

Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grant Grant Application Evaluations

Applicant Scoring Criteria

Narrative Rubrics

Section 1: School Summary (worth 10pts)

Describe your school's mission and vision. What makes the school unique, how the school will prepare students for academic success, and what is the school's philosophy and instructional approach?

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 This answer should help you as a reviewer understand why the school was developed and what the goals of the developers are/were. For expansion and replication applicants, they may include language around evolution of program and school goals. Reviewers should have a clear picture of the school's identity from this question.	 Applicant is thorough and thoughtful in the response. Provides a cohesive mission and vision for educating students that leads to academic success for the likely student population, providing evidence from research or publications. Provides evidence of ways the school is unique or innovative vs. the NH Charter Community (unique elements to the NHED are one that are the sole source in their region or one of less than 5 in the state). Provides research or data to support the effectiveness of their approach. Response is cohesive and demonstrates a clear line from mission, to vision, to approach. 	 Is their answer vague or does it express their identity with clarity? Based on your understanding of NH public schools, is their school unique (either has new approach, is shared by only one or two other schools in the state)? Does the school describe how their model supports student academic success?





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Section 2: Educational Model (worth 10 pts)

<u>For startups</u>, provide a description of the academic program model your school plans to implement. Include discussion of the curriculum design, alignment to state standards, and if you plan to use any consultants. <u>In the case of expansion project</u>, please discuss this in the context of what your school currently has in place for an educational model and how your curriculum has been refined since startup (the current state of the school).

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 This narrative should outline the school's curriculum, how they will ensure alignment to state standards, and how they develop/create the curriculum. (purchasing, using a consultant, internal teams, etc.) If this project proposes to expand programming, reviewers should use this narrative to understand what is in place currently. Later narratives will discuss any planned curriculum additions. Reviewers should feel the school has experience with/can implement an educational model with proven success.	 Applicant demonstrates understanding of state standards and provides strategies to align their curriculum to the state standard. For new schools, model seems well developed and thought-through. Model implementation is discussed, and strategies seem practical/effective Consultants, tools, and outside resource relationships are clearly defined and understood If the school is an expansion or replication, provides data of their own students to show effectiveness in their model in student performance. Model and curriculum draw a clear line to the school's mission, vision, and anticipated student body. Gives dates, deliverables, or targets that the school is striving to meet with respect to curriculum development, if applicable. 	 Can you clearly understand their model and curriculum? If it is a new school, does the school explain in how the program is implemented and are the new schools ideas to align it to state standards sound? If the school is targeting at-risk students, does the school explain how their model benefits and supports that target population? If the school is an expansion school, do they discuss student achievement or other data around how their programming has been effective? Do they provide context on how their school started and how they refined curriculum to better serve students?





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Section 3: School Leadership & Governance (worth 10 pts)

Provide the organizational structure of the school, including a description of how each layer of leadership and management work together. Discuss the makeup and selection process for the governing board. Provide background information for Leadership and Board Members. Will the school use outside organizations to manage or operate any portion of the school, if so who and for what purposes? Include an organizational chart in the appendix.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 This answer should help you as a reviewer understand the skills, experience, diversity, and structure of leadership. For replication applicants, they should describe how will the new location be operated relative to the existing school (separately, under the same leadership).	 The applicant demonstrates well-thought-out response to development of the board and its membership Provides for depth of experience and input at leadership levels. Includes discussion on skill development needs or goals for leaders Gives dates, deliverables, or targets that the school is striving to meet, for new schools. If outside consultants are noted, the applicant provides what they will deliver, how they will be managed and included in key opening stages. If outside consultants are noted, they explain the relationship (contractual, non-profit assistance, 	 Are responsibilities for the board, leaders, and other key stakeholders clearly defined, including how leaders are chosen and developed? Is the applicant's understanding of organizational structure and needs clear? Does the school, if new, have realistic and reasonable timelines for fitting out their leadership and board? Are they setting clear and appropriate levels of responsibility? Are measurable targets for leadership and governance development provided? Have they considered resiliency planning and sustainability of the board? For existing schools, does the board appear to
Reviewers should understand how the school	etc) services, duties, and oversight of such work.	have stability?
will be structured and how		
responsibilities are divided and managed.		

* ESEA Section 4310 (3) defines a "charter management organization" as a nonprofit organization that operates or manages a network of charter schools linked by centralized support, operations, and oversight.





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Section 4: School Operations & Staffing (worth 10 pts)

How are policies and procedures developed and implemented to ensure they are followed and comply with applicable state and federal rules and laws? How will/do the board and school leaders divide responsibilities? How does the school exercise its autonomy and flexibility in operation? Discuss key staff hires as it relates to your grant project including timelines for hiring. Discuss any external resources needed to support the planning and implementation of your school (for example: curriculum specialist, marketing team, or accounting team) and who will manage/oversee these external resources.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 Reviewers should gain a sense	 Demonstrates an understanding of the state and federal compliance and a plan to stay compliant through policy, procedure, and implementation 	 Are roles and responsibilities of the operational staff clear? Does the applicant have clear, well-thought-out methods for ensuring compliance?
that the applicant has an operation plan that ensures compliance with the rules and law in New Hampshire, takes advantage of their flexibility and autonomy, and ensures appropriate staffing levels.	 of school. Provides a discussion on how leadership teams will work together to ensure compliance, exercise their autonomy, and handle challenges. If applicable, demonstrates understanding of the staff the school will need to develop. If the project proposes to add key staff, they positions extend on a provide and handle on a provide and	 methods for ensuring compliance? Is staffing aligned with the expected need based on model and stage of development? Are the school's strategies for recruiting, retaining, and engaging staff to reduce turnover presented? Did the applicant present solutions to any shallenges the unstad?
Existing schools may include an overview of their current staff and what will need to be added with this project. New schools should present an understanding of critical roles they need to fill.	 noted are reasonable and support the project. May present unique and thoughtful ways to engage, recruit and retain staff If outside consultants are noted, the relationship is clear and the school will maintain autonomy over decisions and the grant. If applicable, demonstrates an understanding of EMO/CMOs* and notes that relationship clearly, if it exists. 	 challenges they noted? Are timelines and targets reasonable?

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Section 5: Program Development and Effectiveness (worth 10 pts)

Discuss what measures the school will use/does use to evaluate the success of the educational program and what data points be used to track success? How will this data be used to develop strategies to meet the needs of learners?

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 This answer should show that the applicant has a set of measures to review the effectiveness of their program and understands the data needed to track and monitor. All applicants should have established targets for their school. Expansion and replication schools should include a discussion on data they have and how it supports their belief in their program's effectiveness.	 Provides detailed description of how they will track and monitor individual student success with specific data points that they will collect, track, and use. Has a definition for effectiveness and student success with measurable targets for the students that roll up to school targets Demonstrates understanding of student and school data and how data is used in decision making, identifying students in need and for improving methods Has a plan to develop formal practices and share them with others for elements of the school that are highly-effective. Expansion and replications provide evidence that their program is high-quality. 	 Is the plan for evaluating success of model and instruction detailed and clear? Are arguments made around what will be collected and why? Does the applicant provide targets to measure program effectiveness? If the school is an expansion/replication, do they provide specifics on how they track and monitor their program effectiveness and data to support their model's effectiveness?
Reviewers should feel comfortable with the applicant's grasp of using data and tools as well as their plan or process to continuously improve.		



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Section 6: Admission Policies and Lottery Process (worth 10 pts)

Discuss your admission policies and how students will be admitted. What information is collected and how is it used in making admission decisions? Provide details on your lottery process including exemptions from the lottery, how it will be run, and comply with the federal guidelines? *Please note that the use of weighted lotteries by a sub-grant applicant may require review and approval prior to implementation.*

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 This answer should demonstrate an open, transparent process. Applicants should demonstrate an understanding with the RSAs	 Applicant has well-developed approach to admissions and data collected does not appear to collect data that could be used to exclude any student Applicant describes systems used to track, manage and record admissions and lotteries Policies do not seem to have procedures or decision points that could be exclusionary 	 Did the school note information that is requested during the application process? Does the student or family need to present information that could be used to exclude prior to admissions (interviews, work samples, transcripts, economic data, IEP data, 504 data, etc.? Do the lottery policies allow exceptions or
that govern lotteries. Expansion and replication schools should have well defined policies and processes.	 Lotteries are proposed to be held in an open and transparent way Lottery weighting is done only to comply with Title VI, I, and/or disadvantaged students. Lottery exceptions are only for Students of a public school conversion Siblings 	 weighting outside what is described to the left (for example exemption for board member children)? If so, have they noted they will seek approval or exception if awarded the grant? Is the admission or lottery process explained clearly, with sufficient detail to determine conformance with guidelines?
Grant recipients must conform to federal admission and lottery guidelines, which prohibit any practice that may be discriminatory and are stricter than state statutes.	 Children of founders, teachers and staff (as long as the overall percent is low) 	 Is the lottery process fair and have transparent procedures?



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Section 7: Grant Project Goals & Project Discussion (worth 10 pts)

Discuss your grant project. What type is it (start-up, expansion, replication) referring to your project overview in the application form. Include five goals the school has for the grant funding (academic and non-academic) and include the metrics/measures it will use to track and report success. These goals should be written "SMART" (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Based) giving specific, measurable milestones that are achievable and relevant to the project. They should also have a timeframe for delivery associated with them. How will the school assess progress toward these goals throughout the life of the grant and include levels of reporting (reporting what and to whom).

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 Applicant provides a clear outline for their grant project including a discussion of what they are looking to create with the grant funding. Applicant provides 5	 School's project is well articulated and easy to understand For expansions, how the school is expanding is clear and new to the school. Five, well-crafted goals that align to their project The goals are written SMART The goals are clearly linked to the funding request and demonstrate need for funds Demonstrates a strong plan for monitoring 	 Do you understand the project and what the applicant is trying to achieve with the funding? Are the goals written so that the school can measure progress? Do the goals align with the project and the rest of the application narratives? Has the applicant created a link between the goals and the fund request?
reasonable, achievable goals for their grant project that NHED can track and monitor and are well aligned to the project they are proposing.	progress on the goals that includes reporting and frequency of review.	 Do they seem reasonable and achievable in the timeframe?

Section 8: Grant Management (worth 10 pts)

Describe how the school will ensure proper fiscal management of grant funds and compliance with the federal program. Include information on systems and tools to monitor the finances, track assets purchased with government funds, track and report expenses, and provide transparency with regard to the project. Who will lead compliance and oversight of the grant at the school? Include any checks and balances in place to safeguard misuse.





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Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 Applicant demonstrates an understanding of control measures needed to manage and comply with federal grants. Reviewers feel confident that the applicant understands the importance of grant management and ensuring	 Applicant demonstrates a thoughtful approach to properly handling and monitoring the expenditures resulting from award of grant funds Applicant shows a strong understanding of fiscal responsibility and the steps and policies needed Provides clear checks and balances plan Applicant can identify the people or roles responsible for managing/overseeing the grant Applicant references federal requirements to demonstrate understand of the compliance needs of the fund 	 Is the plan to oversee the grant thorough and complete with checks and balances? Does the plan address systems and tools the applicant will use to track expenditures and create reports? (financial systems, project management tools, etc) Does the applicant demonstrate an understanding of the complexities of federal compliance; does it appear they have reviewed the provided guidance materials? Did the applicant provide information on internal procedures to be developed or in
compliance to grant terms.		place?

Section 9: Sustainability Planning (worth 10 pts)

Detail the school's plan for sustainability post grant. Demonstrate an understanding of the recruitment efforts required to meet enrollment goals, fundraising efforts and goals needed to close income gaps, and strategic planning. Include if the school is working with identifying and engaging an external resource to assist in its development.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 This answer should show a thoughtful approach to long- term operation.	 Applicant clearly outlines future funding, other funding resources, and how to access them solutions that are detailed and comprehensive. Demonstrates understanding of their future needs. Provides clear fundraising and recruitment plan to meet enrollment goals. 	 Does the applicant address, and have a good understanding of their future funding needs? Is their response realistic, and doesn't rely too heavily on funding streams that are historically unreliable? Is the response aligned with what was presented in the operational budget?



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Expansion and replication schools may point to their continued operation, but they should provide more information to reviewers on how the expansion will be supported in the long term.	 Provides clear targets for fundraising and enrollment. Reviewers may check the attached documents for the operational budget to check for alignment with statements made in this section. Expansion and replication will have access to historic data and should present data on 	 Does the applicant include clear plans or goals for fundraising and recruitment? Did the applicant discuss leveraging available Title Funds?
Reviewers should be convinced of the applicant's understanding of the school's long-term needs and ability to manage the school post grant	demand and waitlists to support their arguments on post grant enrollment/recruitment.	

Section 10: Innovation (This was identified in the state's application to USED as a key priority and is therefore weighted; worth 20 pts)

Discuss ways in which your school is innovative in respect to operation, instruction, or model. Consider aspects of management, assessment of progress, curriculum, student services, approach to education, and other elements that make your school unique. Consider your school in comparison to other schools in the area, state, and region.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 20 Applicant provides a discussion regarding innovation and their innovative position	 School makes valid arguments as to their level of innovation backed up by contextual data on the state and region. They show innovative practices in more than two areas of their school, supported by a reasonable definition of innovative 	 Does the applicant compare their practice to other schools, and have enough knowledge of the school community to make sound arguments? Is the applicant displaying new ideas for operating, curriculum, strategies, etc.?





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Reviewers understand if the applicant values innovation and if they see themselves as innovative (if so, why).	 Arguments demonstrate an understanding of the New Hampshire charter community and the work being done in the schools in their proposed area. They plan to maintain creativity and innovation and have a process to do so that includes continuous evaluation, improvement or sharing of best practices when created. 	 Does the applicant provide goals or targets for innovation/creativity in the school's operations, programs, strategy, etc.? How many other school in New Hampshire have similar models or are located in the same area? See <u>NH Charter Schools map</u> (zeemaps.com)
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Section 11: Best Practices (This was identified in the state's application to USED as a key priority and is therefore weighted; worth 20 pts)

Discuss ways the school's leaders will develop and share best practices with the broader educational community. Note areas where best practices are/will be developed. Provide ideas of how your school can help share best practices with the educational community.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 20	Applicant demonstrates a knowledge of what best	Does the applicant demonstrate an
Applicant provides information on their approach to developing and documenting systems, ways of operating, and educational strategies.	 practices are and how to document them Applicant expresses a desire to further develop their practices, document, and share them Applicant includes a method for evaluating the effectiveness of practices that are/will be developed Provides concrete ideas on how they will share 	 understanding on how to develop and document best practices, and a willingness to share those practices with all public schools? Are there specific areas where best practices exist/will exist? Does the applicant place a high value on best practices?
Reviewers feel the school values developing practices that can enhance and be shared with the wider educational community.	 practices and with whom Provided specific examples of practices under development or previously developed 	 If the school is an expansion or replication, have they presented ways they shared written best practices other than a required submission with their APR?



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Section 12: At-Risk Students (This was identified in the state's application to USED as a key priority and is therefore weighted; worth 20 pts)

What is the anticipated percentage and type(s) of the educationally disadvantaged students (ELLs, those qualifying for free lunch, those with IEPs, etc.) that you will serve? Discuss how the school has arrived at this estimate and if the school plans to target these students and how. Discuss support the school plans to provide to these students.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 20 Applicant should demonstrate a reasonable understanding of the at-risk students they will attract and target. Reviewers should be convinced of the applicant has appropriate supports, plans, and targets for these populations.	 Applicant demonstrates an understanding of the likely at-risk student population using research, data, etc. Applicant cites programs, policies, and approaches to teaching that align with the potential population. Demonstrates an understanding of the needs of this student population and an ability to meet those needs. If they plan to target these populations, they outline how they will market their school and provide supports that will lead to retention and student success. 	 Is a sensible approach to planning for or supporting the potential at-risk population demonstrated? Do they discuss their populations vs the state averages or the districts they will draw from? Are there policy discussions around the supports for the population? If the applicant is targeting this group, are there clear targets and goals for this population?





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Section 13: Budget Narrative (worth 10 pts)

Provide a description for the planning and implementation phase budget activities and expenditures that will be supported by this funding. The level of detail provided should be sufficient to understand how that money will be allocated over the planning phase and the implementation phase and support the level of funding requested. Include discussion on the research used to develop your grant budget.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10	 Applicant provides sufficient detail and 	• Is the Narrative organized and easy to follow?
	descriptions to clearly understand the purchasing	Are there descriptions on what will be done
Applicant provides a summary	plan for the grant	with the additional funding for innovation
of their project's planned	 The narrative supports and aligns to the other 	and at-risk?
expenses.	application narratives and makes sense within the	
	context of the previous narratives.	
Reviewers are given a valuable	 Narrative is organized by project stage (planning 	
overview of the planned	and implementation) and the activity noted in	
expenditures for the grant, so	each stage is appropriate.	
they have good context before	 Provides notes on the research performed to 	
reviewing the grant budget	arrive at the budget.	
itself.		





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Budget Rubrics

Reviewers should review and score the budgets in 2 areas: Clarity & Reasonableness and Alignment to Application Narratives. The next two grids provide guidance for scoring each of these elements. Review both stages of budget: Planning (noted as such, with one column for the year) and Implementation (noted as such and has two columns for year).

Reasonableness (worth 10 pts)

Review both the Planning and Implementation budgets to score the overall clarity and reasonableness of the outlined expenses using the guidance below.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 Expenses outlined in the budget seem reasonable in the context of the application, stage of development, and in amount/quantity when considering that this project is funded via tax dollars.	 Both planning and implementation budgets are well organized and easy to follow/understand and completed with all columns having entries for each row. Activities listed seem reasonable when compared to the school's mission, project goals and the overall application narrative. Activities seem reasonable based on project stage (planning stages vs implementation) Quantities seem reasonable when compared to enrollment, staffing, grades served, stage in school development and other factors Cost amounts seem reasonable and are supported 	 If the applicant is requesting both planning and implementation funds, are they separated? Are the objectives easy to link to expenses? Are there stand-out or questionable activities based on the project description in the application? For example, a line item lists a greenhouse, but there is no discussion of agriculture or horticulture education.
	by discussion in the narrative	

Necessary for the Project (Alignment to Application Narratives) (worth 10 pts)

Review both the Planning and Implementation budgets to score the alignment to the responses in the narrative sections of the application using the guidance below. Notes are provided if you should reflect to specific narratives.





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Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 10 Expenses outlined in the budget seem necessary to support the success of the project, ensure completion within the timeline, and to ensure that the project goals are met. The expenses are well aligned to the overall application.	 When checked against the narrative section 10 (Budget Narrative) budget is aligned with the description of spending and supports the budget narrative. Amounts in budget match or exceed overall request Clear lines can be drawn between the projects goals and the expenses outlined; things fit the "story" the grant is telling School makes a case that the expenses are important to the successful development, implementation and delivery of their grant project. School includes clear description of how funds will be used for the innovation plan and/or at-risk plan, if they applied for the additional funding. 	 Does the submitted operational budget demonstrate a "need" for the funding? Does the budget cover at least the amount requested in the grant application? Does the overall application make a good case, or explain well how the funds will enhance or benefit its targeted students? How does the budget align to the project goals? Have they funded in a way that will help them achieve their goals?





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Innovation Plan Rubric (100 points maximum)

Please use the guidance below in reviewing the innovation aspects on the application to provide a score for the applicant. Particular areas to review in the application include: innovation narrative (section 9), budget references to innovation, budget narrative references to innovation (section 10), and the innovation plan attachment. The innovation plan directions for applicants were as follows:

NHEd is providing additional funding to schools that can demonstrate innovation which covers a broad range of categories including model, populations served, location, operation, access to technology, community partnerships, and more. Plans should detail the goals/activities to be delivered, how the grant funds will support this plan, and how the school will track and monitor progress on the goals.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 100	 The applicant provides solid evidence using contextual and data driven arguments to define innovation. 	 Can the ideas presented be defined as innovative when looking at other schools in the region/area?
Applicant clearly	The applicant provides numerous areas of	Does the applicant have a clear plan for the
demonstrates areas of	innovation (more than 3).	additional funding?
innovation and how this	 The applicant shows interest in sharing their 	 Does the budget clearly reflect where the
additional funding will assist in	innovative practices with others.	additional innovation funding will be spent?
strengthening, accelerating	• The ideas presented in the innovation plan support	 Are the ideas presented aligned with other
and/or improving their	the other elements of the application narratives.	elements of the application?
innovative position.	• In the budget line items are specifically referenced	
	to support "innovation" projects and align to the	
Reviewers are convinced of	narratives and the innovation plan in attachment.	
the areas of innovation and	• The plan for innovation funds is clear, includes	
feel the applicant is willing to	timelines, goals, milestones/measures that provide	
assist others through sharing	enough detail to track and monitor progress	
the best practices they	 The plan is well-aligned to the overall application 	
develop.	and makes sense relative to the school's objectives	
	and method of operating.	





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At-Risk Plan Rubric (100 points maximum)

Please use the guidance below in reviewing the at-risk aspects on the application to provide a score for the applicant. Particular areas to review in the application include: at-risk narrative (section 8), budget references to at-risk, budget narrative references to at-risk (section 10), and the at-risk plan attachment. The at-risk plan directions for applicants were as follows:

NHEd is providing additional funding to schools that can demonstrate a strong focus on recruiting, retaining and supporting at-risk students. The plan provided should align to and expand on information provided in Section 8. Plans should detail the goals/activities to be delivered, how the grant funds will support this plan, and how the school will track and monitor progress on the goals.

Question Guidance	Ideal answer:	Consider these questions when scoring:
Maximum point value is 100 Applicant clearly demonstrates how this additional funding will assist in their support for at-risk students. Reviewers are convinced the at-risk funding will be used to develop robust supports and programming for at-risk students that will benefit them.	 The applicant provides strong argument for the atrisk funds supported by data for enrollment of these populations. Provides strong approach to developing supports for these students and monitoring their success. Discusses clearly how the funds would be used to benefit at-risk student populations. Gives realistic recruitment/retention information that justifies any enrollment estimates. In the budget line items are specifically referenced to support "at-risk funds is clear, includes timelines, goals, milestones/measures that provide enough detail to track and monitor progress The plan is well-aligned to the overall application and makes sense relative to the school's objectives and method of operating. 	 Does the plan include specific details around supports and goals for at-risk students? Does the applicant provide a full understanding of their potential at-risk population? Are the objectives and/or expenditures support the application in a clear way, with clear connections to how at-risk students will benefit? Are there goals and accountability for the additional funding?

