



INNOVATION & EXCELLENCE

WASHINGTON'S CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT

CHARTER SCHOOL CSP SUB-GRANT SCORE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

School Name: Pinnacles Prep Charter School	
Contact Person: Jill Fineis	Contact Email: jill@pinnaclesprep.org
Application Type: New School	Grant Budget: \$1,500,000
Grades Served: 6-12	New Seats Created: 300
Total Averaged Score: 95.62	Priority Points Assigned: 8.00
Application Status: Awarded	

RUBRIC

A. GRANT PROJECT GOALS

Identify 3-5 grant project goals and justify each goal in terms of its value in supporting the planning and implementation of your proposed school.

Be sure to align your budget to your project and ensure that all planned grant spending, including future revisions to your budget, fit clearly within one of your stated project goals.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 12.00/12.00

Reviewer Comments – Grant Project Goals

Strengths:

- Goals reflect focus on community served (low income, majority Latinx)
- Goals reflect desire to recruit underserved students strategically, provide appropriate facilities for underserved students
- The applicant clearly identified three grant project goals that support the planning and implementation of the proposed school
- Each grant project goal is a quality goal and is specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, relevant, time-bound, and include targets
- An explicit justification is provided for each goal, and there is clear alignment among grant project goals and the overall mission and goals of the school

Weaknesses:

None provided

B. EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY, KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS, AND SCHOOL CULTURE

Fully describe and justify the design of the academic program in terms of the educational philosophy, key elements of the program, and how school culture is developed.

Be sure to include key design elements, and rationale for why this education model was chosen and how it will produce strong outcomes for the unique community and student population the school will be located within.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 10.66/12.00

Reviewer Comments - Educational Philosophy, Key Design Elements, and School Culture

Strengths:

- Research-based and comprehensive approaches reflect a systems-wide vision (Place-Based-Education)
- Design draws on models that have worked in other settings (ie HTH Chula Vista, with similar demographics)
- Clear focus on academic rigor, support and equity (see SMARTE goals, also content team meetings, SST, etc)

- Focus on student needs over adult convenience (see looping model to build supportive relationships)
- Define the autonomies and flexibilities for each design element
- The applicant described and justified the design of the academic program that will be utilized to meet the school's performance objectives
- Key design elements for the school were clearly articulated and include integrated diversity, equity, and inclusion practices; social-emotional learning; and place-based education
- The applicant provided specific examples of how the school culture will be established and maintained
- The applicant provided clear information about how the school will utilize autonomies and flexibilities granted to charter schools under state statute to create programs that meets the unique needs of the school's anticipated demographics

Weaknesses:

- Limited information about goals and student outcomes
- Presents information about other schools but doesn't outline their own goals for academic outcomes
- Additionally, while a research basis was discussed for some elements, it appears that there should be footnotes or endnotes, but these couldn't be found

C. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES, AND TECHNOLOGY

Fully describe and justify the instructional practices and curriculum that will be utilized to meet the school's performance objectives, while also demonstrating alignment to state and Federal requirements. Be sure to include the use of technology and how it will assist with producing strong outcomes for the unique community and student population the school will be located within.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 5.99/8.00

Reviewer Comments – Curriculum, Instructional Strategies, and Technology

Strengths:

- State-approved curricular programs (CPM, etc)
- Strong data-driven culture (iReady to track student assessments)
- Commitment to increasing tech access (goal of 1:1 for underserved students with devices)
- Technology used to administer all school-wide assessments (MAP, iReady, Smarter Balanced)
- Thoughtful balance of curricular relevance (see PBE--application points out this is flexibility that traditional district school would not have) with focus on equity and social-emotional needs (SEL, DEI)
- Organizational structure supports the academic program and focus (ie standing DEI committee with broad stakeholder participation)
- Presents a strong rationale for each curricular decision
- The applicant identified key curriculum materials using a table that addressed instructional delivery, alignment to state standards, and curriculum
- Justification and rationale were provided for each curricular choice
- The applicant described the provision of 1:1 technology to support individualized learning

- Technology will also be sufficient to address assessment needs as it will be used to administer all state Smarter Balanced assessments annually, as well as i-Ready, MAP, Smarter Balanced Interim assessments three times per year

Weaknesses:

- While there is focus on technology access and usage in administering online assessments, more description is needed how the school integrates all curriculum into a LMS (no name provided) to create individualized student plans--some of the curricular models don't lend themselves easily to such integration (see CPM, for example)
- The applicant included place-based education (PBE) as a separate curriculum in the table; however, it's not clear how this will be integrated across the curriculum - additionally, the table included curriculum for a STEM elective, but it is not clear if this is the only elective to be offered
- The applicant identified student grouping options for instruction, but did not identify instructional methods or how instructional methods will complement curriculum decisions and design
- The technology narrative stated that students will be provided with computers for 1:1 technology, but the applicant did not discuss how this technology will be used regularly in the classrooms
- The applicant stated that technology will be used to access Lexia and Dreambox, but these are not discussed in the curriculum section, so an overall curriculum plan is unclear

D. ASSESSMENT AND DATA

Fully describe and justify how your school will have rigorous goals and adequate performance management to ensure students' academic success. Describe your assessment choices, data collection and analysis, and use of data to inform instruction, differentiate and evaluate the school as a whole.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 5.00/6.00

Reviewer Comments – Assessment and Data

Strengths:

- Systematic collection and use of student achievement data (iReady, MAP, Smarter Balanced)
- Content teams meet weekly and bring student achievement data for teams
- SST use of data
- Teachers are expected to bring student work to weekly content area team data meetings in order to examine level of work against an exemplar and make necessary curricular or instructional adjustments
- The applicant clearly identified sound assessment practices that effectively monitor student and teacher performance that include diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments; and explained the plan for data analysis
- The applicant included a table that addressed assessment in each curriculum area, specifically noting both formative and summative assessments with specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, relevant, time-bound annual goals

Weaknesses:

- The applicant did not discuss how data will be utilized to inform policy and management decisions; did not identify interim benchmarks to ensure progress toward performance goals for all student subgroups, or present a plan to adjust these benchmarks annually; and did not describe how the portfolio of assessment tools will be well understood by all staff
- The applicant referenced the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) table in Section E; however, this table does not include specific differentiation and intervention strategies

E. EFFECTIVELY SERVING ALL STUDENTS

Charter schools are obligated to take specific actions to ensure an open, fair, non-selective method of attracting and enrolling students, and all charter schools need to be ready to serve the group of students that choose to attend. Fully describe and justify your plan to offer a continuum of services for all types of students, including those that are educationally disadvantaged (such as low-income, special education, English learners, homeless, migrant and other at-risk students) and gifted and talented.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 10.66/12.00

Reviewer Comments – Effectively Serving All Students

Strengths:

- Public transportation passes provided free of charge, other services will be contracted if needed free of charge to insure student attendance
- Summer Institute training insures teachers understand school's focus on equity, PBE, etc
- Family/Community Engagement Coordinator position demonstrates school's focus on needs of diverse and low income community
- Page 4 - clear statement about school's philosophy on diversity and equity
- DEI student team will continually focus on equity and diversity needs
- COMPASS model being used, strong record in other settings raising student achievement and focusing on increasing equity and access
- PEAK program
- Weekly Community Meetings to connect to stakeholders
- Mentoring Program
- The applicant clearly described the plan to provide appropriate and effective services to ELL and economically disadvantaged students
- The applicant clearly described the plan for identifying students with disabilities
- Federal and state requirements, as well as the needs of students in the local community, appear to be wellunderstood
- Specific details are provided about classroom strategies to be used and professional development for teachers
- The applicant provided clear and realistic information about the school's plans for meals and transportation, including transportation for students with special needs and compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Weaknesses:

- More could have been mentioned regarding student discipline and connection to equity

- No real information about what the school's special education program looks like beyond adherence to current IEPs. Will you do push-in? Pull-out? Resource classrooms? How will you serve high incidence disabilities?
- The applicant did not provide a comprehensive academic and behavioral strategy is in place to support students with disabilities or describe how the school will ensure appropriately trained staff for special education students
- The applicant did not discuss how staff will be trained on effective intervention strategies and corresponding support tools

F. STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Fully describe and justify your approach to staffing, inclusive of ratios, positions, etc. required for effective implementation of the chosen education model. Further, describe the process in which all staff will be supported in their ongoing professional development.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 5.99/8.00

Reviewer Comments – Staffing and Professional Development Plan

Strengths:

- SMARTE goals developed yearly with principal
- "E" focuses on equity
- Summer Institute to train and retain
- Strategic goal commitment to "growing our own"
- Strong plans for coaching and classroom observations
- Prioritizing hiring a diverse staff strongly aligns to mission
- The applicant fully described the approach to staffing required for effective implementation of the chosen education model
- A clear summary of the school's approach to staffing and recruitment was provided in a staffing table that specified staff positions and FTE for each position for each of the school's first five years - the positions in the table were aligned with all staff positions mentioned previously in the application and indicated in the budget
- The applicant identified the interview and selection process for staff and provided specific examples of priority characteristics for candidates
- Notably, the applicant appears to be intentional in the search for staff members with evidence of success with the target student population
- The applicant provided a summary of the school's plan for all staff development, evaluation, and retention that includes a substantial summer staff institute, and regular coaching and feedback, and will provide support to all staff
- The professional development plan is designed to address the key elements of the school's model

Weaknesses:

- Good to see that hiring a diverse team of teachers & retaining those teachers are high priorities (especially to support the mentor program & looping plans); however, didn't see any real strategies for how to actually recruit or retain staff
- While the response met the criteria in many respects, additional information was required in some areas – for example, the applicant stated that a recruitment plan is in place, but did not describe

the plan or recruitment strategies. This makes it difficult to determine if the school has a plan that is sufficient to achieve the school's opening and/or growth plan and ability to attract top instructional talent. The applicant clearly stated the importance of retaining high-performing teachers as critical to student achievement and implementation of the school model, but did not discuss any strategies that will be implemented to ensure staff retention.

- The professional development (PD) plan appears to have a good framework, but many questions arose from the information provided – for example, the applicant stated that culturally responsive practices using authentic student data will serve as the context for PD, but culturally responsive practices have not been previously described so the alignment of this focus with the overall educational plan is not clear.
- The applicant stated that the school will implement a Monday late start for a 90-minute weekly PD session, but this raises concerns about accommodations for working parents.
- The applicant stated that the principal will observe, coach, and meet with teachers weekly. But, assuming an hour to complete these activities for each teacher, this will take 16 hours of the principal's time every week, which does not seem reasonable or realistic.
- The applicant stated that teachers will participate in data analysis meetings at the end of the first quarter (Q1) and Q2, and a summative evaluation meeting at the end of Q3. It is not clear if student achievement results will have any impact or accountability in Q4.
- It is not clear if the school has a sound plan for supporting and encouraging innovation and continuous improvement within the classroom.
- The applicant stated that a "see it-name it-do it" approach to continuous improvement will be used, but the implementation of this strategy at this school was not described. It is also unclear why it was selected, how teachers will be trained and supported, and how it aligns with the school's philosophy and goals.
- Overall, more evidence is required to determine if the PD plans will ensure continuous improvement and that the educational model will be implemented with fidelity across all grade levels.

G. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

As independently governed public schools, charters are fully responsible for ensuring quality financial management practices and ongoing financial stability. Fully describe your school's plan to be compliant, strategic, and responsible with finances and business services.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 11.33/12.00

Reviewer Comments – Financial Management and Monitoring Plan

Strengths:

- Conservative budget philosophy
- Commitment to increasing cash reserves (3-5 percent) over time
- At-will contracts allow flexibility should enrollment decrease sharply
- Significant philanthropic support
- Salaries in alignment with region and profession
- Facilities lease cost from City is modest
- At full build-out, facilities cost approx 13% of budget
- Budget support school's mission

- The applicant has provided evidence of the ability to manage the successful and sustainable implementation of the proposed activities
- The applicant provided a multi-year operating budget that aligns with the application and budget narratives
- The applicant provided an implementation plan that includes key personnel and target dates for completion of activities and purchasing
- Budget projections align closely with the school's programmatic and staffing plans and ensure that the school is financially prepared to successfully accomplish its strategies to serve educationally disadvantaged and at-risk students
- A plan is in place to mitigate risk associated with projected enrollment and underestimated the financial resources necessary to adequately serve the population of students enrolled
- The applicant provided a viable, well-conceived facilities plan that included the school's specific location and a timeline for acquiring and developing the facility
- Projected facility costs are feasible and below 20 percent of the school's annual budget
- A clear description of the facility was provided with thoughtful planning for all needed spaces, and included illustrations

Weaknesses:

- Although the applicant provided a multi-year operating budget that aligns with the application and budget narratives, the planning year starts with a major infusion of cash. It was explained that funding has been secured through private grants and donations, but no evidence (such as letters of commitment) have been provided
- The budget format makes it difficult to read, but it seems in the notes that funding from the New Schools Venture Fund is unconfirmed - it is risky and unwise to base a budget on unconfirmed financial resources
- Additionally, the budget includes over \$10,000 for board expenses in the first two years, but it's not clear what these funds are allocated for

H. BOARD CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

A competent, trained governing board is essential to the success of a public charter school. Fully describe how your school has developed a strong governing board with a diverse set of skills. Be sure to include how board members understand their roles and responsibilities and have developed a transition plan and ongoing professional development to maintain board strength going forward.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 7.66/10.00

Reviewer Comments – Board Capacity and Governance Structure

Strengths:

- Impressive Board member resumes—broad experience and expertise
- Clear commitment to diversity on Board and have it reflect school community (goal of 50% Latinx membership)
- Commitment to strategic board--goals oriented (BoardonTrack.com)
- Standing Board committees including one on academic achievement
- Strong plans for board development

- Has identified knowledge and diversity gaps and intends to address those gaps
- The applicant has described the board composition, highlighting areas of expertise
- Resumes in the attachment provide evidence of a strong board representing diverse areas of expertise that will likely lead to successful governance
- Gaps in skills are identified and a plan exists to address them through recruiting additional board members
- The board has a clear plan to provide oversight using a tracker tool to set governance and management goals and monitor progress
- All board members will sign a conflict of interest policy
- The school has prioritized board training and provided a list of training topics to be addressed during the first two years

Weaknesses:

- Lack of detail around how Board will strategically recruit, vet new members and how this is messaged to community, esp given goals around equity of membership
- Board membership is quite long (10 years)
- No detailed information presented related to board responsibilities or how the board's policies and procedures ensure monitoring of performance and academic, financial, operational, and legal compliance
- The applicant did not outline a comprehensive set of board roles and responsibilities, inclusive of ensuring compliance with Open Meetings and Open Records Law
- Board responsibilities, other than hiring and evaluating the principal, are not detailed in the application or the bylaws
- Although the applicant stated that the board will comply with Open Meetings requirements, no plan for compliance was provided and information in the by-laws only discusses the provision of notice to board members, which is not fully compliant with state law. Further, there is no discussion of compliance with Open Records laws. This raises concerns about the applicant's knowledge and ability to comply with these requirements
- The applicant did not discuss the plan for an annual review of policies or a plan for regular board self- evaluations that help identify areas for continuous improvement

I. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Fully describe and justify the intended leadership structure of your school and demonstrates a strong leadership and staffing plan that ensures high-quality implementation and sustainability of the school.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 11.00/12.00

Reviewer Comments – School Leadership and Management

Strengths:

- Clear org chart transition from start-up (Principal in charge of all instructional side, Ops Mgr all operational matters) to eventually at full operation Principal really serving as Exec Director
- Clear awareness of risk factors (low enrollment for ex) and has mitigation steps in place
- Retains use of outside provider (Joule) for financial management side
- The applicant provided a complete organizational and management plan for the school that includes a clear division of roles and management responsibilities

- Organizational charts for school opening and capacity were provided
- The applicant clearly demonstrated how the school has designed its leadership team to ensure sufficient expertise to manage charter school-specific compliance, operations, and finance
- The school has sufficiently identified potentially material operational challenges and has developed an adequate response for each
- Although the applicant did not discuss the current challenge of opening and operating a school during the pandemic, the thoughtfulness about school operations leads to confidence about the applicant's abilities to respond appropriately

Weaknesses:

- Unclear what staff expertise will manage and oversee the outside fiscal management entity
- Will the Principal or Board manage the work provided by Joule Growth Partners and Educational Services District?
- Would be interesting to see how the management works with outside providers
- The applicant did not articulate a comprehensive process that will be used by the board to evaluate the principal
- Although the applicant stated that the board will adopt tools and processes from BoardOnTrack and Association of Washington School Principals, and that the principal and board chair will set performance goals, no other information was provided
- It is not clear if the evaluation tools from the two organizations are aligned
- It is not clear what the evaluation process is after goal setting
- The role of the full board in the evaluation process is not discussed
- It is not clear how performance concerns will be addressed

J. STUDENT DEMAND AND COMMUNITY/LOCAL SUPPORT

Schools funded under the CSP subgrant must ensure they are in tune with their communities' needs and priorities. Describe and justify your school's vitality and long-term sustainability through demonstrating your dedication to developing and maintaining community partnerships and connections.

TOTAL AVERAGE POINTS: 7.33/8.00

Reviewer Comments – Student Demand and Community/Local Support

Strengths:

- Have solicited parent and community input to-date
- The applicant provided a sound strategy for marketing, branding, and community outreach to achieve promised student enrollment that addressed specific strategies for recruiting educationally disadvantaged, at-risk, diverse, and underserved families along with a timeline of planned events
- Sufficient funds were raised and are dedicated to marketing, recruitment, and outreach - notably, the applicant included specific outreach strategies compliant with public health recommendations due to Covid
- The applicant provided a realistic projection for each category of educationally disadvantaged students to be served
- Evidence has been provided that the enrollment goals for each year through final expansion are reasonable
- The applicant described significant planning and effort to meaningfully engage current and prospective families and community members on the implementation and operation of the school

- The principal will ensure that state report card data and the school's annual report are available on the school's website
- It is clear that the school is dedicated to developing and maintaining family and community partnerships and connections

Weaknesses:

- Would like to know more about how the school's leaders intend to address student retention in order to maintain enrollment. Will they add students through 12th grade in the event of vacancies? How will they retain students who may prefer the offerings (sports, extracurricular) at a comprehensive high school?

OVERALL COMMENTS

- School laser-focused on equity, raising prospects for underserved community (substantiated with demographic analyses)
- Clear frameworks drive academics, socialemotional supports (PBE, etc)
- From Board to admin to teachers, there is a universal structure that reflects equity, community engagement, and accountability
- Strong alignment to mission of serving at-risk students throughout application
- Thoughtful approach to planning key design elements
- This applicant was very well organized with headings aligned to the rubric, which made it very easy to find required information and evidence
- Additionally, information was well aligned throughout the application. For example, the applicant discussed the school's three key design elements, which were also addressed, as appropriate, in subsequent sections
- Succinct descriptions of most required information inspired confidence in the applicant's deep understanding of the elements necessary to operate a successful school
- The application would be significantly strengthened with more information about specific instructional strategies including differentiation, assessments and the use of data to inform instruction, and details of the professional development plan

APPLICATION TOTAL POINTS		
Rubric Section	(AVERAGE) Points Awarded	Points Possible
A. Grant Project Goals	12.00	12.00
B. Educational Philosophy, Key Design Elements, & School Culture	10.66	12.00
C. Curriculum, Instructional Strategies, and Technology	5.99	8.00
D. Assessment and Data	5.00	6.00
E. Effectively Serving All Students	10.66	12.00
F. Staffing and Professional Development Plan	5.99	8.00
G. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan	11.33	12.00
H. Board Capacity and Governance Structure	7.66	10.00
I. School Leadership and Management	11.00	12.00
J. Student Demand and Community/Local Support	7.33	8.00
STANDARD POINTS AWARDED	87.62	100.00
Priority Points: 3 Additional Points may be awarded for schools that focus on the development of the whole student (college and career academic readiness and social-emotional development). Applicant must demonstrate a strong instructional and social-emotional focus that supports students toward both educational goals and positive relationship and identity development (including but not limited to mentorship, restorative justice practices, and whole-school college readiness or entry goals).	3	3
Priority Points: 3 Additional Points may be awarded for schools with an explicit focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Applicant must demonstrate that its staffing, educational model, community and family engagement strategy, and overall design process are responsive to community input, provide ongoing opportunities for learning for school staff, and have planned evaluative measures to help drive diversity, equity, and inclusion through school culture and climate.	3	3
Priority Points: 3 Additional Points may be awarded for schools that recruit from rural or unincorporated regions. Applicant must demonstrate that it intends to locate in or near rural or unincorporated regions and how it intends to meet the unique needs of the student population that it recruits from there.	2	3
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED	95.2	109