approval on appeal, the reasons for such action to both parties. The state board shall promptly notify the prospective board of trustees and the school board of its decision in writing.”*

Thus New Hampshire provides for multiple approaches to authorizing. The use of the state board as arbitrator of the contract application when there is deemed to be an inadequate application, gives the resources of the charter school office to the applicant for technical assistance and the State Board's experience with authorizing successful charter schools to the applicant and the LEA. With this structure in place, the Charter applicant and the LEA have the resources they need to arbitrate problems that might arise. In New Hampshire, the State Board of Education, the NHDOE and the LEA's work together to follow the State's education foundation of "following the child". The excellent charter accountability process that is available to the LEA allows for structural variation but is clear on expected outcomes. The process is modeled on the New England School and Colleges accreditation process and that is familiar to LEA's.

#### **Priority 4--High Degree of Autonomy**

RSA 194-B stipulates that New Hampshire charter schools must operate with a very high degree of autonomy: charter school boards of trustees operate as non-profit corporations, and may adopt a name and corporate seal, sue and be sued, acquire real property, receive and disburse funds, make contracts, incur debt, solicit and manage grants and gifts, and operate as any other non-profit corporation in New Hampshire would be able to operate (RSA194-B:5(III)). The State Board of Education's control over charter schools is limited by statute to anti-discrimination measures, state and federal health and safety standards, compulsory attendance laws and annual (statewide) pupil assessment/evaluation (RSA 194-B:8). Further, no greater than 25% of the membership of a local school board, or one member, whichever is greater, may simultaneously serve as members of the board of trustees of a charter or charter conversion school in New

Hampshire (RSA 194-B:5(II)). Additional discussion of charter school autonomy and flexibility in New Hampshire may be found under Selection Criteria (ii).

**Invitational Priority FY 2010 --High Quality Charter Schools in Urban or Rural Areas.**

New Hampshire is an interesting state in that we have a very rural, sparsely populated northern region and a very concentrated relatively urban population in our large southern cities. This striking contrast of population can best be viewed by the illustrated population density map on page 61. The northern regions of our state often suffer from a lack of economies of scale, which can result in underserved students, at-risk of not achieving academically or dropping out of high school. The charter school model is well suited to address the needs of a rural state like New Hampshire and can help even the playing field between educationally disadvantaged students and their peers. Although there are challenges to providing options to youngsters when there is not density of population, New Hampshire remains the only northern New England state with charter schools.

Dropout Rate Comparison: The following table compares the Annual Statewide Average and 4 Year Cumulative Dropout Rates to that of our five most rural northern districts.

<b>Dropout Rate Comparison 2008-09</b>			
<b>Statewide Average</b>		<b>5 Most Northern Districts</b>	
Annual dropout percentage	4 year cumulative dropout rate	Annual dropout percentage	4 year cumulative dropout rate
1.7%	6.7%	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>9.9%</b>

As the data clearly shows, students in our most rural districts are struggling more than the state as a whole. Opening new, high quality charter schools in these high need communities would help to improve student achievement and graduation rates in these chronically low performing areas of our state.

Targeted Funding: New Hampshire's highest priority for awarding Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP) funds will be to schools that propose to increase the academic achievement of students who are at greatest risk of not meeting challenging state academic standards or completing high school.

In this application, "at-risk students" will be defined as students who enroll in a charter school but whose home attendance district is chronically low performing as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) classification of "District in Need of Improvement". All applications for charter schools that meet this priority will receive a competitive scoring advantage and will be eligible to receive a 10% larger grant award than that available to applications for charter schools that will not serve this targeted population.

Of the five secondary charter schools operating in New Hampshire, four specifically target students at-risk in grades 9-12. As many as 34% of the students attending these charters are former high school drop outs. Although they enroll a high percentage of former drop outs, all secondary charter schools have continuously made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and the average charter school dropout rate of 5.9%, is below that of the state average and well below that of our most rural districts.

AYP and Charter Schools: The following table documents the number of charter schools that have met AYP compared to other public schools for the year 2008-09.

<b>NH AYP Comparison Charter Schools and other Public Schools 2008-09</b>					
		Charter Schools AYP		Public Schools without Charters AYP	
	Tested	11		463	
	Met AYP	9	<b>81.81%</b>	205	44.27%
	Not Met	2	<b>18.18%</b>	253	54.63%

Replicating Successful Programs: A highly successful program that we believe deserves replicating is that of the North Country Charter Academy (NCCA). NCCA currently serves students at-risk in grades 7-12, providing a learning environment for students that benefit from a nontraditional high school setting. With two locations serving rural Lancaster and Littleton New Hampshire, NCCA has graduated a total of 153 students since its establishment in 2004. Of those 153 graduates, 29% were former high school dropouts dating back to 2001. To this date, 30% of NCCA graduates have matriculated into post-secondary educational programs and colleges.

Both the New Hampshire Department of Education and New Hampshire LEA's have realized the need to address how education is delivered to students at-risk in New Hampshire as the number of high school dropouts reached 2,300 in 2005. The charter school program has helped to provide additional options for students currently at-risk and the next round of federal funding will be crucial to funding additional secondary charter schools that serve disengaged and underperforming students in New Hampshire. The successes of our secondary charter schools already open for these students, demonstrate that the foundations are in place to better provide for these students.

## Application Requirements

**Requirement (i)** - *Describe the objectives of the SEA's charter school program.*

- **Objective 1:** Increase the number of high quality charter schools in New Hampshire, particularly those serving educationally disadvantaged students most at risk in rural and urban settings.
- **Objective 2:** Use Federal CSP grant funds to improve student achievement for secondary charter school students and increase graduation rates.
- **Objective 3:** Support the dissemination of charter schools best practices to other public schools and LEAs.
- **Objective 4:** Empower charter schools to become strong independent organizations and support charter school efforts to be fiscally responsible.

Please see Selection Criteria (i), (Page 17), for a detailed explanation of our program objectives, activities and performance measures.

Please see Selection Criteria (iv), (Page 35), for a detailed explanation of our management plan.

**Requirement (ii)** - *Describe how the SEA will inform each charter school in the state about Federal funds and Federal programs.*

The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) uses multiple strategies for informing each charter school in the state about federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and federal programs in which the charter school may participate. These strategies include activities such as posting announcements on the NHDOE

website, sending direct mailings to all eligible applicants, use of email distribution lists, and monthly meetings held with Charter School Directors. The NHDOE also offers workshops and presentations on grant funding opportunities for all of the State's districts and charter schools. A calendar of deadlines for federal program applications is created annually and sent through a distribution list to all charter schools as well as posted on the NHDOE website. Each charter school is assigned a unique school code that is entered into the NHDOE database system that drives all communications to schools throughout the state.

**Requirement (iii)** - *Describe how the SEA will ensure that each charter school in the State receives the school's commensurate share of Federal education funds.*

Funding for New Hampshire charter schools is detailed in RSA 194-B: 11. Each charter school completes a Consolidated Application that is used for formula funding and guarantees each charter school receives its fair share of all federal funds. The per pupil tuition amount is distributed directly to charter schools in September, December, March, and June, and payments are adjusted to reflect each school's enrollment at that time, so any increases/decreases in enrollment are directly reflected in the payments issued.

Please see Selection Criteria (iii), (Page 29) for a detailed discussion of RSA 194-B:11 and federal funds.

**Requirement (iv)** - *Describe how the SEA will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the state.*

Please see Selection Criteria (vi), (Page 49) for a detailed discussion of dissemination.

**Requirement (v)** - *If an SEA elects to reserve part of its grant funds for the establishment of a revolving loan fund, describe how it would operate.*

**Not applicable.**

**Requirement (vi)** - *Include a request and justification for any waiver of statutory or regulatory provisions that the SEA believes is necessary for the successful operation of charter schools in the State.*

This Grant Applicant requests a waiver of the limitations of Section 5202(c)(1) of the ESEA Act, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1, which states “Grants awarded to State educational agencies under this subpart shall be for a period of not more than 3 years.” The Applicant, the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE), respectfully requests an extension to 5 years (60 months) from the United States Department of Education Charter School Program.

The New Hampshire Department of Education received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Charter Schools Program in 2003, which was instrumental in launching our first charter schools in New Hampshire, but has since been unsuccessful in obtaining a second state charter school grant. Despite this setback, additional charter schools have continued to be authorized by both the State Board of Education and LEAs, demonstrating that there is continuing interest and demand for charter schools in New Hampshire.

**Requirement (vii)** - *Describe how charter schools that are considered to be LEAs under State law and LEAs in which charter schools are located will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.*

In New Hampshire, for any charter school to open, it must demonstrate compliance with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Act. Under New Hampshire's charter school statute, RSA 194-B: 11, III, a student's LEA continues to be responsible for special education funding and decision-making regarding the student's individual education plan. Charter schools work with LEAs and parents to develop a mutually agreeable plan for implementation, respecting the agency's responsibility for handling special education decision-making. The LEA of residence for the student is responsible for providing a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The LEA and the charter school cooperate and share responsibility for the provision of FAPE. The sending LEA retains decision-making authority and financial responsibility for provision of special education services. The Charter and the LEA decide if the service should be provided at the Charter school or at the LEA. In some instances, the setting of the Charter School and the teaching methods have proved to be instrumental in helping the child perform at higher levels and in other instances when reading skills or speech skill are deficient, the LEA has provided the remediation as set forth in the individual learning plan. This arrangement, which might be considered unorthodox in some larger states, works well for New Hampshire charter schools, given their limited resources, and provides an additional avenue for communication, partnership, and dissemination of best or promising practices between charter schools and LEAs.

One of the frequent difficulties that charter schools across the country face is the inability to adequately provide for FAPE. By sharing the resources and experiences of LEAs, New Hampshire charter schools are able to have experienced staff working to provide special education needs. Further, the unpredictable financial burden of requiring charter schools to provide FAPE is thus not an issue in New Hampshire. The cost for

LEAs is generally not much higher than if the special need student was attending their local school. In addition, the provision of state payments for education stipulates that if the LEA incurs a catastrophic expense, they may seek reimbursement.

A New Hampshire Department of Education memo dated January 11, 2007 (Fiscal Year 2007 Memo #14) states, "The New Hampshire Department of Education will ensure that FAPE is provided to students with disabilities by monitoring the LEA through the New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval and Improvement Process. The public charter schools will be monitored for their method of coordinating with a pupil's local education agency (LEA) responsible for matters pertaining to any required special education programs or services including method of compliance with all federal and state laws pertaining to educationally disabled pupils' as specified in RSA 194-B:3(n).

Charter schools are public schools of the LEA [of residence] and must serve children with disabilities attending those charter schools in the same manner as the LEA serves children with disabilities in its other schools, including providing supplementary and related services on site at the charter school to the same extent to which the LEA has a policy or practice of providing such services on the site to its other public schools per IDEA 04 regulation §300.209 (b)(1)(i). Therefore, charter schools as public schools of the LEA will be monitored at the same time and in a comparable manner as all the other schools that are part of the LEA."

**Selection Criteria**

**Selection Criteria (i)** - The contribution the charter schools grant program will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students.

Targeted Funding for Educationally Disadvantaged Students: The New Hampshire Charter School Program (NHCSPP) is aligned with state educational goals designed to assure a quality education for every child in New Hampshire and to close the achievement gap between educationally disadvantaged students and their peers. To help meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students, New Hampshire's highest priority for awarding Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP) funds will be to schools that propose to increase the academic achievement of students who are at greatest risk of not meeting challenging state academic standards or completing high school.

In this application, these charter schools will be defined as those programs enrolling a majority of students whose home attendance districts are considered chronically low performing as indicated by an Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) classification, "District in Need of Improvement". All applications for charter schools that meet this priority will receive a competitive scoring advantage and will be eligible for a 10% larger grant award than that available to applications for charter schools that will not serve this targeted population.

AYP and Charter Schools: The table on page 18 documents the number of charter schools that have met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) compared to other public schools

in 2008-09. As the data shows charter schools are making great gains but that more can be done to further improve student performance.

<b>New Hampshire AYP Comparison Charter Schools and other Public Schools 2008-09</b>					
		Charter Schools AYP		Public Schools without Charters AYP	
	Tested	11		463	
	Met AYP	9	81.81%	205	44.27%
	Not Met	2	18.18%	253	54.63%

While the total number of charter schools operating in New Hampshire may seem low, five schools are secondary schools of which four specifically target students at-risk in grades 9-12. As many as 34% of the students attending these schools are former drop outs who have found that the smaller, more focused charter school programs work best for them. The fifth secondary charter school, the Academy for Science & Design, scored #1 in the State in science and #2 in the State in Math, in 2008 NECAP State testing.

Follow the Child: In 2007 the U.S. Department of Education awarded a \$3.2 million Longitudinal Data Systems grant to help implement New Hampshire's Follow the Child Initiative. The FTC Growth Model, coupled with the AYP index model, calculates individual growth targets for every student and tallies the number of students meeting these individual growth targets.

Program Objectives and Activities: The objectives of the New Hampshire Charter School Program (NHCSPP) were reviewed, revised, and re-prioritized during the last year. This resulted in the following four objectives, their activities and performance measures.

**Objective 1: Increase the number of high quality charter schools in New Hampshire, particularly those serving educationally disadvantaged students most at-risk in rural and urban settings.**

**Activity 1:** Implement the Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP) grant process annually while providing additional grant funding to successful secondary charter school grant applicants that target serving at-risk students.

**Activity 2:** Provide technical assistance and workshops on writing high quality charter proposals and start-up logistics for charter school developers.

**Activity 3:** Monitor student achievement goals annually, provide feedback and technical assistance (TA).

**Performance Measure 1:** Twenty new charter schools in operation by 2015.

**Performance Measure 2:** At least five of the new charter schools opened will be secondary schools targeting students at-risk.

**Performance Measure 3:** At least 85% of charter schools will meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by year two of the grant, currently 81.81%

**Objective 2: Use PCSP funds to improve student achievement for secondary charter school students and increase graduation rates.**

**Activity 1:** Monitor subgrantees' student achievement goals annually (NECAP, AYP, school progress reports) and provide feedback and technical assistance.

**Activity 2:** Increase the awareness of best practices used to narrow the student achievement gap and improve graduation rates.

**Activity 3:** Fund dissemination projects with proven methods for improving student academic achievement and improving student graduation rates.

**Activity 4:** Mentorships, partner high performing secondary charter schools with charter schools working to raise student achievement and graduation rates.

**Performance Measure 1:** At least 80% of charter school students will meet or exceed statewide average assessment scores (NECAP) by year 3 of the grant, currently 75.27%.

**Performance Measure 2:** The graduation rate for charter school students (including programs serving students at-risk) will continue to meet or exceed the statewide average.

**Performance Measure 3:** Existing charter schools that have improved secondary student achievement will highlight and share their progress at annual state conference.

**Performance Measure 4:** Partnerships developed between high performing charter schools and charter schools working to raise student achievement.

**Performance Measure 5:** 85% of charter school students will meet or exceed personally established goals set by students themselves that are measurable and recorded in the annual report of their charter schools. This measure is in keeping with the spirit of New Hampshire for personalized learning and assessment initiative so each individual student can flourish in multiple areas.

**Objective 3: Support the dissemination of charter schools best practices to other public schools and LEAs.**

**Activity 1:** Implement the Dissemination Grant program annually.

**Activity 2:** Choose review panel members, provide orientation to charter laws.

**Activity 3:** Work with the NH Chartered Public School Association, school districts, and other partners to identify at least two charter schools with best practices each year.

**Activity 4:** Provide two TA and dissemination grant writing workshops annually.

**Activity 5:** Publicize charter school successes and best practices annually.

**Performance Measure 1:** Up to three dissemination grants awarded each year.

**Performance Measure 2:** Increased knowledge and awareness of charter schools best practices by other charter schools and LEAs.

**Performance Measure 3:** Workshops and statewide conference attended by charter school developers.

**Performance Measure 4:** Dissemination grant recipients share their knowledge of charter school best practices with others at annual charter conference.

**Objective 4: Empower charter schools to become strong independent organizations and support charter school efforts to be fiscally responsible.**

**Activity 1:** Disseminate sound governance, fiscal responsibility and policy examples through handouts, ongoing TA and workshops.

**Activity 2:** Require all subgrantee applicants for federal charter school funds to describe fiscal accountability measures in place.

**Activity 3:** Ensure each charter application submitted, contains required information regarding fiscal accountability.

**Activity 4:** Review school progress reports and conduct site visits to provide constructive review and recommendations for improvements.

**Performance Measure 1:** Each year at least 80% of all subgrantees participating in technical workshops will report an increased knowledge and awareness of charter school governance and fiscal responsibility.

**Performance Measure 2:** All subgrantee applications are reviewed for fiscal accountability before subgrants awarded.

**Performance Measure 3:** Charter school developers and staff attend technical support and training sessions, their feedback is collected.

**Performance Measure 4:** Each year at least 85% or more of the charter schools open three years or longer remain financially viable.

Logic Model: NHCSP staff have prepared the following logic model to represent the inputs, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes of the New Hampshire Charter School Program.

<b>New Hampshire Charter School Program Logic Model</b>				
<b>Inputs</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Short/Medium Term Outcomes</b>	<b>Long Term Outcomes</b>
Funding Staff Time Partnerships Materials Technology Supplies	Implement Planning and Implementation Grant Program  Implement Dissemination Grant Program  Technical Assistance and Monitoring  Outreach and marketing of charter schools by NHCSP staff	Announcement of new funding opportunity  Planning and implementation grants awarded  Dissemination grants awarded  Charter schools with best practices identified  Technical assistance workshops held  Workshops attended by participants  Publicity and marketing activities	Increased knowledge of charter school startup, governance and fiscal sustainability  Increased knowledge and implementation of best practices by schools and LEAs  Improved student achievement levels particularly for “at risk” students  Increased number of charter schools become fiscally sustainable  Replicable charter school models for small rural states	Increase the number of high quality charter schools  Increased student academic achievement  Drop out rate in state reduced  All students will have the same opportunity to succeed regardless of their socio/economic starting point

Steps taken by the NHDOE to inform parents, teachers, communities and LEAs of the SEA federal grant program: Should New Hampshire be awarded a Federal Charter Schools Program grant, the NHDOE will make a widely broadcast announcement via paper and electronic means to inform all New Hampshire residents, charter schools, districts, colleges, libraries, and other nonprofit community organizations of the availability of charter school start-up grants. The NHCSP will also take full advantage of the myriad of public service announcement venues available in newspapers, online publications, and PEG (Public, Education, Government) television stations in New Hampshire. Databases of contact information for parties interested in charter schools have been developed by the NHCSP and other organizations supportive of charter schools in New Hampshire, such as the New Hampshire Chartered Public School Association (further discussed in Selection Criteria (vi)). This contact information will be utilized to: issue statewide mailings, emails, public announcements and postings on the NHCSP website to target recipients. As further described in Selection Criteria (vi) forums, showcases, and conferences will also be held to inform New Hampshire communities about charter schools and their best practices.

The NHDOE has also prominently documented charter schools in the NHDOE publication, [Public School Choice: New Hampshire](#). This document describes the variety of public school options available to New Hampshire residents, and was modeled after the U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement's publication on school choice, [Choosing a School for Your Child](#). The NHDOE has distributed copies of "Public School Choice: New Hampshire" to every public school and public library in New Hampshire, and has made it readily available to the public on the NHDOE website.

The NHDOE has support systems in place to immediately implement this grant program, and interested groups will be able to start the application process immediately to support proposals being researched now. One additional NHCSP staff member will be hired.

Competency Based Learning: Under the leadership of the New Hampshire State Board of Education the standards for school approval are no longer based on Carnegie Units and seat time in favor of competency based learning. This innovation is coupled with carefully outlined Curriculum Frameworks requiring competency based standards. These competency measures allow students to meet established course requirements and graduation requirements in multiple ways.

Inclusion of charter schools in this sweeping reform allows for different learning styles and different emphases. The “[Vision for Re-Design](#)” document provides guidance from the State Board of Education, state stakeholders, and the NHDOE. In the charter school movement, that has translated to schools more able to provide a learning environment geared toward the needs of the individual student. This document is available to the public at the following web address.

<http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/news/hsvision.htm>

**Selection Criteria (ii) - The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to charter schools under the State’s charter school law.**

New Hampshire law extends a high degree of flexibility, autonomy, and privilege to charter schools. The statutory scheme of RSA 194-B empowers New Hampshire charter school boards of trustees with great educational, fiscal and social freedom, but requires extensive accountability for accomplishing their charter goals.

New Hampshire Charter school law section 194-B:3 specifically states:

*“Except as expressly provided in this chapter, including but not limited to RSA 194-B:8, charter schools shall be fully exempt from state laws and rules which otherwise apply to public or nonpublic schools, or local school boards or districts. Notwithstanding the foregoing, charter schools shall have all the rights and privileges of other public schools.” RSA 194-B:3(I)(a).*

As a public school, authorized under RSA 194-B in New Hampshire, a charter school is recognized as a government instrumentality authorized by the New Hampshire State Board of Education and independent of any LEA except in the area of special education.

Section 194-B:8 requires non-discrimination (I), compliance with state and federal health & safety laws, regulations and rules (II), days required for public schools (III), and academic assessment tests such as NECAP (V). These are basic requirements that any school agency should have, and do not cause any interference with the ability of a charter school to implement its teaching methods in any way.

Finances are provided by the state using a per-pupil formula. Prior to 2006, money for charter schools was distributed through LEAs. However, in some instances this proved problematic, so in the 2006, the New Hampshire state legislature amended the law to allow funds to be sent directly from the New Hampshire Department of Education to each charter school. The state does not dictate how those funds are used, and does not limit a charter school from raising more funds from philanthropic or business venues. Public funds are spent using the triple check procedure required for any public funds expenditure.

All New Hampshire public schools, including charter schools, are now able to upload student attendance and personal demographic information online to the NHDOE in order to track students. This technological support has simplified procedures and eliminated many forms. In addition, as part of the “Follow the Child” initiative, multiple data streams including demographic and assessment data are collected for analysis and quality planning.

In accordance with RSA 194-B:5, each charter school is governed by a board of trustees that has general supervisory control and authority over the business and operations of the charter school. No greater than 25% of the membership of a school board, or one member, whichever is greater, may simultaneously serve as members of the board of trustees of a charter or charter conversion school in New Hampshire.

Each charter school board has the authority to set policy and make decisions that serve the mission and vision of the school and has oversight and authority to render final decisions on matters pertaining to:

- Adoption of a name and corporate seal,
- Approval and oversight of annual budget and fund-raising programs,
- Employment of professional and non-professional personnel,
- Establishment of policy,
- Appointment of board advisory members or committees,
- Delineation of educational priorities, oversight for the school’s growth plan,
- Establishment professional salary and compensation program,
- Review and approval of contracts, e.g., for facilities and benefit programs,
- Matters for which the Board serves as a hearing body for action/appeals,

- Any other matters that are not administrative in nature and/or that are prescribed in statute or rule.

Each charter school's budget and expenditures is approved by its board of trustees and managed on a daily basis by the school's director. Management of daily operation and personnel is the responsibility of the school's director, who will:

- Allow faculty and students to maximize achievements consistent with the charter school's philosophy,
- Assist faculty with all aspects of school as needed,
- Act as a public relations liaison, including working with the local school district,
- Assume overall responsibility for supervision of staff and students,
- Follow all charter school, State and Federal administrative requirements and standards,
- Supervise and collaboratively evaluate the work of staff, and submit recommendations to appropriate staff members for promoting, retaining and dismissing members of the charter school staff,
- Oversee schedules created in collaboration with all staff members,
- Research grant programs and write funding applications,
- Initiate and participate in consultation with teachers, parents, students and the community regarding the welfare of any student or other issues relative to the charter school, and promote safety and good health practices by adherence to public codes/regulations and the charter school's standards.

New Hampshire RSA 194-B:3(IV)(a) thru (d) concerns the State Board of Education appeals process for charter school proposals which have been denied by local school boards: by September 30 of the given year appeals shall be submitted to the State

Board, which shall conduct a review of the proposed application using review standards as specified under RSA 194-B:3, II. The State Board is authorized to suggest amendments or additions to the proposed application including, but not limited to, deficiencies identified by the local school board and the trustees, as the State Board deems necessary to assure its completeness and compliance with charter school law. Application disapprovals by the State Board shall include a written statement specifying areas deemed deficient or in the case of approval on appeal, the reasons for such action to both parties. The State Board shall promptly notify the prospective board of trustees and the school board of its decision in writing. The applicant may then reapply in a subsequent year.

New Hampshire RSA 194-B:13(IV) specifies that charter school boards of trustees shall be considered the public employer for the purpose of collective bargaining, and RSA-B:14(I,II,III) specify that employees of charter schools shall be considered public employees for the purposes of collective bargaining, and may participate in the state teacher retirement system. RSA 194-B:14(IV) specifies that at least 50% of charter school teaching staff must be either certified by New Hampshire or have at least three years of teaching experience. RSA 194-B:5 (e) (I-II) specifies charter schools' Board of Trustees have complete authority for selection, hiring, and firing of charter school personnel. Monthly reports sent to the Department of Education must report all activities in this area including descriptions of the services/tasks and any salary/commission/fee.

**Selection Criteria (iii) - The number of high quality charter schools to be created.**

New Hampshire, which currently ranks 41st in population among US states, is a small, rural state, with northern regions that are sparsely populated. (please see page 61 for illustrated map of NH population density). Thus the number of charter schools that can be expected to flourish in this setting is obviously lower than in more populous states, and New Hampshire charter schools face more challenges without the economies of scale often available to charter schools in larger states. This number of roughly 31 charter schools (including proposed schools) is comparable on a per capita basis with many other states (e.g., California's population: 36,457,549, number of charter schools: 750 → one charter school for every 48,610 people; New Hampshire population: 1,314,895, number of charter schools: 31 (including proposed schools) → one charter school for every 42,415 people).

The goal of the NHDOE is to open twenty new charter schools during the life of this grant. There are currently four planning groups researching charter school proposals in New Hampshire, one school is scheduled to open later this year, and three more are proceeding through the local authorization process.

Informing Charter Schools of Federal Funds: The New Hampshire Department of Education uses multiple strategies for informing each charter school in the State about federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and federal programs in which the charter school may participate. These strategies include activities such as posting announcements on the NHDOE website, sending direct mailings to all eligible applicants, use of email distribution lists, and monthly meetings held with charter school directors. The NHDOE also offers workshops and presentations on grant funding opportunities for all of the state's districts and charter schools. A calendar of deadlines for federal program

applications is created annually and sent through a distribution list to all charter schools as well as posted on the NHDOE website. Each charter school is assigned a unique school code that is entered into the NHDOE database system that drives all communications to schools throughout the State.

Commensurate Share of Federal Funds: Funding for New Hampshire charter schools is detailed in RSA 194-B: 11. Each charter school completes a Consolidated Application that is used for formula funding and guarantees each charter school receives its fair share of all federal funds. The per pupil tuition amount is distributed directly to charter schools in September, December, March, and June, and payments are adjusted to reflect each school's enrollment at that time, so any increases/decreases in enrollment are directly reflected in the payments issued.

In addition, New Hampshire State Law specifies the following:

**RSA 194-B:11 IV.** Any federal or other funding available in any year to a sending district shall, to the extent and in a manner acceptable to the funding source, be directed to a charter or open enrollment school in a receiving district on an eligible per pupil basis. This funding shall include, but not be limited to, funding under federal Chapters I and II of Title II, and Drug-Free Schools, in whatever form the funding is available in any year.

**RSA 194-B:11 IV-a.** The Commissioner of the Department of Education shall apply for all federal funding available to charter schools under the No Child Left Behind Act, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or other federal source of funds. The Commissioner shall expend any such funds received in a manner acceptable to the funding source.

**RSA 194-B:11 X.** There shall be an appropriation in the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2003 for the establishment of charter schools under this section. Charter schools which

are eligible for grants under this program shall match funds provided by the State through private contributions in order to receive funding that exceeds the State's average per pupil cost for the grade level weight of the pupil. State funds shall be provided in addition to any other sums provided by the State. Grants under this section shall be administered and determined by the State Board of Education which shall have the authority to develop a grant application, written procedures and criteria used to determine eligibility for grants, and procedures for the administration of grants by recipients, including reporting requirements. The total grants provided under this program shall not exceed the amount of money appropriated in the budget, or transferred, or provided by gift or grant to the state for this purpose.

Charter Schools in New Hampshire: There are currently 11 charter schools open and operating in New Hampshire:

1) Academy for Equine Science: Opened in September 2006 with a unique mission to offer a three-part curriculum consisting of an academic program, an equine studies program, and an entrepreneurial business program. The school is closely associated with a large equine clinic nearby where students get invaluable hands-on experience.

2) Academy for Science and Design: Opened in September 2007 for grades 7-12 offering a science and engineering oriented curriculum beginning with algebra, biology/chemistry, and physics in the 7th grade. First year math assessment scores using the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) tests administered in October 2007 and May 2008 indicated ASD seventh and eighth graders scored two to two and half times higher than NWEA specified targets, an impressive gain attributable to the ASD's careful

and rigorous approach to mathematics. In school year 2008 ASD scored #1 in the State in science and #2 in math in annual NECAP testing.

3) Cocheco Arts and Technology Charter Academy: Opened in January 2005 with a mission to integrate arts and technology into all aspects of education. A number of students at CATA are former dropouts or have considered dropping out of high school. Students come from twenty New Hampshire communities and one from Maine. CATA has consistently made AYP. CATA held its first graduation ceremony in June 2007, with students performing works such as Gershwin's "Prelude 1" on piano; Bach's "Prelude for Suite 1 for Solo Cello"; an original song entitled 'Mary Anne'. The entire Senior class was accepted into institutions of higher learning including Emerson College in Boston; Hartt School of Music at the University of Hartford in Connecticut; University of New Hampshire (Durham); Sarah Lawrence College in Westchester, New York.; and the North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem, N.C.

4) CSI (Competencies, Skills, Interests) Charter School: Opened in fall 2007 offering a nontraditional, competency-based educational program for disenfranchised students in grades 9-12 who are in danger of, or have already dropped out of school. Thirty-seven students have now graduated from CSI. During CSI's first graduation ceremony a young man spoke who shared with great pride that he was the first male in his family to graduate from high school. This school serves youngsters who have had not resonated with the traditional schools but are proud of their achievements in that school. The teachers in that school are highly experienced educators who work with students until they understand algebra or history and the result of that accomplishment is palpable. What excluded them from accomplishment in the past was not that they could not do the

work, but other insidious distractions that they do not have at CSI. Teachers and students share in the sense of a job well done.

5) Great Bay eLearning Charter School: Opened in January 2005, Great Bay is following through on its measurable goal that all senior students will apply to at least one college, and each student has a plan in place for post-secondary action when they graduate. All of Great Bay eLearning's first graduating class of thirty-one students received college acceptances. These students were all previously extremely disengaged, but at Great Bay have found a learning environment that suited their needs and flourished. Great Bay students have been accepted to the following schools: Johnson and Wales University (RI), Johnson State College (VT), New England College (NH), University of New Hampshire (Durham, NH), and Unity College (ME). Students have also been awarded substantial academic scholarships.

6) Ledyard Charter Academy: Opened in 2009 with grades 9-12 and designed to serve under-performing and/or disengaged students by providing learning in the community, internships, and a rigorous academic program that stresses the importance of community.

7) North Country Charter Academy: With two sites covering 4000 square miles in the mountainous northern regions of New Hampshire, NCCA serves grades 7-12 for students at-risk, with many (29%) already having dropped out of high school. The area this school covers is the best illustration available of what it takes to provide services for a rural state. Over 153 students have completed their education and graduated, and 30% of those who graduated have gone onto post-secondary education. Tuition paying students from Vermont also attend NCCA. NCCA has produced wage earners and individuals who will contribute to their communities, rather than individuals who will

need the services of their communities. Some of the most heart breaking and heart warming stories are associated with NCCA students: a former single teenage mom who is now attending college in Boston, child in tow; a homeless student ostracized in his previous high school but now welcomed into the stable, personalized structure of NCCA and showing impressive results on his academic work. These students are often the forgotten poor in our nation and New Hampshire is proud of the services that have been provided to them through this remarkable school. They will make a difference to the future of their region, and most importantly, NCCA has given them the confidence to now know they can.

8) Seacoast Charter School: Opened in fall of 2004 for grades 1-6 and has had one hundred students on its waiting list at various times. Seacoast's mission emphasizes thematic approaches to curriculum incorporating the arts and an appreciation of other cultures and languages across the curriculum.

9) Strong Foundations Charter School: Opened in August 2007 serves students in grades K-5 including many with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and using the Orton-Gillingham Method to build early literacy. Last year SFCS raised enough funds and donations to build a new addition to their school which houses three new class rooms and a common area. The State Board of Education has recently approved Strong Foundations request to add grades 6, 7 and 8, rolling out one new grade per year over the next three years.

10) Surry Village Charter School: Opened in September 2006 for grades 1-6 and has received outstanding community support since opening, raising \$180,000 in donations, with forty-two students on its waiting list. It is modeled after a traditional village school with a strong emphasis on teaching sustainable skills – students learn to

farm, make wool, and provide for their own needs. Surry Village offers itself as an example of a collaborative effort to help build a more locally based, self-reliant economy which is integrated to enhance the economic, environmental and social health of the community.

11) Virtual Learning Academy Charter School: Opened January 2008 uses new and emerging distance learning techniques with a mission that incorporates personalized online education to students through out New Hampshire. This school levels the playing field for all youngsters providing calculus, Latin, and AP courses for every interested child in New Hampshire, bringing opportunity for students previously isolated from the mainstream by poverty and rural location. There are currently 94 students taking AP courses in a program vetted by the Advanced Placement Organization. A student's zip code is no longer a factor in offering opportunity.

**Selection Criteria (iv) - The quality of the management plan for the project.**

Based on full funding of this application, the 2010-2015 PCSP grant award would support the positions of 2 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. Roberta Tenney will serve as Project/Grant Director for the program and aided by 1 (FTE) program assistant. Responsibility for implementing each of the subgrant program areas will be that of the Grant Director and staff. The employees in the New Hampshire Charter Schools Division have extensive expertise in program design, school improvement strategies, school assessment, special education, school standards and administration, school finance & fiscal issues, instructional leadership, training, and auditing.

Management Plan: The purpose of the management plan is to ensure the New Hampshire Charter School Program (NH CSP) achieves its stated outcomes, objectives,

and activities on time and within budget. Please see the following chart outlining the objectives, timelines, budget, resources, responsibilities and milestones of the proposed plan.

<b>NHCSP Management Plan</b>	
<b>Objective 1: Increase the number of high quality charter schools in New Hampshire, particularly those serving educationally disadvantaged students most at risk in rural and urban settings.</b>	
<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Implement the PCSP grant process annually while providing additional grant funding to successful secondary charter schools grant applicants that target serving at-risk students.</b>
Timeline	Receipt of PCSP grant, Request for Application (RFA) posted on NH DOE website by September 1, three rolling acceptance dates, January 28, February 25, March 25, grants awarded in May-June annually.
Budget/Resources	PCSP Grant Funds, staff time, travel, website updates
Responsibility	NHCSP staff & review panel
Milestones	If approved, NH DOE will immediately make a widely broadcast announcement of the new funding opportunity. New RFA will be posted on the NHCSP website explaining preference given to secondary schools serving at-risk students, peer review panel selected & orientation given, grant applications reviewed by NHCSP staff and evaluated by peer review panel, grants awarded.
<b>Activity 2</b>	<b>Provide technical assistance (TA) and workshops for charter school developers.</b>
Timeline	Workshops occur in April & August, technical assistance immediately
Budget/Resources	Staff time, travel, printing
Responsibility	NHCSP staff
Milestones	Technical assistance will begin immediately, two workshops held annually for charter school developers, April & August.
<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Monitor subgrantees' achievement goals annually and provide feedback and technical assistance as needed.</b>
Timeline	April – AYP assessment data released.
Budget/Resources	Staff time
Responsibility	NHCSP staff
Milestones	Review student achievement and assessment in April, provide technical assistance for subgrantees when needed, and evaluate subgrantees revised goals.
<b>Activity 4</b>	<b>Evaluate program effectiveness for charter school developers</b>

	<b>in opening new charter schools.</b>
Timeline	At the end of each grant year
Budget/Resources	External evaluator, staff time
Responsibility	External evaluator
Milestones	Program evaluation completed and refinements made.
<b>Objective 2: Use CSP grant funds to improve student achievement for secondary charter school students and increase graduation rates.</b>	
<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Monitor subgrantees student assessment results, provide feedback and technical assistance as needed.</b>
Timeline	January –NECAP data released. April AYP determinations made, ongoing TA provided.
Budget/Resources	Staff time
Responsibility	NHCSP staff
Milestones	Review student assessment data to verify progress in secondary student achievement.
<b>Activity 2</b>	<b>Give priority to dissemination grant proposals serving secondary schools.</b>
Timeline	June annually.
Budget/Resources	Subgrant Funds, staff time
Responsibility	NHCSP staff & review panel
Milestones	Grant notices widely broadcast with priority given to programs serving secondary schools, grant applications evaluated & scored, grants awarded to secondary schools.
<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Disseminate information on best practices proven to narrow the achievement gap and improve graduation rates in secondary schools.</b>
Timeline	Ongoing, April & Aug workshops, & November State Conference
Budget/Resources	Staff time
Responsibility	NHCSP staff
Milestones	Professional development and technical workshops held and attended by subgrantees. Statewide conference attended by subgrantees annually.
<b>Activity 4</b>	<b>Mentorships, partner high performing secondary charter schools with charter schools working to raise student achievement and graduation rates.</b>
Timeline	Ongoing
Budget/Resources	Staff time, Travel
Responsibility	NHCSP Staff
Milestones	Partnerships created between charter schools.

<b>Activity 5</b>	<b>Evaluate the effectiveness of the program to improve student achievement and outcomes in secondary charter schools.</b>
Timeline	At the end of each grant year
Budget/Resources	External evaluator, staff time
Responsibility	External evaluator
Milestones	Program evaluation completed and refinements made.
<b>Objective 3: Support the dissemination of charter schools best practices to other public schools and LEAs</b>	
<b>Activity 1</b>	<b>Implement the Dissemination Grant program annually, award up to three dissemination grants each year.</b>
Timeline	RFP posted in December
Budget/Resources	Dissemination grant funds, staff time
Responsibility	NHCSP staff
Milestones	Grant applications posted online, reviewed by NHCSP staff
<b>Activity 2</b>	Choose review panel members, provide orientation to charter laws.
Timeline	RFA's reviewed in April, grants awarded in June.
Budget/Resources	Dissemination grant funds, staff time
Responsibility	NHCSP staff & review panel
Milestones	Peer review panel chosen, orientation to laws, applications reviewed, grants awarded.
<b>Activity 3</b>	<b>Work with the New Hampshire Chartered Public School Association, school districts, and other partners to identify charter schools with best practices.</b>
Timeline	Ongoing during grant cycle, recommendations made before applications reviewed in March.
Budget/Resources	Staff time, travel, printing, website updates
Responsibility	NHCSP staff & partners
Milestones	At least two charter schools identified each year that should be targeted for dissemination awards.
<b>Activity 4</b>	<b>Provide two technical assistance and dissemination grant writing workshops annually.</b>
Timeline	Workshops occur in April & August, TA begins immediately
Budget/Resources	Staff time, travel, printing, supplies
Responsibility	NHCSP staff
Milestones	Technical assistance will begin immediately, two workshops held annually for charter school developers, April & August.
<b>Activity 5</b>	<b>Share charter school best practices at annual conference.</b>
Timeline	Ongoing & annual conference in November
Budget/Resources	Dissemination grant funds, staff time

Responsibility	NHCSP staff, dissemination grant recipients.
Milestones	Recipients of dissemination grants share their progress and work at annual charter conference.
<b>Activity 6</b>	<b>Evaluate the effectiveness of the program to disseminate best practices to other public schools and LEAs</b>
Timeline	At the end of each grant year
Budget/Resources	External evaluator, staff time, travel
Responsibility	External evaluator
Milestones	Program evaluation completed and refinements to dissemination program made.
<b>Objective 4: Empower charter schools to become strong independent organizations and support charter school efforts to be fiscally responsible.</b>	
<b>Activity 1:</b>	<b>Provide workshops and TA for charter school developers on sound governance, fiscal responsibility and policy examples.</b>
Timeline	April & August for workshops, ongoing technical assistance.
Budget/Resources	Staff time, travel, printing
Responsibility	NHCSP staff
Milestones	Training sessions and workshops attended by subgrantees.
<b>Activity 2:</b>	<b>Require all planning and implementation grant applicants for federal charter school funds to describe fiscal accountability measures in place.</b>
Timeline	Plans reviewed and evaluated before grants awarded.
Budget/Resources	Staff time
Responsibility	NHCSP staff
Milestones	Review and ensure that each charter application submitted contains the required information regarding fiscal accountability.
<b>Activity 3:</b>	<b>Review school progress reports and conduct site visits to provide constructive review and recommendations for improvements.</b>
Timeline	Ongoing
Budget/Resources	Staff time, travel
Responsibility	NHCSP staff
Milestones	School progress reports reviewed, site visits made and technical assistance provided.
<b>Activity 4:</b>	<b>Evaluate the effectiveness of the program to empower charter schools to become strong independent organizations and support charter school efforts to be fiscally responsible.</b>
Timeline	At the end of each grant year
Budget/Resources	External evaluator, staff time
Responsibility	External evaluator

Milestones	Program evaluation completed, refinements made.
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NH Charter School Program Staff Responsibilities: Within two months of notification of a PCSP award, NHCSP staff will use the Management Plan and the Logic Model to develop a detailed work plan for the project. This work plan will describe project objectives, activities, milestones, personnel responsible, and timelines. The NHCSP team will meet daily and use this work plan to measure the progress in achieving program objectives and goals. A general description of the elements included in the work plan and grant administration are discussed below.

Grant Awards: Grant awards for planning, implementation and implementation renewal grants will be based on grade levels served, its proposed enrollment numbers during the planning year and actual enrollments during the first two years of operation and program type i.e. targeting students at-risk. Grant funds will provide resources for post-award planning, including refinement of the curriculum and professional development for teachers who will work in the charter school. This may also include planning activities that will lead to the opening of a new charter school such as evaluation of curriculum and school design models, visits to other charter schools, attendance at state and national conferences, and other planning activities. Funds also provide for initial implementation activities, including: informing the public, especially parents, about the school, acquiring initial equipment, educational materials, supplies and hiring consultants to offer advice on finances, professional development and curriculum.

The following table describes the funding amounts for each type of charter school.

<b>Elementary Charter Schools - (Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grades)</b>		
Student Enrollment	Max Grant Amount Per Year	Max Three Year Total
100-300+ students	\$175,000/year	\$525,000
< 100 students	\$150,000/year	\$450,000
<b>Secondary Charter Schools - (6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> Grades)</b>		
Student Enrollment	Max Grant Amount Per Year	Max Three Year Total
100-300+ students	\$200,000/year	\$600,000
< 100 students	\$175,000/year	\$525,000
<b>Secondary Charter Schools - (6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> Grades) - Charter schools targeting at-risk students in Districts in Need of Improvement (DINI) will receive a 10% higher award.</b>		
Student Enrollment	Max Grant Amount Per Year	Max Three Year Total
100-300+ students	\$220,000/year	\$660,000
< 100 students	\$192,500/year	\$577,500

Subgrant Application Process: The Grant Director will be responsible for all administrative activities associated with application submission, review, and scoring of applications. The subgrant application process will begin with a widely broadcast announcement prior to each funding cycle alerting interested parties that a new Request for Applications (RFA) is available on the NH DOE website. The RFA can be downloaded from the NHDOE website by any interested party or group. This document contains all relevant information, including types of grants available; levels of funding; federal and state goals, objectives and requirements; deadlines; dates of training; and how to obtain technical assistance. Planning and Implementation application deadlines will consist of three (3) rolling dates for receipt of applications (January 28, February 25, March 28) and grant awards will be issued three (3) times over the next six (6) months of each funding period. Planning and Implementation (P/I) subgrants will be awarded on an ongoing basis to applications that score at least 75% against a published rubric.

After applications are reviewed and scored, applicants will receive notification of the status of their application and a copy of each reviewer's comments. Successful

applicants must make any necessary revisions and provide necessary documentation prior to release of funds.

The Peer Review Process: The Grant Director will be responsible for the recruitment and selection of peer reviewers. Reviewers will include charter developers, charter school board members, operators, charter school oversight committee members, State Board of Education members, other charter experts and NHDOE staff. Peer reviewers will be trained annually by NHCSP staff prior to beginning their review of applications. This training will include a review of the federal charter school law, the New Hampshire charter school law and the programs priorities and objectives. In addition the application will clearly identify the approval criteria of each element of the application. Review criteria will include but are not limited to:

- The uniqueness and ambitiousness of the school,
- the commitment to quality in curriculum for the target population including the assessment program for monitoring student achievement,
- the reasonableness of the financial request in terms of the size and needs,
- the reasonableness of the budget plan for financial sustainability,
- the adequacy of the work plan to achieve the objectives on time and within budget, including clearly defined timelines milestones for accomplishing project tasks,
- the technical capacity of the Board of Trustees and school leader(s) to assure a well-managed and successful independent public school.

The peer review process will require three reviewers per application. Each application will be read and scored to determine approval or disapproval of the application. In addition, for those schools that serve secondary students priority in funding will be given to charter school applications that will, (1) assist at-risk and underserved students in meeting challenging State academic standards and completing high school, and (2) provide new school options not available in geographic areas such as the mountainous regions of rural New Hampshire, in which a large proportion or number of public schools have been identified for improvement or corrective action .

Subgrant Monitoring and Technical Assistance: NHCSP staff will initiate contact with each subgrantee to ensure progress is being made toward subgrant project objectives, and provide technical assistance as required or requested. They will verify the status of each subgrantee to ensure that the school is meeting its project benchmarks and is in good standing with its charter. If indicated, NHCSP staff will conduct an onsite review of the subgrantees' school to provide help and technical support.

As part of its management responsibilities the NHDOE holds a monthly group meeting with charter school directors, which facilitates collaboration and further oversight and management of charter schools. The meetings are not geared toward compliance but rather toward mutual problem solving and as such form a strong cadre of results orientated school innovators. The meetings also encourage considerable communication and coordination among the charter schools themselves, who have consequently formed an independent statewide charter school organization, whose planned activities are discussed in more detail in Selection Criteria (vi).

Charter School Best Practices Workshops: The Project Director and program staff will be responsible for developing regional informational conferences, contacting

panelists, collecting and organizing hand-out materials, securing conference locations and processing surveys. The Best Practices Seminar and State Workshop will be lead by the NHCSP Director with assistance of staff. The first conference will be organized and planned no later than November 2011. This will be the state workshop. The remaining best practices workshops will be held in regions of NH: the North Country, Southern NH, Sea Coast, and Western NH. The schedule of the workshops will be such that the last workshop occurs no later than August 2014. NHCSP staff will ensure timely delivery of product materials and will coordinate the peer review process of guest lectureship, subgrantees and contracts.

Federal Reports and other SEA Requirements: The project director will be responsible for ensuring the proper collection of data during the grant project period. The project director will be responsible for all reports and ensuring that progress on subgrants is reported accurately and within ED timeframes. The NHCSP Director will attend the PCSP Project Directors meeting annually to take advantage of the help and expertise provided by PCSP staff.

External Evaluator: We believe that having an unbiased and external evaluator will be critical to the success of this program. During the first year of the grant, the NHDOE will contract with an external evaluator to conduct the evaluation of the program.

Please see Selection Criteria (vii), (Page 53), for a detailed explanation of the evaluation plan.

Oversight and Accountability: Oversight of charter schools is done through monthly progress reports, quarterly financial reports, yearly onsite visits and an annual “accountability report” for each charter school. This report forms the basis of the

evidence that will be needed for a school to be re-authorized. These reports are specified in the New Hampshire [Charter School Accountability Process](#), which was developed to comply with RSA 194-B:10. Monthly reporting must include the charter school board's meeting minutes and/or summary of school progress, equipment purchases, any public announcements or advertising, and hiring or contracting of personnel, including a description of the person's work and salary/commission/fee.

Quarterly reports consist of a balance sheet, revenue and expenditure statements, and a financial report. Charter school annual reports for the State Board of Education are required to contain the number of pupils served by the school and their respective tuition rates (if from out-of-state), as well as a discussion of progress towards the achievement of the school's academic goals as set forth in its charter. The following table illustrates these reports and their deadlines.

<b>New Hampshire Department of Education Charter School Reporting Schedule</b>		
<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Charter School submits:</b>	<b>NHDOE conducts:</b>
December 1 of opening year	Accountability Plan (per RSA 194-B)	Review and feedback on measurability of goals
September 1	Annual Financial Report	Compliance Check
October 1	Enrollment (Form A12A,Part A)	Compliance Check
October 15	Health, Fire and Safety Inspection Reports and evidence of insurance	Compliance Check
October 16	Class & staffing form, Teacher attainment and avg. salary, H.S.completion & AP info., H.S. dropout form	Compliance Check
June 1	Calendar of instructional days teacher salary schedule	Review to determine compliance with state requirements
Monthly (or as defined charter)	Board minutes	Review to assure effective governance practices
Quarterly	Progress report for school goals	Compare with targets in Accountability Plan
Quarterly	Financial Reports	Check to see if it complies with standards
April 2	Tuition rates	Compliance Check

April 2	School Board membership lists	Compliance Check
Annually August 1	Year-end summary of school performance	Review and verify as needed, assess performance
End of Year Reports Aug. 1	Attendance, Graduation, etc. (Form A3 and others as appropriate)	Compliance Check
Annually Sept. 30	Independent financial audit	Request for action if any material defects

Charter School Funding: Currently, two sources of New Hampshire state funding are available to charter schools:

- 1) Pupil funding (\$5450/pupil for 2009-10).
- 2) Other matching grants (RSA 194B: 11, X) These per pupil funds are distributed quarterly, with the first disbursement to be sent within 15 days of the receipt of an attendance report from the charter school.

Legislative Gains for Charter Schools: The 2009 legislative session saw great improvements to our local approval process. The process was simplified and streamlined cutting the LEA authorization time approximately in half.

The 2008 Legislative session in New Hampshire witnessed the passing of House Bill 1642 which increased charter school funding. HB1642 received strong bi-partisan support with a House floor vote of 198-91, and a State Senate vote of 18-5. Governor John Lynch, who had asked the Legislature not to send him any new spending bills to sign in 2008 due to shortfalls in the State budget, did in fact sign HB 1642, along with one other bill dealing with local flood relief, and these were the only two spending bills he signed for 2008. Three additional House bills and one additional Senate bill, providing financial support for charter school facility and transportation aid are also awaiting action.

**Selection Criteria (v) - The SEA's plan to monitor and hold accountable authorized public chartering agencies.**

As noted in selection criteria 1, the objectives of the New Hampshire charter school program were reviewed and revised over the last year. This has resulted in better defined objectives and a retooling of our charter school program offices which we believe will make for a stronger, more efficient and more accountable program.

Charter School Authorizers: New Hampshire currently has two charter school authorizers.

1. The New Hampshire State Board of Education, and
2. The Local Education Agency (LEA) of each district.

Alternative Authorizers: In addition to our two current authorizers, the NHCSP is involved in preliminary discussions with members of the NHCPSA and representatives of the New Hampshire University System. Interest has been expressed by New Hampshire universities in becoming a charter school authorizer and partnering together to create public charter schools that would receive substantial financial support from the university system.

Technical Support and Guidance: NHCSP staff work closely with both state and local authorizers to provide technical assistance and guidance in all areas relating to charter schools. NHCSP staff regularly attends monthly meetings with both our state and local authorizers. The director of the program has a strong background in curriculum and assessment and often serves as a sounding board for new academic approaches as well as help navigating the public policy issues that arise. Prior to each meeting the agenda is determined through consultation with both local and state authorizers, charter school directors, the NHCPSA and any other groups or citizens who have expressed interest.

Registration Program for School Boards Interested in Charter Schools: The NHCSP has witnessed an increased level of interest from school boards around the state interested in starting new charter schools. To better serve all school boards the NHCSP has developed a new procedure to register school boards interested in charter schools. Each year the NHCSP will initiate contact with all boards from around the state prior to September 1st. Boards interested in starting a new charter school will be able to register for more information and to request NHCSP staff attend a scheduled school board meeting in order to answer questions and provide technical details on how to proceed.

Authorizer Annual Report: Each year both state and local authorizers submit an annual report which summarizes their authorizing activities as well as the performance of its authorized schools. This information is then verified independently through the NHDOE Bureau of Accountability and Assessment and the NHCSP office.

Review and oversight by the Charter School Advisory Committee: The charter school advisory committee consists of a group of professionals with many decades of both public and private educational experience. Its members include professionals from public and private universities, charter school directors and board members, and NHDOE personnel.

The committee serves as a policy adviser and oversight of charter schools and charter school authorizers on both issues of a technical nature and as a matter of public policy. The chair of the Education Department at the University of New Hampshire, our flag ship university, sits on the committee and is able to add the larger educational picture to discussions. Key people in the NHDOE are also on the advisory committee and their help has been instrumental in navigating the bureaucratic waters of compliance and

regulation. Charters have remained the agile instruments that the legislature designed because of the input of this advisory committee.

The Executive Director of the School Board Association is also on the advisory committee and his input on governance and issues of community impact have been invaluable. The Chair of the advisory committee is a businessman who started a successful charter school in the town of Surry and has a clear sense of how important charter schools are to rural New Hampshire.

Program Evaluation by the Charter School Advisory Committee: The advisory committee led the external evaluation of the entire Charter School Program in New Hampshire including the NHCSP office, charter schools and authorizers in 2007. The advisory committee worked with the external evaluator to construct an unbiased evaluation of the program as a whole. This thorough review and evaluation offered critical insight and valuable improvements that have helped make the entire charter school program stronger, more efficient and more accountable. All issues of policy are vetted by the NHDOE at the Charter School Advisory Committee.

Report to the Legislature: Each year, the Legislature asks for an update on the status and health of the Charter School Program. This report is typically given by the head of the NHCSP with input from the Charter School Oversight Committee.

**Selection Criteria (vi) - Dissemination activities, the quality of the dissemination activities and the likelihood that those activities will improve student achievement.**

Should New Hampshire's application be successful, approximately 5% of this award will be used for dissemination activities. The dissemination grant program will foster the sharing of charter school best practices, encourage the development of high

quality charter schools, strengthen the statewide charter school association (NHCPA), offer technical assistance to developers, provide mentorships for new groups, and distribute policy guides and governance examples to all interested parties.

Availability of dissemination subgrant funds will be widely broadcast by the NHDOE via statewide mailings, public announcements and postings on the NHDOE website. Instructions and announcements will highlight the priority for funding of projects that partner with “schools or districts in need of improvement” as defined by an ESEA classification, “District In Need of Improvement”. The NHDOE hopes to leverage the experience and expertise of our successful charter schools in order to help create more high quality charter schools in New Hampshire and to positively impact all New Hampshire public schools.

Request for Proposal: The NHDOE website includes extensive information and documentation on charter schools. This includes detailed school descriptions, evaluations and complete application information including grants, reporting, and the renewal processes. On December 1 of each year, a Request for Proposal (RFP) for dissemination subgrants will be announced and posted on the NHDOE website. Successful charter schools operating in their fourth year will be encouraged to apply. The deadline for submittal of RFPs will be April 1 with dispersal planned in June of each year.

External Review Process: NHCSA staff will review all applications for compliance with state and federal requirements. The NHDOE will then appointment an external peer review team to review and score all applications. This team will be comprised of professionals who are knowledgeable and experienced with charter schools, teaching and administration and authorizing of charter schools. After the review team is assembled NHCSA staff will provide an orientation to both state and federal charter law,

priorities in funding and selection criteria. This team will then act as the external review panel for dissemination subgrants. After applications are individually reviewed and scored team members will discuss their scoring and make a group recommendation for funding. Applicants will receive notification of the status of their application from NHCSP staff and a copy of each reviewer's comments. Successful applicants must make any necessary revisions and provide necessary documentation prior to release of funds. All subgrantees must provide assurances that they will participate in any other state and federal reporting, evaluation or onsite monitoring required.

Subgrantees will be required to attend a mandatory reporting session annually to submit progress reports detailing dissemination activities, outcomes and impact of their projects. A few New Hampshire charter schools that are in year 5 of their charters with impressive NECAP results have already voiced their interest in using dissemination subgrants to present information on their best practices.

Application Review Criteria: Review criteria will include but are not limited to:

- The needs to be addressed by the project, their severity, and the approach used to assess the needs.
- The qualitative and quantitative information that support the needs for the project.
- The goals of the project and how the goals are tied to the identified needs.
- The results and benefits of each goal.
- The project activities and how they will accomplish the goals of the project
- Description of the timeline for the completion of the project.
- An itemized budget along with a brief narrative of how the requested funds will be used.

- A description of how the proposed expenditures are appropriate, reasonable, and necessary to support the project activities and goals.

Replicating Successful Programs: Funding priority will be given to applications that target the replication of successful programs or support the start up of new charter schools that increase student achievement. Applicants must provide evidence of past student progress or academic achievement, high levels of parental satisfaction and financial viability in order to qualify for this priority. Examples would include NECAP yearly assessments, parental surveys, program evaluations, financial and audit documentation, and yearly progress reports.

Number of dissemination grants to be awarded: The New Hampshire Department of Education intends to award up to three (3) dissemination grants per year. As previously stated, funding priority will be given to those programs targeted at secondary charter schools that have demonstrated successful practices to improve student achievement.

Professional Development Workshops: Two strategically located professional development workshops will be held annually on charter development, dissemination grant writing, and charter school best practices to help charter school developers. An annual charter school conference will also be held each year that focuses on charter school best practices, student achievement and research-based practices that are emerging as the most successful in meeting the needs of at-risk students. The intent throughout the dissemination process is to share this information with other public schools and LEAs'.

Statewide Charter Association: With encouragement from NHCSP staff, New Hampshire's Public Charter Schools formed the New Hampshire Chartered Public School Association (NHCPSA) in 2008. The NHCPSA was created in order to assist in the

promotion of charter schools among New Hampshire families, philanthropists, businesses, and state legislators. The NHCPSA and the NHDOE meet at least once a month, working together to advance quality charter schools in New Hampshire.

**Selection Criteria (vii)** - The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

External Evaluator: By law, New Hampshire is required to put any evaluation contract over \$2,500 out for bid and be approved by the Governor's Council. Because of this we are unable to identify the specific group or individual that will assist in our planning, design, development and implementation of our evaluation program. However, the evaluator will meet the following minimum criteria:

- Master's degree or Ph.D. in educational research and evaluation
- Experience working with charter schools
- Experience assisting state agencies in the design, development, and implementation of project or program evaluation plans
- Experience with state level program staff in the refinement of project objectives, performance measurements, data collection and evaluation methods

Program Evaluation: Although our proposed evaluation plan cannot currently identify a specific group or individual evaluator, it does contain a description of the project objectives, performance measures, and types of measurable data needed to effectively monitor the progress of each of the stated outcomes.

Measurable Data: The NHCSP currently has in place multiple methods for collecting measurable data on charter schools, students and achievement. The New

Hampshire Bureau of Accountability has the primary responsibility for producing student achievement data reports from all public schools, including charter schools.

Statewide Assessments The New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP), provides part of the data required for school and district report cards in New Hampshire. Additionally, the federal reauthorization of the ESEA 2001, requires the annual review of district and school performance to determine “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) for each district and school.

Since 2005, the annual review of district and school performance or [AYP in New Hampshire](#) is based on annual New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) results for Grades 3-8 and 11, together with annual NH-Alternative Assessment results for Grades 2-7 and 10. AYP is calculated through an index system, with schools and districts receiving full credit for each student that scores proficient or better and partial credit for student scores below proficient. All of the information above is available to the public through the NHDOE website, [School District Profile section](#). Any interested party is able to use this electronic resource to review New Hampshire’s public schools’ Standards and Assessment, Data Analysis, and retrieve state level, district level and school level reports and analysis.

Evaluation Plan: The evaluation plan outlined below will require continuous monitoring by NHCSPP program staff. It will answer basic questions such as:

- Is the program succeeding in what it said it was going to do?
- Are goals being met?
- Are our outreach efforts reaching the intended targets?
- Are schools making progress?
- Are schools responsibly using public funds?
- Are the schools sustainable?

The evaluation plan will help us assess whether our program is achieving outcomes and goals of the program, if not, we will change strategies or refine our methods.

### NHCSF Evaluation Plan

**Objective 1: Increase the number of high quality charter schools in New Hampshire, particularly those serving educationally disadvantaged students most at risk in rural and urban settings.**

<u>Performance Measure 1 a:</u> Twenty new high quality charter schools created during the proposed grant period.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods & Instruments	Analysis/Reports
Announcement prior to each funding cycle, priority given to programs for at-risk students	Track applications submitted, track applications given priority status.	NHCSF staff review and evaluate applications	NHCSF staff complete evaluations
Peer review panel evaluates and scores applications	Track panel reviewers concerns and applicant responses	Data tracked and stored in NHCSF database	Staff monitors application process to ensure target of 4 new schools per year

<u>Performance Measure 1 b:</u> At least 5 new secondary charter schools opened serving students at-risk during the life of this grant.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods & Instruments	Analysis/Reports
New schools targeting at-risk students opened each year	Track applications given priority status	NHCSF staff review and evaluate applications	NHCSF staff complete evaluations

<u>Performance Measure 1 c:</u> At least 85% of charter schools will meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by year two of the grant, <u>currently 81.81%</u> .			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods & Instruments	Analysis/Reports
April, NH Bureau of Accountability releases AYP data	Assessment data collected and analyzed by	NECAP and NH Alt Assessment Program testing annually.	Review school report card and NHCSF

and finalizes DINI/SINI	NHBA		accountability reports
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**Objective 2: Use CSP grant funds to improve student achievement for secondary charter school students and increase graduation rates.**

<b>Performance Measure 2 a:</b> At least 80% of charter school students will meet or exceed statewide average assessment scores (NECAP) by year 3 of the grant, <u>currently 75.27%</u> .			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reports
April, NH Bureau of Accountability releases assessment data	Assessment data collected and analyzed	NECAP testing annually	School report card and NH CSP accountability reports

<b>Performance Measure 2 b:</b> The graduation rate for charter school students (including students at-risk) will continue to meet or exceed the statewide average each year.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods & Instruments	Analysis/Reports
By May 30 <sup>th</sup> , charter schools submit annual progress reports containing graduation data	School progress reports collected and analyzed	School progress reports	Review school report card and NH CSP accountability reports

<b>Performance Measure 2 c:</b> Existing charter schools that have improved secondary student achievement will highlight and share their progress at annual state conference.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reports
Presentation at annual charter conference	School progress reports	School progress reports	School report card

<b>Performance Measure 2 d:</b> 85% of charter school students will meet or exceed personally established goals set by students themselves that are measurable and recorded in the annual report of their charter schools.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reports
By May 30 <sup>th</sup> , charter schools submit annual progress reports containing graduation data	School progress reports	School progress reports	School report card

**Objective 3: Support the dissemination of charter schools best practices to other public schools and LEAs.**

<b>Performance Measure 3 a:</b> Award up to three dissemination grants each year. Priority given to dissemination grants for secondary schools.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reports
RFP posted December, State will award up to 3 dissemination grants each year in June	Track all dissemination applications received & awarded each year	Peer review panel evaluates applications	NHCSP analyzes applications and evaluation outcomes
By May 30 <sup>th</sup> , dissemination subgrantees annual progress reports submitted	Collect annual progress reports	Surveys of recipient school directors and teachers regarding the impact of their projects	Compile and share data regarding dissemination program results

<b>Performance Measure 3 b:</b> At least two technical assistance and dissemination grant writing workshops held annually.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reports
Two workshops held in April & August, attended by charter developers	Attendance at and evaluation of grant writing work shops	Dissemination grants awarded	NHCSP staff will review attendance data to determine usefulness of workshops and whether they assisted in the creation of successful grant applications

<b>Performance Measure 3 c:</b> Each year at least 80% of participants in the dissemination grant program will report an increase in knowledge and awareness of charter schools best practices.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reports
Presentations of charter schools best practices at annual conference by dissemination grant recipients	Evaluations and surveys from statewide conference	Evaluations from program participants	Compile data on dissemination results and effectiveness of the program

**Objective 4: Empower charter schools to become strong independent**

**organizations and support charter school efforts to be fiscally responsible.**

<b>Performance Measure 4 a:</b> Each year at least 80% of all subgrantees participating in technical workshops will report an increased knowledge and awareness of charter school governance and fiscal responsibility			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods/Instruments	Analysis/Reports
At least 80% of attendees at workshops report increased knowledge of governance and fiscal responsibility through surveys and questionnaires	Track attendance and evaluation data from program participants surveys and questionnaires	Evaluations from program participants	Review evaluation data to determine effectiveness of the workshops and where improvement can be made

<b>Performance Measure 4 b:</b> All subgrantee applications reviewed for fiscal accountability before subgrants awarded.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods & Instruments	Analysis/Reports
Subgrant applications reviewed for fiscal accountability	Subgrant applications	Subgrants awarded to successful applicants	NHCSP staff will review applications and provide TA as needed

<b>Performance Measure 4 c:</b> Each year at least 85% or more of the charter schools open three years or longer remain financially viable.			
Benchmarks	Data Collection	Methods & Instruments	Analysis/Reports
Each year less than 15% of charter schools open three years or more will close due to financial problems	Track charter schools in operation each year and the number that close each year due to financial problems	Review annual openings and closings of charter schools	Review feedback and reasons for closing

2007 Program Evaluation and Improvements: In 2007 the NHDOE contracted with an eight person team from Clarus Group and their sub-consultant group, Class Measures Limited, to conduct an evaluation of the current charter program as it exists.

Clarus Group and Class Measures experience includes management and oversight of public and nonprofit agencies and programs, design and implementation of accountability systems, performance auditing and evaluation, public policy analysis, effective and ethical procurement and contracting, and professional training development and delivery. They have been instrumental in developing and improving charter school accountability measures for other states. Their detailed and extensive [2007 evaluation report](#) is posted on the NHDOE website, Charter Schools home page.

Over a two month period beginning in Fall of 2007, Class Measures collected data on mission, enrollment, governance, finance, staffing and professional development, curriculum, assessments, student and parent engagement and support, and post-secondary planning and facilities.

Data was collected using on-site school visits and interviews with staff, students, and parents, as well as data collection forms, surveys and telephone interviews. NHCSP staff were interviewed, as were documents on file at the NHDOE and charter schools. Interviews were conducted with charter school representatives from New Hampshire charter schools in all phases of operation: open, about to open, and one school that had closed. The resulting 88-page report issued in the Winter of 2007, [State of New Hampshire Charter School Program Review](#), has been used to improve the charter school program as a whole and increase accountability practices and measures at charter schools.

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### Appendices

#### New Hampshire Population Density

World Book map; based on U.S. Census Bureau data

