

Quality Counts Charter School Program (CSP Grant)
Summary of Peer Reviewer Scores, Cohort 2, August 2018

Name of Applicant: The Excel Center -- Gary
Overall Ranking: 57.1 out of 71

OPTIONAL COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY (Up to 3 Points)			
0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
Applicant opts not to address this element, OR narrative does not focus upon any of the designated priority areas (Early Childhood, Postsecondary, or Rural)	Area of focus is indicated, but only one of the three required elements is fully described	Area of focus is clearly defined, and two of the three required elements are fully described	Area of focus is clearly defined and <i>all three</i> elements fully addressed: (1) Expected targets and outcomes are clearly described; (2) Targets/outcomes are supported by qualitative or quantitative data or specific measurable and accessible goals; and (3) Unique populations are clearly defined and described
Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 1.8			
Comments: As an adult high school, The Excel Center-Gary seeks competitive preference priority for its post-secondary focus. A very short narrative includes the expected, measurable targets and outcomes, including one goal with quantitative data measures around State assessment pass rates. An overview that more completely explains all required elements is not provided within this section (p. 9).			

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

1. CHARTER SCHOOL VISION and EXPECTED OUTCOMES (Up to 6 Points)			
0 points	1-2 points	3-5 points	6 points (1 point per element)
No description provided or cited within Application; applicant only cites pages in Charter Application	Only 1-2 of the required six elements are <i>fully</i> described. 1 point per element	At least 3-5 of the required six elements are <i>fully</i> described. 1 point per element	<i>All six elements are fully developed and described.</i> (1) Vision; (2) Need and Communication Plan; (3) Curriculum Framework and Key Evidence-based Instructional Practices; (4) Specific Strategies Support All Students in Meeting/Exceeding Indiana Academic Standards; (5) Development of 21 st Century Skills or Preparing Students to be College & Career Ready; and (6) Sustainability beyond CSP Grant Funding
Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 5.3			
Comments: The vision of GLI is to provide education, support, and career potential for adult high school students (p. 10). Needs are aligned to area poverty and graduation rates. The school director leads marketing efforts supported by Goodwill Industries; staff engages the community through outreach activities; and the school has received solid media coverage (p. 11). The curriculum is aligned with Indiana College & Career Readiness Standards and designed to meet students where they are based on transcripts and basic skill assessments. Students can participate in both remedial and advanced classes and receive college credit for some through Ivy Tech. Evidence-based instructional strategies are presented, with students working at their own pace. Child care, often a barrier, is provided to adult students working toward a diploma. The school employs a life coach to further meet student needs (p. 11). Each student has an individual plan with IEP/Section 504 needs addressed, as needed. Some staff members are bi-lingual. The school will employ collaboration, knowledge construction, skilled communication, global awareness, self-regulation, problem-solving and technology to prepare students to be college/career ready. Tutors are also available (p. 12). Sustainability beyond CSP Grant Funding- Construction projects are financed through Goodwill Industries of Michiana, a non-profit organization. Corporate and community partners have funded projects in other Excel schools and grant writers believe this will be true in Gary (p. 13), but sustainability of CSP-funded initiatives is not explicitly addressed.			

Quality Counts Charter School Program (CSP Grant)
Summary of Peer Reviewer Scores, Cohort 2, August 2018

2. EXPERTISE OF CHARTER SCHOOL DEVELOPERS (Up to 6 Points)

0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5-6 points
No description provided or cited within Application; applicant only cites pages in Charter Application	Key personnel are identified, but descriptions are vague and qualifications not directly aligned to proposed program	Key personnel are identified and solid descriptions provided showing each individual's qualifications aligned to the proposed program	Key personnel are identified and their strong qualifications are clearly described and relevant to the proposed program. Team members appear to exhibit exceptional expertise and the previous successful experience needed to bring about academic growth and student achievement. Applicants that intend to REPLICATE or EXPAND must also provide data analyses findings to be scored within the 5-6 point range.

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 5.8

Comments:

Key personnel have been identified and their qualifications/backgrounds demonstrate their ability to be successful in this environment. They appear well versed in both finance and education experiences. As this is a replication, the data analyses provided are limited to enrollment and a modified graduation rate (i.e., South Bend had a 72% modified grad rate), but they do not provide data related to student academic growth and achievement. The proposal could be strengthened by considering other Excel campus passing rates on State assessments and credit attainment rates.

3. CHARTER SCHOOL GOALS & COMMUNICATION PLAN (Up to 9 Points Total)

A. Charter School Goals (up to 7 points for this element, under Part A)

0 points	1-2 points	3-5 points	6-7 points
No description provided or cited within Application; applicant only cites pages in Charter Application	Goal descriptions are partial, vague or unclear; <u>or</u> applicant has only identified one or two goals; <u>and/or</u> goals are not aligned to proposal priorities (e.g., STEM, Early Childhood, etc.)	No less than three specific, measurable goals are identified. Some goals may not appear rigorous. Methods for measuring success toward goals described but may be somewhat unclear. Some key proposal priorities (e.g., STEM) do not have aligned goals.	No less than three specific, measurable goals are clearly described. Academic outcomes of all students (all grade levels served) will be addressed. All goals appear rigorous, yet attainable. Applicant specifies who will do what, by when, and based upon what measurement. Applicant MUST include at least one goal aligned to a State Assessment to be scored within the 6-7 point range.

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 6.3

Comments:

The proposal included three measurable goals focusing on graduation requirements and graduation rates. The goals appear rigorous and attainable based on performance rates from other local Excel campuses (Hammond). An outline for benchmarking, monitoring and reporting on goals outlined in the grant application was not available. The State content assessment was included and focused on the percentage of students passing all state level tests in order to graduate without a waiver.

B. Communication Plan (up to 2 points for this element, under Part B)

0 points	1 point	2 points
Communication plan regarding goals not addressed	A communication plan is outlined to describe school goals to some stakeholders (e.g., to staff and students but not to families)	A communication plan that has been well thought out and includes multiple avenues to reach all stakeholders (staff, students, families) has been articulated with specificity

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 1

Comments:

The proposal notes that staff will receive information about school goals and will contribute to goals on an ongoing basis. Students will receive information on goals upon enrollment. The school will use press

Quality Counts Charter School Program (CSP Grant)
Summary of Peer Reviewer Scores, Cohort 2, August 2018

releases, public service announcements and community activities, offering general plans to ensure the awareness of the Excel Center’s goals (p. 14).

4. USE of CSP FUNDING (Up to 6 Points)

A. Detailed Budget Narrative and Budget Worksheet Addressing all Expenditures Aligned to the Proposal (up to 4 points, for Part A)

0 points	1 point	2-3 points	4 points
<p>No budget narrative, and detailed budget worksheets are not attached to proposal.</p> <p>OR, budget narrative is unclear and does not align to detailed budget attached and provides very limited or no detail to justify proposed expenditures.</p> <p>There are many discrepancies between the combined <i>Planning & Implementation</i> budget worksheet totals and the <i>Budget Summary</i> worksheet totals.</p>	<p>Many budget narrative descriptors are partial, vague or unclear. Some costs have not been described within the proposal.</p> <p>Several discrepancies exist between the combined <i>Planning & Implementation</i> budget worksheet totals and the <i>Budget Summary</i> worksheet totals.</p>	<p>Detailed budget narrative descriptors are provided for most line items and costs are aligned to initiatives described within the proposal.</p> <p>Most combined <i>Planning & Implementation</i> budget worksheet totals agree with the <i>Budget Summary</i> worksheet totals.</p>	<p>Detailed budget narrative descriptors are provided for nearly all line items and are directly aligned to anticipated initiatives/costs described within the proposal narratives.</p> <p>The combined <i>Planning & Implementation</i> budget worksheet totals agree with the <i>Budget Summary</i> worksheet totals.</p> <p>Applicant MUST adhere to maximum of \$300K in planning year and a maximum of \$900K for total proposal budget to be scored within the 4 point range.</p>

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 2.8

Comments:
 The budget reflects the needs of the school over the life of the grant. The budget worksheet totals agree with the Budget Summary. Planning year costs do not exceed \$300K and the overall total is below \$900K (p. 14). Applicant includes a narrative description for most line items, but does not offer alignment between the costs and the initiatives described within the proposal.

B. School’s Capacity to Continue Implementation & Operation (up to 1 point, for Part B)

0 Points	1 Point
<p>Explanation of how school will develop and maintain required capacity to continue the program after grant life is either not provided, inappropriate, or not adequately described</p>	<p>Explanation of how school will develop and maintain required capacity to continue the program after grant life is clearly articulated and sufficiently described</p>

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = .5

Comments:
 Gary Excel has financial backing from Goodwill Industries of Michiana (GIM) and expects to gain corporate and community partners, if things progress as they did in South Bend (p. 15). The applicant, however, does not fully explain how the school will develop and maintain the required capacity to implement grant-funded initiatives when CSP grant funding ends.

C. Costs are Reasonable, Allocable and Necessary (up to 1 point, for Part C)

0 Points	1 Point
<p>Many costs appear either unreasonable, or unallowable, or unnecessary (as they cannot be directly tied to activities or personnel described within the applicant’s proposal narratives)</p>	<p>All – or nearly all costs – appear reasonable, allocable and necessary</p>

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 1

Comments:
 Nearly all costs appear reasonable, allocable and necessary. Planning Year grant funds will cover

Quality Counts Charter School Program (CSP Grant)
Summary of Peer Reviewer Scores, Cohort 2, August 2018

insurance fees, the EMO contract (**Not sure if this is allowable), rent for a facility until the planned facility is complete, radio spots for communicating with the public and initial personnel costs for child care. Year One funds will be used for furniture and technology needs to include hardware and software. A digital sign and staff training/PD also takes place in Year One. Years Two and Three include educational and administrative software and student recruitment efforts (p. 14). Staff training will be provided by Goodwill Education Initiatives which should minimize costs (Budget Worksheet).

5. GOVERNANCE PLAN & ADMINISTRATIVE RELATIONSHIPS (Up to 6 Points)

Six Required Elements (A-F each worth one point, for a total up to 6 Points)

- A. All applicants provide description of governance structure of the school. **If the school uses an EMO/CMO, applicant also must describe that partnership and why the EMO/CMO was selected**
- B. Description of how school operates (how charter school leaders are empowered to make daily decisions and how school staff work together)
- C. Description of process to select board members and summarize member expectations
- D. Description of governance training for board members, current and prospective
- E. Description of relationship between the charter school leadership, governing board, or authorizer with the EMO/CMO to ensure no apparent or real conflict of interest involved.
IF the school does not use an EMO/CMO, scored as one point
- F. Description of how the charter school will ensure timely and accurate data submission for State and federal reporting requirements.

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 4

Comments:

The Goodwill LEADS Board oversees governance of all Excel Centers. Goodwill Industries of Michiana Board oversees the Goodwill LEADS Board and has a liaison that sits on both boards. The GIM President/CEO (ex-officio) also sits on the LEADS Board. Goodwill Educational Initiatives serves as the EMO as they founded the Excel Center model and advise the planning and implementation of all Excel Centers.

School leaders are empowered to make day to day decisions, supported by the Lead Teacher and Life Coach. School leaders report to the Vice President who reports to the President.

Board members are selected to represent a variety of educational, business and community organizations with one member that also serves on the Goodwill Board; the process for selection is not fully described. Board member responsibilities are not provided, nor does the applicant explicitly address the duties for which the board is responsible.

Governance training includes general governance, vision, mission and values fidelity, fiduciary duty, budget and finance, setting academic and financial goals, evaluation of school and school leader performance and fund raising and community engagement. The LEADS Board, Vice President of Excel Centers, Indiana Charter School Board, and Goodwill Educational Initiatives have no known apparent or real conflict of interest.

The narrative states that the school will ensure timely submission of data but does not describe how.

6. STUDENT RECRUITMENT & ADMISSIONS PROCESSES (Up to 3 Points)

Quality Counts Charter School Program (CSP Grant)
Summary of Peer Reviewer Scores, Cohort 2, August 2018

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
No description provided or cited within Application; applicant only cites pages in Charter Application	Student recruitment plan description is partial, vague or unclear. Evidence to show compliance with IC 20-24-5 is not offered. Public lottery process is poorly described or not present.	Student recruitment plan is described and evidence of compliance with IC 20-24-5 is offered but may not be complete. A public lottery process is adequately described.	A multi-pronged student recruitment plan is clearly articulated and there is solid evidence of compliance with IC 20-24-5 presented. An appropriate public lottery process is clearly described.

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 3

Comments:

Gary Excel is for adult students who choose to come back to school to earn a high school diploma. It targets minority students, students of low-education parents, low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other students who are at-risk for failure. It will alert the community of its open enrollment through outreach to current and prospective partner organizations, news media releases, public informational meetings, social media and through word of mouth. A lottery system is in place that aligns to IC 20-24-5, if enrollment exceeds capacity (page 16). To support ethical practices, it was noted that an outside agency would be used.

7. NEEDS of EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (Up to 6 Points)

0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5-6 points
No description provided or cited within Application; applicant only cites pages in Charter Application	One or two student groups sufficiently addressed by applicant. <u>OR</u> more than two groups addressed but explanation of strategies does not seem appropriate or sufficiently adequate.	Three or four student groups sufficiently addressed by applicant. <u>OR</u> more than three groups addressed but explanation of strategies does not seem appropriate or sufficiently adequate for all groups.	<i>All five student groups are sufficiently addressed by the applicant (generating 5 points); and the applicant descriptions are viewed as exemplary, demonstrating the school's commitment to ensuring that special population needs are met (generating 6 points).</i>

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 2.5

Comments:

While all sub-groups were noted in the narrative, only one subgroup, special education, was thoroughly addressed within this section of the proposal. Strategies were not explicitly addressed and did not align to best practices researched to support specific subgroups needing to be addressed. For example, how do flexible schedules to allow a student to work address EL/homeless/special ed/neglect & delinquent student needs?

8. COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES (Up to 3 Points)

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
No description provided or cited within Application; applicant only cites pages in Charter Application	Evidence of parent, teacher and community involvement in the planning and design of the charter school is partial, vague or unclear	Evidence of parent, teacher and community involvement in the planning and design of the charter school is offered but does not seem fully explained	Clear evidence of the involvement of parents, teachers, and community in the planning and design of the charter school is presented

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 1.8

Comments:

To engage families and promote the school as an option in the community, Gary plans to market the school through radio ads, direct mail, utilize a website and social media (developed by a professional marketing firm), outdoor boards, and advertisements placed on public transportation. The school has held multiple outreach activities to build awareness (4th parade, health fair, back to school, Latino

Quality Counts Charter School Program (CSP Grant)
Summary of Peer Reviewer Scores, Cohort 2, August 2018

resource fair, foodbank). The media covered the ribbon cutting and open house (p. 17). Because the students in this school are adults, reaching out to parents is not really covered or needed.

9. FISCAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (Up to 6 Points)

A. Internal Controls over Expenditure & Record Maintenance (up to 2 points, for Part A)

0 Points	1 Point	2 Points
No description provided or cited within Application; applicant only cites pages in Charter Application	Plan or process for maintaining internal controls over expenditures and record maintenance is generally described, but some pieces are partial, vague or unclear	A plan or process for maintaining internal controls over expenditures and record maintenance is clearly articulated

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 2

Comments:
 A designated accountant oversees all revenue and expenditures, with adherence to SBA’s requirements. The school director has authority to manage day to day expenses, but larger expenditures require approval of the Vice President. The GLI Board meets quarterly to manage operations.

B. Charter School Leadership Responsible for Grant Management (up to 2 points, Part B)

0 Points	1 Point	2 Points
No description provided in narrative; or applicant only cites pages in Charter Application	Grant management process is described, but not fully-developed. Charter school leaders mentioned as responsible for grant, but EMO/CMO explanation not fully-developed (if applicable)	Grant management process fully-described for decision-making, budget & tracking purchases. Charter school leaders are demonstrated to be responsible for all aspects of grant, and not EMO/CMO (if applicable).

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 1.5

Comments:
 School leader responsibility for managing the grant is noted, but with only two sentences of explanation, the response is not really “fully developed,” The EMO has no authority over grant management (p. 18). More specific details needed to generate full points in this section.

C. Other State & Federal Funds Support School Operations (up to 2 points)

0 Points	1 Point	2 Points
No description provided or cited within Application; applicant only cites pages in Charter Application	Minimal/disjointed explanation for how State/federal funds will support school operations & student achievement	Solid descriptions for how other State and federal funds will support school operations and student achievement

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 1.5

Comments:
 Gary states that State funds will be used for staff and other related costs to ensure the highest level of student achievement. It will also pursue all available grants, State and private, to cover additional expenses such as child care and transportation. The school is dedicated to spending within its means. While several sources are noted, the response does not reference Title I, Title II or other federal funding that is available (p. 18).

10. FACILITIES and TRANSPORTATION (Up to 3 Points)

Quality Counts Charter School Program (CSP Grant)
Summary of Peer Reviewer Scores, Cohort 2, August 2018

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
Applicant opts not to address these elements, OR narrative provided does not focus upon the facility or transportation plan	<i>One</i> of the three anticipated elements is provided, i.e., (a) safe, secure & sustainable facility; or (b) how enrollment impacts facility needs; or (c) transportation plan	<i>Two</i> of the three anticipated elements are provided, i.e., (a) safe, secure & sustainable facility; and/or (b) how enrollment impacts facility needs; and/or (c) transportation plan	All <i>three</i> elements are described: (a) how the facility is safe, secure and sustainable; (b) how enrollment impacts facility needs; <u>and</u> (c) a transportation plan that is aligned with the needs of the school

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = **2.5**

Comments:

Gary Excel has identified a commercial space that once renovated will reflect the South Bend Excel school site. It includes 18,000 square feet, all on the ground floor, that allows for 13 classrooms, a computer lab, a drop-in child care, student lounge, large group meeting rooms and office space. How enrollment growth impacts facility needs is not fully explained.

The school has prepared an Emergency Response Procedure Handbook (starting on page 117) that includes plans for emergencies. The school will plan and execute fire, tornado and lockdown drills. Each school has a security office (resource officer onsite) at the entrance and security cameras that cover much of the school building (pp. 18-19).

Gary Excel does not provide transportation, as it is covered through personal and public transport. Public transportation (with passes provided for students) is offered to those in need. The SPED coordinator will arrange transportation for students aligned to IEPs or 504 plans (p. 19).

11. SIGNED CHARTER SCHOOL ASSURANCES (Up to 3 Points)

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
None of the required signatures have been obtained and submitted with the proposal	<i>One</i> of the three required signatures submitted, i.e., charter authorizer, or project contact person, or board president	<i>Two</i> of the three required signatures submitted, i.e., charter authorizer, and/or project contact person, and/or board president	All three required signatures submitted, i.e., charter authorizer, project contact person, <u>and</u> board president

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = **3**

Comments:

All three signatures are present in the proposal (Authorizer page 2; end of Assurances, page 20).

12. REQUIRED APPENDICES (Up to 8 Points)

Eight Required Appendix Elements (1 point for each element, items A-H below)

- A. Charter Application to Authorizer (for new or replication proposals) *or* Amendment to Existing Charter (for expansion proposal)
- B. Budget Worksheet
- C. Most recent *Expanded Annual Performance Report* (IDOE Compass)
NOT APPLICABLE to new charter schools (scored as automatic point).
- D. Proof of Non-Profit Status of governing board, *or* proof that application for such status has been made
- E. Enrollment or Student Admissions Policy
- F. Agreement/contract between governing body and management organization.
NOT APPLICABLE if applicant does not use an EMO or CMO (scored as automatic point).
- G. School's Discipline Policy (promotes retention/reduces overuse of practices that remove students from classroom)
- H. School's Safety Plan is attached in the appendix and evidence that it was submitted to the State Board of Education is present

Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = **7.8**

Comments: All anticipated appendix elements were included in the proposal.

Quality Counts Charter School Program (CSP Grant)
Summary of Peer Reviewer Scores, Cohort 2, August 2018

13. OVERALL ORGANIZATION of PROPOSAL (Up to 3 Points)			
0 points	1point	2 points	3 points
Information was not provided in anticipated sequence; and/or information was nearly always difficult to locate.	Information requested was provided, but not consistently in the anticipated sequence. OR applicant exceeded 30-page narrative limit.	Applicant followed requested sequence and stayed within page limitations. Generally, information was easily located.	Applicant’s proposal narrative clearly presented, following prescribed format, making the location of information and anticipated key elements readily available. Applicant did not exceed 30-page narrative limit.
Averaged Peer Reviewer Score = 3			
Comments: The proposal narrative is clearly presented and followed the prescribed format, making it easy to locate specific information. It did not exceed the 30 page limit.			

Quality Counts Charter School Program (CSP Grant)
Summary of Peer Reviewer Scores, Cohort 2, August 2018

Summary of Averaged Peer Reviewer Scores	Points Possible	Averaged Score of Peer Reviewers
• Optional Competitive Preference Priority	3	1.8
1. Charter School Vision & Expected Outcomes	6	5.3
2. Expertise of the Charter School Developers	6	5.8
3A. Charter School Goals	7	6.3
3B. Goals Communication Plan	2	1
4A. Detailed Budget Narrative & Budget Worksheets	4	2.8
4B. School's Capacity to Continue Implementation & Operation	1	.5
4C. Costs are Reasonable, Allocable and Necessary	1	1
5. School Governance Plan & Administrative Relationships	6	4
6. Student Recruitment & Admissions Processes	3	3
7. Needs of Educationally Disadvantaged Students	6	2.5
8. Community Outreach Activities	3	1.8
9A. Internal Controls Over Expenditures & Record Maintenance	2	2
9B. Charter School Leadership Responsible for Grant Management	2	1.5
9C. Other State & Federal Funds Support School Operations	2	1.5
10. Facilities & Transportation	3	2.5
11. Signed Charter School Assurances	3	3
12. Required Appendices	8	7.8
13. Overall Organization of Proposal	3	3
TOTAL POINTS	71 Total Points Possible	57.1