

Attachment H

Work Samples



Texas Authorizers Leadership Academy –AGENDA

Session #1: San Antonio

March 4, 2024: 11:00am-5:00 pm CT &

March 5, 2024: 9:00am-3:00 pm CT

By the end of the program, TALA participants will...

- **Recognize what is required and where customization is needed.** Develop and implement core authorizing practices that align with 1882 requirements and incorporate each participants' unique context.
- **Ground in the mission and remain true to the promise.** Develop a mission and vision for quality authorizing within their districts and build the knowledge and skills needed to remain committed in the face of challenges.
- **Leadership development.** Find and leverage their positional power to inspire and lead change in their districts.

Session Objectives:

During Session 1, TALA participants will...

- Develop and/or deepen relationships with fellow cohort members;
- Create an authorizing mission and vision for their individual office;
- Define quality authorizing and identify the phases of authorizing and timeline for these activities
- Differentiate the responsibilities of operators and authorizers.
- Develop a deeper understanding of the Quality Seats Analysis (QSA), Call for Quality Schools (CQS), and Applications processes and their role in supporting a high-quality portfolio.
- Define positional power and identify a goal for the program related to it.

Pre-Work

- Module Completion: Module 1: Overview of Authorizing in TX; Module 2: Applications
- [Fun Facts](#)
- [Context Overview](#)
- [Values activity](#)

Monday, March 4 (Session 1, Day 1)

Timeframe	Topic
10:45-11:00am	Do Now: Take out the values activity. Write the 5-6 values that you identified in your pre-work on the index cards provided. (one value per card)



	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Values exercise – Print 2-3 copies
11:00 – 11:40am	<p>Welcome, Introductions, and Overview <i>Welcome to TALA, program overview, introductions.</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the broad purpose and goals of the program• Start to identify with and learn more about their colleagues. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome, overview and introductions<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ DH goes over overarching goals for TALA.○ Facilitator Team introductions○ MP Overview of NACSA○ DH Participant introductions.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Name, role, district, good news○ DH Agenda/Objectives for 1st session.• Participants will engage in a getting to know you activities<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ DH Getting to know you Bingo○ As they are doing this – we will move chairs to middle for a circle for next session. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting to know you Bingo – Print copies
11:40am – 12:30pm	<p>Developing a Cohort: Working Agreements and Values <i>We will continue to get to know one another through discussion of values and develop norms for our time together. Leaders will connect their personal values to their work.</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify personal and shared values that drive the work.• Define shared expectations and norms for our time together. <p>Activities:</p> <p>Chairs should have been moved to the center during previous activity. Ask individuals to find a chair.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Values (30 min - MP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask individuals to grab their values index cards and bring to the circle. ○ MP talk about circle process / talking piece. ○ Each person shares two values, throws into center and discusses one of them and why it is important. Try to keep to 1 min. ○ Depending on time, have another go around. Start to draw connections to values and work. We can circle back to this activity throughout the day and program. ○ MP lead into Working Agreements. ● Working Agreements (20 min - MP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overview of the importance of working agreements and their purpose. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ share out a few standard ones. ○ Folks move into groups of 3. Don't stray too far – take chairs, etc. Brief intros. (8 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ think about your past experience in cohorts, teams, staff meetings, etc.. ▪ what agreements helped you and others be fully engaged and supported the best learning ▪ what agreements do you want for this group for this space? ▪ be prepared to share with the group ○ Come back to full group and share out. Develop a shared list. ○ Discuss strategies to check in on the norms each session. <p>*Flagging participant tendency for getting group off track - ELMO– develop digital parking lot and share via email during session with intent to answer questions after session</p> <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Values Exercise (extra copies) ● Index Cards ● Markers ● Chart Paper
12:30 – 1:30pm	<p>Lunch Break</p> <p><i>The first activity upon returning from lunch will focus on reflections from Module 1. Participants should be prepared to engage in discussion and should use lunch to do so if needed.</i></p>
1:30 – 2:05 pm	<p>What is Authorizing and Why is it Important?</p> <p><i>Through reflection of Module 1 learnings and discussion, Leaders will explore key principles and practices of authorizing and see how it can provide increased opportunities for students in their districts.</i></p>

	<p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define authorizing and outline the key elements of the work. • Identify the purpose of charter school authorizing for individual district. <p>Activities: (DH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 min - Ask participants to reflect on Module 1 and respond to the following prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In your own words, define authorizing. ○ Why have you and your district committed to authorizing?: What problem(s) are districts trying to solve through authorizing? What are we trying to do differently and why? • 15 min - Discussion: What are the overlap and common themes between leaders' reflections and the key elements of the Texas constitution and statute related to education. (PPT slide displaying this language as a reminder from Module 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Probe on role of community if it does not come up in discussion. What might your community know/not know about your "why"? • 13 min – Think-Pair-Share – with partners, leaders will discuss the use of the word authorizing in their district and the why of authorizing in their district. Share whole group. <p>*Leaders should hold on to notes and thoughts as they will be important for our mission/vision conversation</p>
2:05 – 3:05 PM	<p>Operator or Authorizer</p> <p><i>Leaders will engage in an activity that will introduce them to or deepen their understanding of the differing roles of operators and authorizers. Leaders will be re-introduced to the concept of autonomy</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better identify the role of the authorizer and the role of the operator. • Identify potential areas of area around these roles that need to be clarified. <p>Activities: (MP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the activity, highlighting that a district does different things as an authorizer than as an operator. Also highlight that since the district is still the LEA and in some cases the employer among other things, it can be complicated. • Put folks in groups of 3 or 4. Pass out set of materials to each group. (each group find a spot) • 15 minutes to work on the activity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NACSA staff walking around, observing, prodding, etc.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If it seems more time is needed, we can give them another 5 minutes. ● Come back to the full group. Each group posts their answers. ● Take a few moments to walk around – look at others’ answers. What is similar / what is different? ● Facilitators lead a full group discussion to get at tension points. ● Share answers. ● We will bring in 1882 requirements to drive home key concepts of autonomy. Natalie can add here. <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chart paper ● Actions/Decisions cut outs – print and prep ● Tape
3:05 – 3:35 PM	<p>Authorizer Self-Assessment</p> <p><i>TALA is a program that will support leaders’ understanding of the elements of authorizing and introduce them to the policies, practices, and systems that should be in place to ensure they are building a quality authorizing office. Leaders will leverage a self-assessment throughout the program to support reflection and planning for bringing their learnings from the program to their offices.</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leverage the Quality Authorizer Self-Assessment to determine their current knowledge and understanding of authorizer practices. <p>Activities: MP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remind leaders of the “phases of authorizing” as introduced in Module 1 and connect to the Quality Authorizer Self-Assessment tool which will be used throughout the program to support reflection and action planning. We won’t cover ALL aspects of this assessment to the level of detail you may want or need but should help with your planning. ● What is required & what can be customized - High level share of what authorizing responsibilities are required by 1882 and where customization opportunities are – DH & Natalie ● Highlight the elements of Phase 1: Planning – which will be the focus for the rest of the day - starting with mission and vision of the authorizing work in your district. ● Self-Assessment for Phase 1 <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quality Authorizer Self-Assessment – make copies



3:35 – 3:45pm	Break
3:45 – 4:45 pm	<p>Authorizing Mission and Core Vision <i>Developing an authorizing mission and vision is not only a requirement of 1882 and something quality authorizers do, but also having a clear strong mission is something leaders do to inspire their teams and bring folks along to do important work. Leaders will discuss the purpose of the authorizing mission and vision, look at some examples and begin to develop them for those who don't yet have them. For district Leaders that do have an authorizing mission, we will talk more about refining them as needed and thinking about the now what?</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the importance of an authorizing mission and vision for their district. • Begin to assess or consider a mission and vision for their own district. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground mission/vision in self-assessment and 1882 requirement. Share NACSA's P&S standard of mission and vision and the importance of having a mission/vision specific to authorizing. • Direct Instruction - Introduce definitions of mission and visions. Share or explore what the mission/vision is of 1882 before diving into district examples. Provide examples to pressure test – leverage Longview? • Drafting – leaders consider what the mission and vision is for their districts. If they already have one, pressure test it to the practices that were discussed. Write drafts on a paper and post to the wall • Gallery Walk – Leaders circulate, provide feedback using post its. • Discussion – Leaders take their posted mission/vision statements back to their seats. Engage in discussion: what questions do they have about feedback, what do they agree with/disagree with? What trends did you notice? • Reground in the why from the previous session.... Does your district collectively have a “why?” Does it align with your personal why? What does the community understand about that why? <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart or printer paper • Post its • Marker
4:45 – 5:00pm	<p>Wrap Up and Reflection on Day <i>Leaders will identify key learning for the day, reflect on possible to-do's for their district, and level-set on pre-work for Day 2 of session 1.</i></p>



	<p>Activities: DH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 min - Revisit Self-Assessment section focused on mission/vision and have leaders self-assess. What do they need/want to do following the mission/vision activity? Who else needs to be involved in the drafting process?• Pre-Work Preview: Complete Phase 2 Section within the Quality Authorizer Self-Assessment
Post-Session Work / Prework for Tuesday's session.	<p>Quality Authorizer Self-Assessment</p> <p>Optional: Reading Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail</p>



Tuesday, March 5 (Session 1, Day 2)

Timeframe	Topic
9:00 – 9:15am	<p>Do Now: The status of authorizing in my district is like _____.</p> <p>Welcome and Overview - DH Welcome to and quick overview of the agenda for the day. (If for whatever reason we have new people, we will do introductions quickly)</p>
9:15 – 9:45am	<p>The Authorizing Calendar <i>We will continue to get an understanding of the big picture of authorizing by reviewing a calendar of the life cycle of authorizing for a district, starting with planning.</i></p> <p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Articulate the reasons for time needed for to do quality authorizing;• Compare their work to that of their colleagues in other districts; and• Identify a calendar that makes sense for their district in the coming years. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DH talk about the value of the time needed for a newly approved proposal to develop into operational school• Elbow talk re: where is your district located on the calendar? 2-3 people share their location and explain• DH discuss how the calendar can be used to manage staffing and workflow <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authorizing Cycle - print
9:45 – 10:25pm	<p>Quality Seats Analysis (QSA) to the Call for Quality Schools (CQS)– Analyzing School Performance Data and Engaging the Community <i>To open quality charter schools, a district must first know what its needs are and then seek operators to fulfill those needs. In this session, Leaders will review and assess examples of how this is done.</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the why, when, and how of a strong CQS process, including best practices around developing a CQS based on a quality seats analysis that will meet district needs.

- Describe what information is needed to craft a high quality CQS.

Activities:

- DH & NE review slides (5-10 min) - Review the two purposes for the CQS covered in the module:
 - Ensure the partner is able to run a high-quality school.
 - Share what the community wants and needs.
- CQS Activity (25 min)
 - Provide overview of activity
 - Distribute activity handout and divide participants in two groups. Groups tasked with reviewing the data and answering the discussion questions within the document.
 - Debrief activity, leveraging the following questions and noting the following items:
 - What was the need you identified?
 - How did your group craft the Call for Quality Schools that met those needs?
 - What additional information would've been helpful?

Some questions/items to take note of while facilitating to help push thinking:

 - Is the call that you are envisioning district wide or for a specific neighborhood? Did you specify that with your group?
 - Identify components that are reported out that are important to address in the Application but NOT in the CQS. - **TRACK THESE ON POST ITS**
- DH – Take a moment to reflect on your district's CQS (5 min)
 - Does your CQS:
 - Ensure the partner is able to run a high-quality school?
 - Consider what the community wants and needs?
 - Can anyone share how you might adjust your CQS?

Materials:

- [CQS Activity](#) - **print**
- Chart Paper
- Post-Its

10:25-10:40am	Break
10:40–11:25am	Asking the Right Questions – The Application



	<p><i>To open quality schools, district authorizers must set a high-quality bar and require that potential operators can meet that bar. In this session, Leaders will analyze comprehensive application that includes the right questions.</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the importance of a robust application • Assess the quality of sample applications, including that of their district <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need to consider? (20 min) - DH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Post-it activity ○ Share and reflect on post-its <i>Emphasize the relationship between the Community Engagement, Needs, and the CQS.</i> • TEA Model Application (25 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leaders should all have access to the TEA Model Application (hard copy). Move into groups of 3 to do an assessment of the application through the lens of “rigor” and “equity.” ○ Come back to full group to share. ○ Lean on QSA and district priorities to determine additional questions to be asked. ○ Is 30 pages enough to get all the info you need? <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEA Model Application – print
11:25 – 11:45am	<p>Call for Quality Schools and 1882</p> <p><i>In order to access 1882 funds, districts need to meet certain requirements regarding the CQS process. Leaders will hear from Natalie Elliott, Texas Partnerships Manager at TEA.</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain key SB 1882 requirements related to the CQS. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natalie present slides / lead discussion.
11:45am – 1:00pm	Lunch Break
1:00 – 1:45pm	Call for Quality Schools – Part III – Evaluating Applications



	<p><i>To open quality schools, district authorizers must evaluate the capacity of potential operators to ensure they can deliver a quality program to students in the district. In this session, Leaders will review key elements of a rigorous review process, and practice being on a review committee.</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outline key elements of the application evaluation process. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief Review of Highlights of Process (15 min) - MP<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Walk through a handful of PPT slides giving overview of highpoints - answer questions○ Highlight training that evaluators should receive – review examples of written feedback, consider:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Length 2-4 sentences▪ Provide evaluation of all of the criteria▪ Write about what meets the criteria and what criteria were not met. - formative feedback• Preview the Academy of Health Sciences Application Review (15 min) -MP<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Read and evaluate the Academy of Health Sciences to prepare for Session 2○ Divide into groups and provide 5-10 minutes for groups to determine how they will complete their rubrics.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Group 1 – Melissa A, Kara, Lynsey, Mark▪ Group 2 – Justin, Tori, Joe, Dora▪ Group 3 – Melissa H, Nate, Erica, Kim▪ Group 4 – Geta, Rachel, Martin, Willie○ Complete the application rubric and bring to the next session
1:45 – 2:15pm	<p>Leadership: Finding & Leveraging Your Positional Power</p> <p><i>The transition from a district as sole operator of schools to a district that also authorizes schools is a significant change that requires thoughtful and strategic leadership. Leaders will begin to explore the role that they hold, their sphere(s) of influence, and positional power.</i></p> <p>By the end of this session, Leaders will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define positional power• Analyze opportunities for and challenges with working in the ecosystems they are in.• Identify a leadership goal that they will focus on throughout the program. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DH present deck on positional power facilitate observations and questions.

Commented [MP1]: This will be more of a review of Module 2. Per DH comments - add a norming component for terminology standards and criteria. Add - what is the expectation for writing clear evaluative comments? Formative info that can help with addressing shortcomings after approval or used by schools when they re-apply.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual or small group reflections leveraging the change management handout or political/stakeholder mapping worksheet <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change management handout and/or political/stakeholder mapping worksheet
2:15-3:00pm	<p>Wrap Up and Reflection on Day, Preview</p> <p><i>Leaders will identify key learning for the day and reflect possible to dos in their districts. Leaders will be introduced to AuthoRISE and upcoming session.</i></p> <p>Session topics are posted on the wall, participants will participate in a gallery walk; they will write their takeaway from the session in one sentence or less write on a post it note, then post it near the topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operator or Authorizer?• Authorizing Mission and Vision• Authorizing Calendar• Quality Seats Analysis• CQS - Application• CQS Rubric• Political Mapping <p>DH or MP will pull selected post its to share aloud, ask for one or two participants to share unread reflections.</p>



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During Session 1, TALA participants will...

- Develop and/or deepen relationships with fellow cohort members;
- Create an authorizing mission and vision for their individual office;
- Define quality authorizing and identify the phases of authorizing and timeline for these activities
- Differentiate the responsibilities of operators and authorizers.
- Develop a deeper understanding of the Quality Seats Analysis (QSA), Call for Quality Schools (CQS), and Applications processes and their role in supporting a high-quality portfolio.
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Pre-Work

- [Fun Facts](#)
- [Context Overview](#)
- Module Completion: [Module 1: Overview of Authorizing in TX](#) and [Module 2: Applications](#)
- [Values activity](#)

Monday, March 4 (Session 1, Day 1)

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11:00 – 11:40am	Welcome, Introductions, and Overview <i>Welcome to TALA, program overview, introductions.</i>
11:40am – 12:30pm	Developing a Cohort: Working Agreements and Values <i>We will continue to get to know one another through discussion of values and develop norms for our time together. Leaders will connect their personal values to their work.</i>
12:30 – 1:30pm	Lunch Break <i>The first activity upon returning from lunch will focus on reflections from Module 1. Participants should be prepared to engage in discussion and should use lunch to do so if needed.</i>

1:30 – 2:05pm	What is Authorizing and Why is it Important? <i>Through reflection of Module 1 learnings and discussion, Leaders will explore key principles and practices of authorizing and see how it can provide increased opportunities for students in their districts.</i>
2:05 – 3:05pm	Operator or Authorizer <i>Leaders will engage in an activity that will introduce them to or deepen their understanding of the differing roles of operators and authorizers. Leaders will be re-introduced to the concept of autonomy</i>
3:05 – 3:35pm	Authorizer Self-Assessment <i>TALA is a program that will support leaders' understanding of the elements of authorizing and introduce them to the policies, practices, and systems that should be in place to ensure they are building a quality authorizing office. Leaders will leverage a self-assessment throughout the program to support reflection and planning for bringing their learnings from the program to their offices.</i>
3:35 – 3:45pm	<i>Break</i>
3:45 – 4:45pm	Authorizing Mission and Core Vision <i>Developing an authorizing mission and vision is not only a requirement of 1882 and something quality authorizers do, but also having a clear strong mission is something leaders do to inspire their teams and bring folks along to do important work. Leaders will discuss the purpose of the authorizing mission and vision, look at some examples and begin to develop them for those who don't yet have them. For district Leaders that do have an authorizing mission, we will talk more about refining them as needed and thinking about the now what?</i>
4:45 – 5:00pm	Wrap Up and Reflection on Day <i>Leaders will identify key learning for the day, reflect on possible to-do's for their district, and level-set on pre-work for Day 2 of session 1.</i>
Post-Session Work / Prewrite for Tuesday's session.	Quality Authorizer Self-Assessment Optional: Reading Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail
5:45 PM - TBD	Cohort Dinner @ Acenar (146 E. Houston St.)

Tuesday, March 5 (Session 1, Day 2)

Timeframe	Topic
9:00 – 9:15am	Welcome and Overview
9:15 – 9:45am	The Authorizing Calendar <i>We will continue to get an understanding of the big picture of authorizing by reviewing a calendar of the life cycle of authorizing for a district, starting with planning.</i>
9:45 – 10:25pm	Quality Seats Analysis (QSA) to the Call for Quality Schools (CQS)– Analyzing School Performance Data and Engaging the Community <i>To open quality charter schools, a district must first know what its needs are and then seek operators to fulfill those needs. In this session, Leaders will review and assess examples of how this is done.</i>
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10:40–11:25am	Asking the Right Questions – The Application <i>To open quality schools, district authorizers must set a high-quality bar and require that potential operators can meet that bar. In this session, Leaders will analyze comprehensive application that includes the right questions.</i>
11:25 – 11:45am	Call for Quality Schools and 1882 <i>In order to access 1882 funds, districts need to meet certain requirements regarding the CQS process. Leaders will hear from Natalie Elliott, Texas Partnerships Manager at TEA.</i>
11:45 – 1:00pm	<i>Lunch Break</i>
1:00 – 1:45pm	Call for Quality Schools – Part III – Evaluating Applications <i>To open quality schools, district authorizers must evaluate the capacity of potential operators to ensure they can deliver a quality program to students in the district. In this session, Leaders will review key elements of a rigorous review process, and practice being on a review committee.</i>
1:45 – 2:20pm	Leadership: Finding & Leveraging Your Positional Power <i>The transition from a district as sole operator of schools to a district that also authorizes schools is a significant change that requires thoughtful and strategic leadership. Leaders will begin to explore the role that they hold, their sphere(s) of influence, and positional power.</i>
2:20 – 3:00pm	Wrap Up and Reflection on Day, Preview <i>Leaders will identify key learning for the day and reflect possible to do in their districts.</i>

A smiling man with a beard, wearing a light grey button-down shirt, is clapping his hands. In the background, other people's hands are visible, also clapping, suggesting a group celebration or applause. A whiteboard with some text and sticky notes is also visible in the background.

TEXAS AUTHORIZER LEADERSHIP ACADEMY (TALA)

Session 4: May 14, 2024

nacsa
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS

TALA Goals

By the end of the program, TALA participants will...

- **Recognize what is required and where customization is needed.** Develop and implement core authorizing practices that align with 1882 requirements and incorporate each participants' unique context.
- **Ground in the mission and remain true to the promise.** Develop a mission and vision for quality authorizing within their districts and build the knowledge and skills needed to remain committed in the face of challenges.
- **Leadership development.** Find and leverage their positional power to inspire and lead change in their districts.

Session 4 Objectives

- Draw connections between the Application Evaluation Process, contracting, oversight and monitoring activities (ACER and CEF), and renewal and identify specific evidence needed to be accumulated.
- Describe the relationship between the Annual Campus Evaluation Report (ACER) and ongoing accountability.
- Imagine customizing the ACER to meet their district's needs.
- Begin to develop a calendar of oversight activities.
- Explain how interventions support strong accountability and autonomy and apply understanding of interventions to various scenarios to ensure appropriate accountability and autonomy is maintained.
- Evaluate processes for and examples of addressing complaints through the lens of autonomy and accountability; and
- Identify effective practices for written Notices.

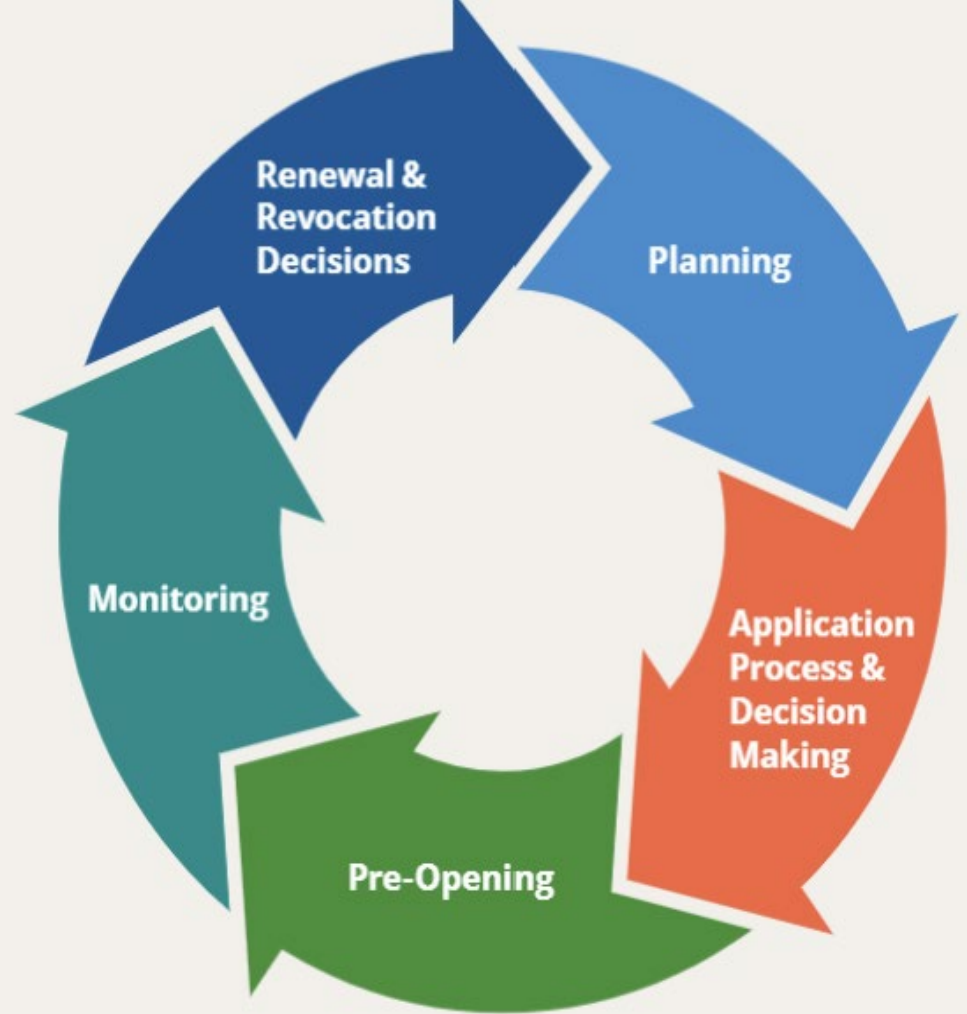
AGENDA FOR THE DAY

2:00 – 2:10	Welcome and Overview
2:10 – 2:20	Where have we been? What is ahead?
2:20 – 2:30	Monitoring & Oversight
2:30 – 2:55	Revisiting the AHS Application – April 2024
2:55 – 3:10	Ready to Open – June 2025
3:10 – 3:55	Ongoing Monitoring & Evaluation: Complaints and Intervention
3:55 – 4:00	Wrap Up and Reflection

Our Working Agreements...

- Full and active engagement– come prepared, be present, actively listen, & limit device distractions
- Have fun
- Celebrate confusion
- Take care of personal needs
- Keep Confidentiality / Vegas
- Assume positive intent and have a supportive mindset. Respect others' opinions and views.
- Make space for others
- Be aware of time – start and end on time
- Stay on target/topic - use ELMO when needed – enough, let's move on [use the question corral]

Five Phases of Quality Authorizing



Monitoring and Oversight

ONGOING OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING

MEASURE WHAT YOU
VALUE

or else

YOU ARE LIMITED TO
VALUING ONLY WHAT YOU
HAVE MEASURED

THE CHARTER SCHOOL LIFE CYCLE



MONITORING PROVISIONS IN THE LAW TEC CHAPTER 39: PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM ACCOUNTABILITY

- ✓ Authorizer has authority to conduct oversight activities.
- ✓ Authorizer can notify its schools of perceived problems, with opportunities to remedy such problems.
- ✓ Authorizer has authority to take appropriate corrective actions or exercise sanctions short of revocation.

TEA MODEL BOARD POLICY

Oversight and Evaluation: Monitoring System

The Board shall implement a comprehensive performance accountability and compliance monitoring system that is **aligned with the Board's performance standards** and provides the Board with the information necessary to make rigorous, evidence-based decisions regarding charter renewal, revocation, and probation or other interventions. ***This monitoring system shall be based on and aligned with academic, financial, operational, and governance standards set forth in the charter performance contract.***

To the extent possible, the Board shall minimize administrative and compliance burdens on campus charters and ***focus on holding campus charters accountable for outcomes rather than processes.***

Evaluation and Reports

Annually, the Board shall evaluate each campus charter against the performance standards established by the Board or law.

The Board shall **communicate evaluation results to the campus charter's governing body and leadership** in a written report that summarizes compliance and performance, including **areas of strength and improvement**. The results of all evaluations shall be made accessible to the public and available on the District website.

The Board shall produce for the **public an annual report** that provides performance data for all the campus charters it oversees, including individual campus performance and overall campus charter performance. ***The annual report shall at a minimum be posted on the District website.***

MONITORING TOOLS



PRE-
OPENING
CHECKLIST/
PROTOCOL



REPORTING
TIMELINE



DESK AUDITS



SITE VISITS



ANNUAL
REPORTS

GENERAL MONITORING TIPS

- Align to charter contract and evaluation framework
- Focus on **outcomes**
- Accept that you can't know everything all the time
- **Build relationships**, but be consistent
- Provide technical assistance only in terms of connecting to resources, not in terms of prescribing solutions
- **Communicate constantly, consistently, and sometimes publicly**

**REVISIT APPLICATION REVIEW
AND RECOMMENDATIONS
- *APRIL 2024***

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?!?!

April 30, 2024

AHS' application was denied by San Mateo ISD

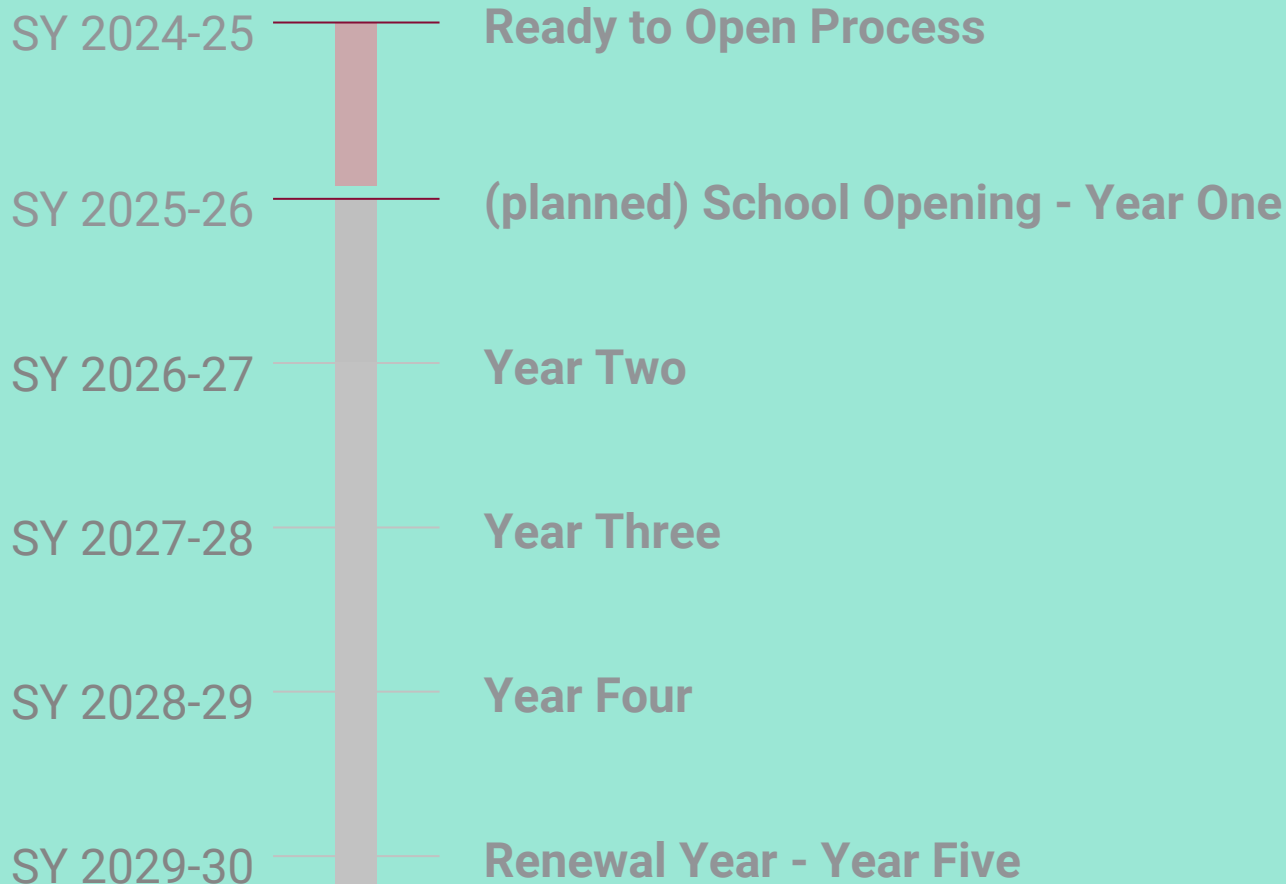
BREAKING NEWS!

ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCE

May 14, 2024

- Since approval, San Mateo identified two district campuses of high need.
- AHS decided to create a network.
- The AHS Board hired Tanya St. Elizabeth as their Executive Director and submitted an updated application for two schools in San Mateo.
- Last night, May 13, 2024, San Mateo approved AHS to operate two schools:
 - *AHS Researcher Academy*
 - *AHS Scientist Academy*
- The two schools are scheduled to serve same grade span and curriculum and are both scheduled to open in Fall 2025.

AHS Timeline:



CONTRACTS

- *AHS Research Academy & AHS Scientist Academy*
 - Key design elements and performance expectations.
 - Term: 5 years Fall 2025– Spring 2030

AHS RESEARCHER ACADEMY

AHS SCIENTIST ACADEMY

- Take 10 minutes to review the contracts for:
 - Material Terms of Educational Program: Key design elements
 - Performance expectations (truncated): Academic, Financial, Operational

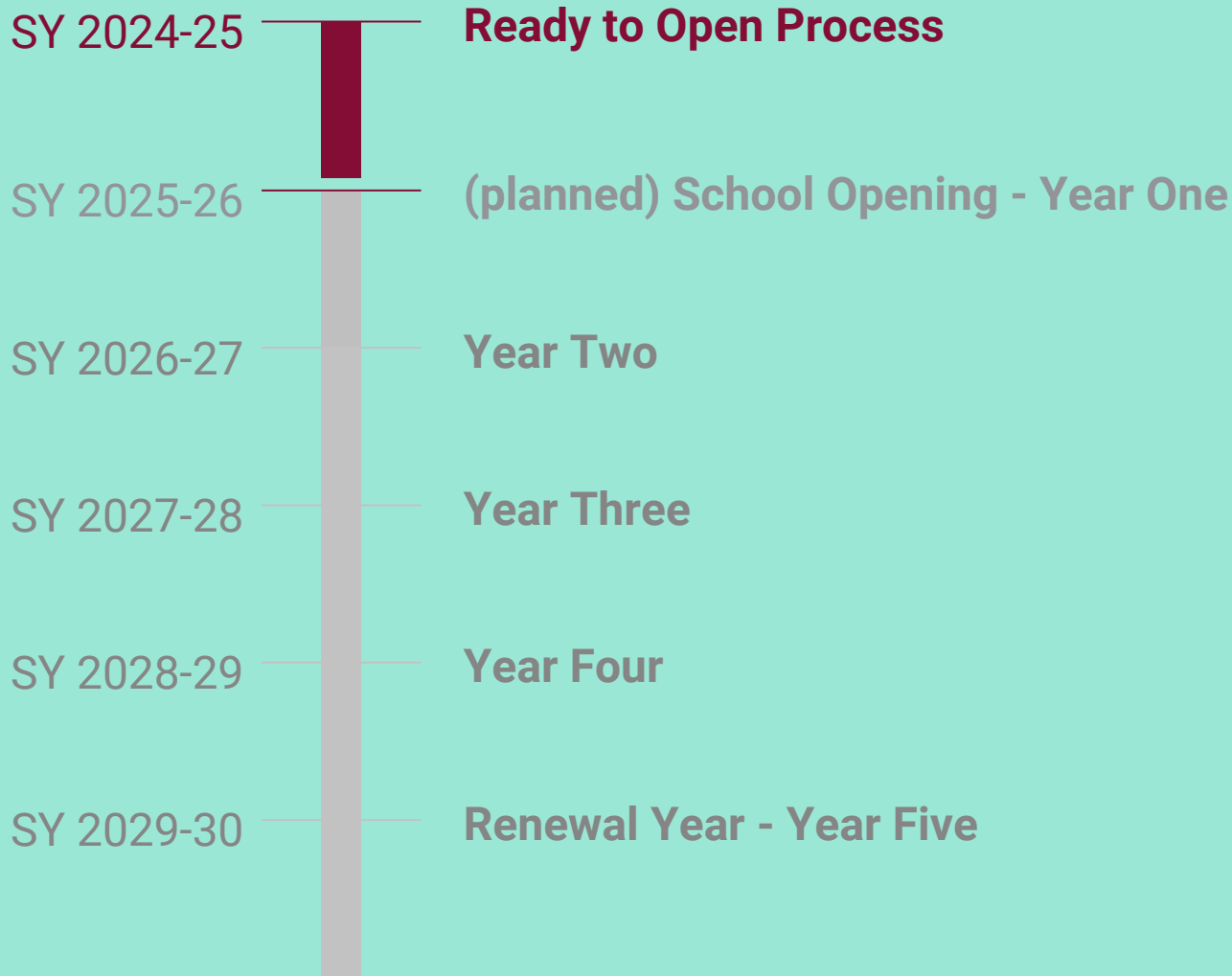
What outcomes are expected by school year 20290? (renewal)

Ready To Open

**Will AHS be
Ready to Open in August?**



AHS Timeline:



“Unlike in other areas of authorizing practice, authorizers are very hands on (sometimes quite intensively) in the pre-opening process.”



**LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT,
JUDGMENT: ELEMENTS OF
SUCCESSFUL CHARTER
SCHOOL AUTHORIZING**

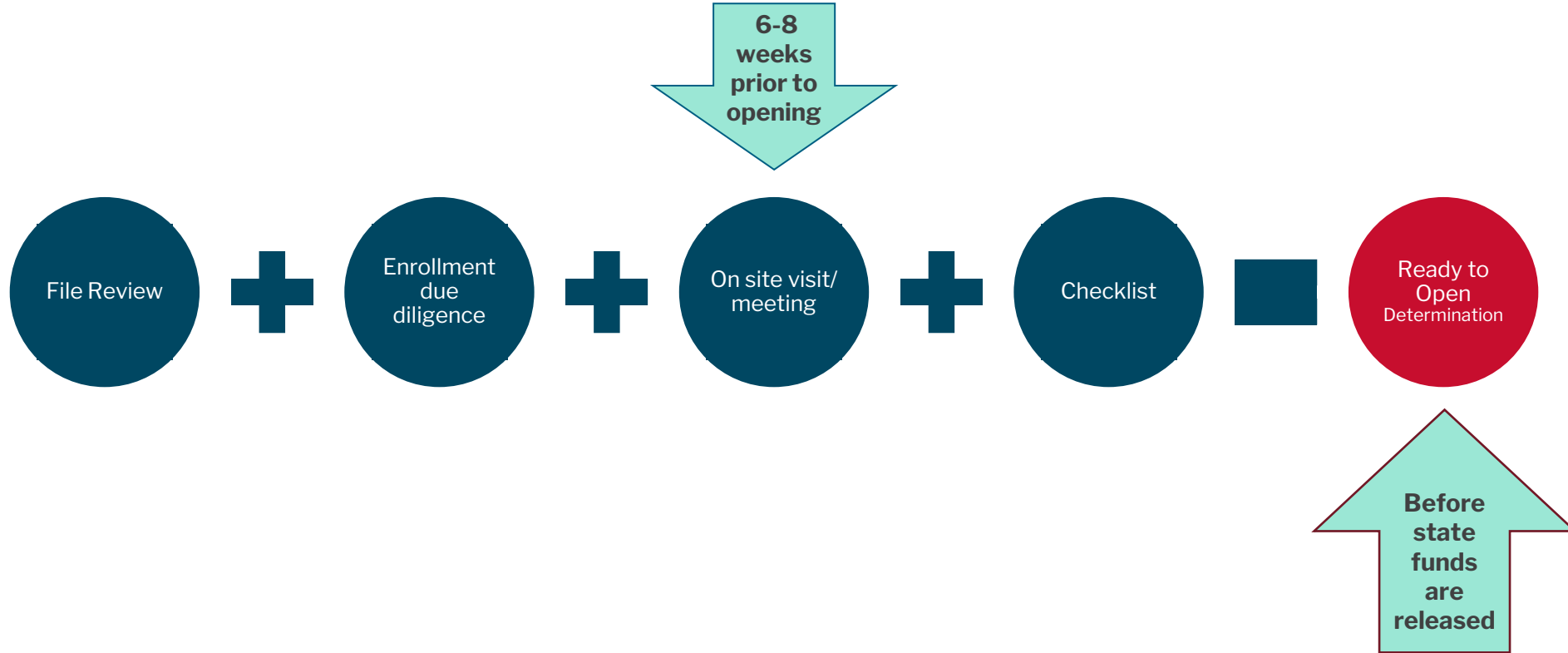
*Findings from the
Quality Practice Project*

WHAT DOES A HIGH-QUALITY READY TO OPEN PROCESS INVOLVE?

Expectations and oversight:

- are clearly communicated to all stakeholders.
- are implemented over the course of the school development period (year 0), generally in conjunction with a checklist or other tools.
- cover all areas critical to school operations, program implementation, and student safety.
- result in a final determination of readiness to open ***well before*** students are on site, and ideally before any state funds are expended.

GENERAL READY TO OPEN TIMELINE



PRE-OPENING REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL CATEGORIES

- Students, Enrollment, and Admissions
- Governance
- Educational Program
- Administration and Staff
- Management Contract (if applicable)
- Budget
- Financial Management
- Facility
- Transportation
- Food Service
- Insurance

HELPFUL RESOURCE:

TEA and NACSA have pre-opening guidance and checklists you can adapt to your district's needs.

MONITORING COMPLETION OF PRE-OPENING REQUIREMENTS

On paper

Submission of appropriate documentation primarily via desk audit

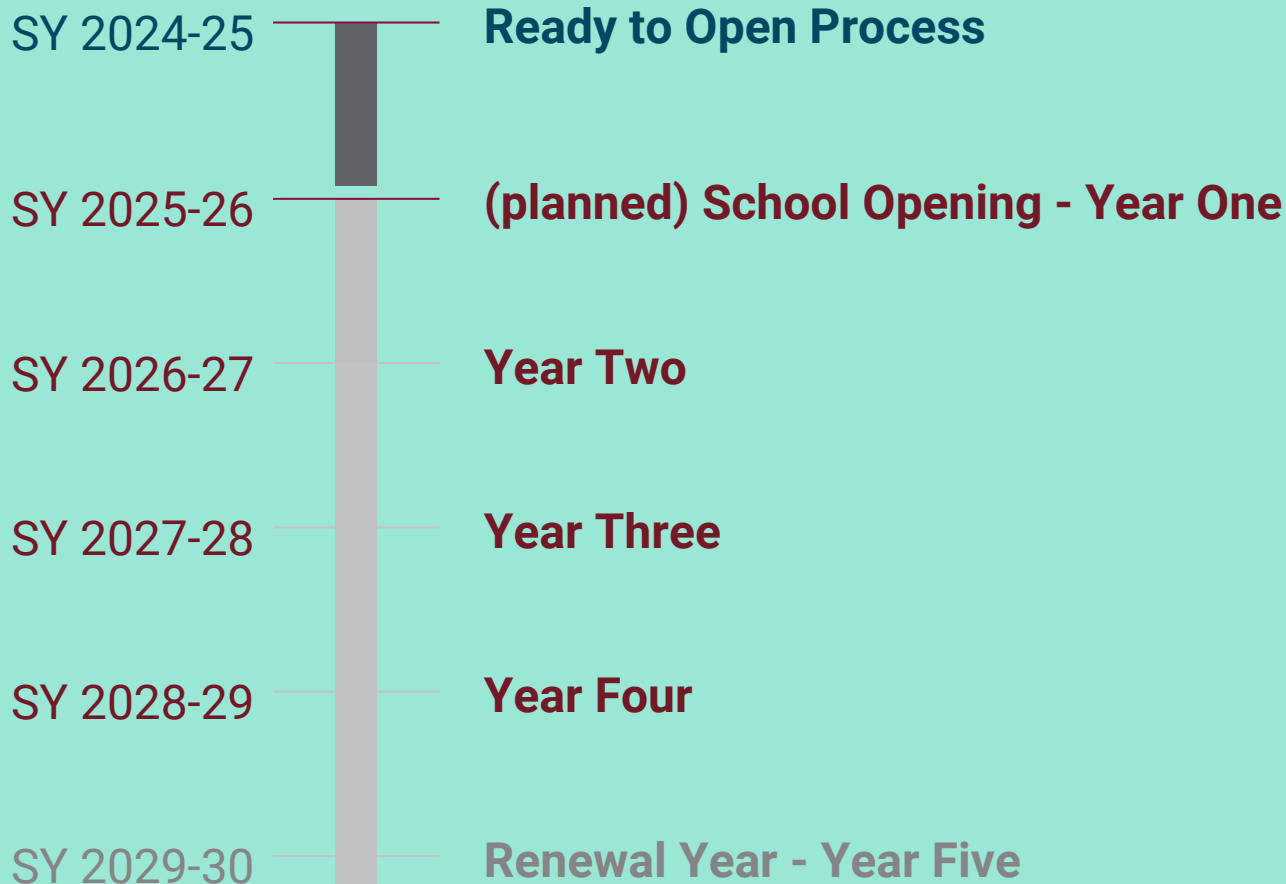
In person

Final ready to open meeting **6-8 weeks** before school opening.
Final site visit **1-2 weeks** before school opening

Ongoing

Regular contact with charter school operators to stay up to date on progress (and potential issues)

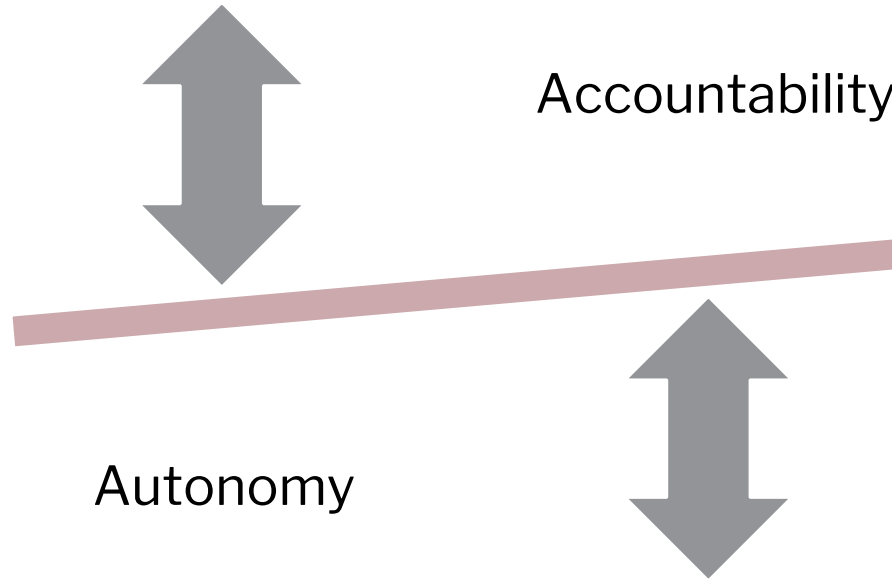
AHS Timeline:



INTERVENTIONS & COMPLAINTS


SEPTEMBER 2026

WHERE IS THE LINE?



MONITORING PROVISIONS IN TEA'S MODEL CONTRACT

- ✓3.03. Material Breach. A “material breach” of this Agreement shall include the failure of a Party to comply with or fulfill any material obligation, condition, term, representation, warranty, provision, or covenant contained in this Agreement, including without limitation any failure by OP to meet generally accepted fiscal management and government accounting principles, comply with Applicable Law, state agency rule, or meet the student outcome goals required by this Agreement.
- ✓7.03 Performance Consequences. The Parties agree to specific consequences in the event that the operating party does or does not meet the annual academic or financial performance expectations and goals described in Addendum 4.



**Intervention policy
to be developed
locally**

TEA MODEL BOARD POLICY

Intervention

The District shall give timely notice to the campus charter of any violations of the charter performance contract or performance deficiencies justifying formal intervention. The notice shall identify in writing the concerns, and, if applicable, the time frame for remediation. The notice may include additional consequences if any of the concerns are not remedied within the stated timeline.

Depending on the severity of the concern or deficiency, the Board may place a campus charter on probation or revoke the charter performance contract, in accordance with the terms of the contract and applicable law.

Probation

Criteria

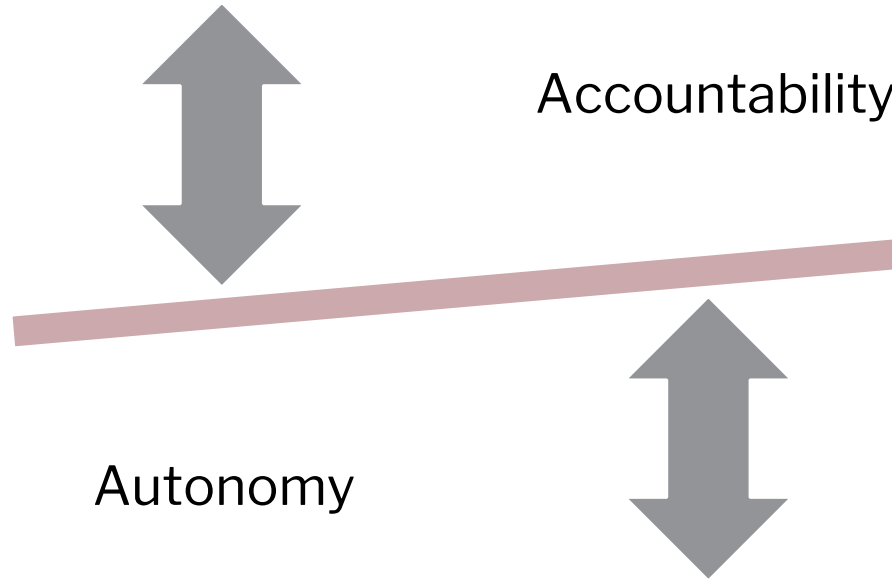
The Board may place a campus charter on probation as permitted by law or the charter performance contract, or for failure to meet academic performance standards.

Procedure

In the event of any indication or allegation that a campus charter has committed a violation of law or the charter performance contract that may warrant probation, the District shall take the following steps:

13. The Superintendent shall investigate the allegations and hold a conference with the chief operating officer and governing body of the campus charter to discuss the allegations.
14. If the Superintendent determines that a violation or mismanagement has occurred, the chief operating officer of the campus charter shall respond to the allegation at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.
15. The Board shall hear the presentation and take action, if

WHERE IS THE LINE?



A QUALITY AUTHORIZER AND INTERVENTION

- Establishes and makes known to schools at the outset an intervention policy that states the general conditions that may trigger intervention and the types of actions and consequences that may ensue;
- Gives schools clear, adequate, evidence-based, and timely notice of contract violations or performance deficiencies;
- Allows schools reasonable time and opportunity for remediation in non-emergency situations; and
- Where intervention is needed, engages in intervention strategies that clearly preserve school autonomy and responsibility (identifying what the school must remedy without prescribing solutions).

THE INTERVENTION “LADDER”

- Schools earn good standing until a performance deficiency occurs.
- Ladder can be non-sequential, schools may escalate (or de-escalate) among the tiers depending on extent or severity of performance deficiency
- A school may exit the intervention ladder and earn good standing once the performance deficiency is resolved.



Intervention Protocol		
Intervention Status	Conditions That May Trigger Status	Possible Consequences
LEVEL 1 Notice of Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indications of weak or declining performance identified through routine monitoring, site visits, or other means; Repeated failure to submit requirements on a timely basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written notification to school board detailing severity of concern, authorizer's requirements for resolution, timeline, and consequences if not satisfactorily remedied.
LEVEL 2 Notice of Breach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to satisfactorily remedy or make substantial progress toward remedying previously identified concern(s); Failure to meet multiple performance targets; An overall "Does Not Meet" rating on any performance framework; One or more indicator-level "Falls Far Below" ratings on any Performance Framework; Failure to comply with applicable law or breach of contract. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written notification to school board detailing severity of concern, authorizer's requirements for resolution, timeline, and consequences if not satisfactorily remedied; Specialized site visit, as necessary; Meeting with school board, as necessary; Remedial action plan developed by the school and approved by the authorizer, as necessary.
LEVEL 3 Notice of Probationary Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any overall "Falls Far Below" rating on any performance framework; Continued failure to comply with applicable law or with the charter; Failure to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting terms of remedial action plan, as relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remedial action plan developed by the school and approved by the authorizer; Meeting with school board; Specialized site visit, as necessary; If needed, authorizer may appoint an agent to monitor implementation of remedial action plan.
LEVEL 4 Notice of Revocation Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued failure to comply with applicable law or with the charter contract; Failure to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting terms of the remedial action plan, as relevant; Noncompliance with an applicable health or safety standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written notice stating intent to consider revocation; Meeting with school board; Remedial action plan developed by the school and approved by the authorizer; If needed, the authorizer may appoint an agent to monitor implementation of remedial action plan.
LEVEL 5 Notice of Revocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended pattern of failure to comply or to meet performance targets; Failure to satisfactorily address or make sufficient progress toward meeting terms of prior interventions; Applicable conditions for revocation set forth in charter school law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revocation process must be conducted in accordance with state law and will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written notice from authorizer stating reason for proposed revocation; Specialized site visit, as necessary; Decision to revoke by authorizer.



LEVEL ONE: NOTICE OF CONCERN

Conditions that may trigger status

- Indications of weak or declining performance identified through routine monitoring and reporting, site visits, or other means;
- Repeated failure to submit reporting requirements on a timely basis

Consequences

- Written notification to OP board detailing severity of concern, authorizer's required outcomes for resolution, timeline, and consequences if not satisfactorily remedied
- Request from OP board a written response to the authorizer's findings



LEVEL TWO: NOTICE OF BREACH OR DEFICIENCY

Conditions that may trigger status

- Failure to satisfactorily remedy or make substantial progress toward remedying previously-identified concern(s);
- Failure to meet multiple performance targets;
- Overall poor performance on the School Quality Framework
- Failure to comply with applicable law or breach of contract

Consequences

- Written notification to OP board detailing severity of concern, authorizer's required outcomes for resolution, timeline, and consequences if not satisfactorily remedied;
- Specialized site visit, as necessary;
- Meeting with OP board, as necessary;
- Corrective action plan developed by the school and approved by the authorizer, as necessary



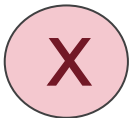
LEVEL THREE: NOTICE OF PROBATIONARY STATUS

Conditions that may trigger status

- Overall poor performance on the School Quality Framework.
- Continued failure to comply with applicable law or with the charter;
- Failure to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting terms of corrective action plan, as relevant

Consequences

- Corrective action plan developed by the school and approved by the authorizer, as necessary;
- Meeting with OP board of directors;
- As relevant, authorizer may appoint an agent to monitor implementation of corrective action plan.



LEVEL FOUR: REVOCATION REVIEW

Conditions that may trigger status

- Extended pattern of failure to comply with applicable law or with the charter contract or to meet performance standards;
- Failure to satisfactorily address or make sufficient progress toward meeting terms of probation or corrective action plan;
- Noncompliance with an applicable health or safety standard.

Consequences

- Written notice stating intent to consider revocation;
- Meeting with OP board;
- Remedial action plan developed by the school and approved by the authorizer;
- If needed, the authorizer may appoint an agent to monitor implementation of remedial action plan.



LEVEL FIVE: REVOCATION

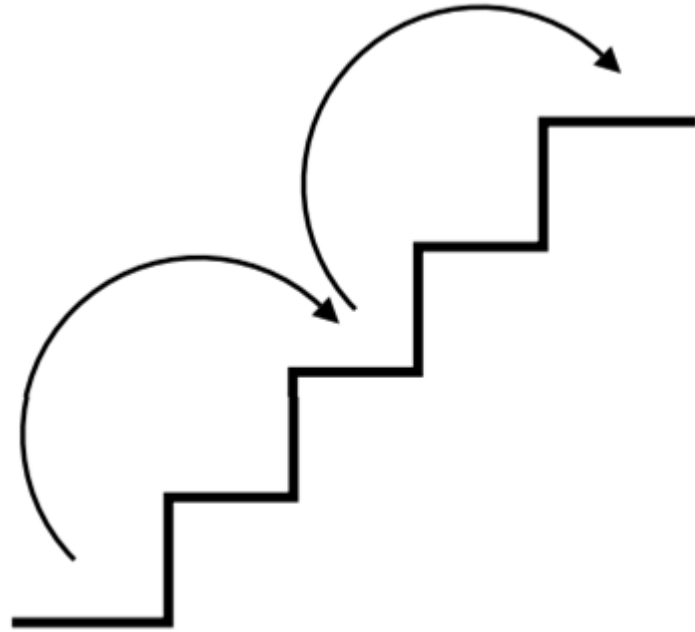
Conditions that may trigger status

- Extended pattern of failure to comply with applicable law or with the charter contract or to meet performance standards;
- Failure to satisfactorily address or make sufficient progress toward meeting terms of probation or corrective action plan;
- Noncompliance with an applicable health or safety standard.
- Applicable conditions for revocation set forth in charter school law or contract.

Consequences

- Revocation process must be conducted in accordance with state law and will include:
- Written notice from authorizer stating reason for proposed revocation;
- Specialized site visit, as necessary;
- Decision to revoke by authorizer (district board of directors).

The authorizer must reserve the right to skip levels of intervention, as necessary.



COMPLAINT POLICY

- Authorizer should ensure the school has a policy for addressing complaints
- Authorizer should also have a policy for addressing complaints about charter schools
 - Balance autonomy and accountability
 - School should be the first line for addressing most complaints
 - Consider if complaint involves:
 - immediate threat to student health or safety
 - Violation of law or charter contract
 - Violation of generally accepted accounting principles or financial mismanagement

SCENARIO 1

The school earns a “D” on the Texas Accountability System after its first year of operation.

SCENARIO 2

Recruitment efforts have led to low enrollment of students with disabilities.

- School's = 9.8%
- District Average = 20.6%

SCENARIO 3

The school earns a “D” on the Texas Accountability System after its first two years of operation.

SCENARIO 4

A parent calls to complain that her son has been unfairly suspended for talking back to the teacher. The parent says that her son is always respectful and that he said he didn't say to the teacher what he was accused of saying. The parent called the principal, but the principal supported the teacher and didn't undo the suspension.

SCENARIO 5

Over the course of the next 3 weeks, the district receives 6 calls from parents complaining about various issues with discipline at the school. Two are very similar to the first complaint and involve the same teacher but different students, two relate to student fights in the school, and two relate to thefts of students' cell phones.

THE WRITTEN NOTICE

Review the Notice of Deficiency related to the school earning a “D” on the Texas Accountability System.

- Is the letter clear?
- Does it maintain appropriate lines of autonomy and accountability?
- How would you revise it?

REFLECTION AND COMING UP

AHS Timeline:



COMING UP

Final Session June 10-11 | San Antonio, TX | Geekdom Event Center

- **Time:** START 11 AM, Monday June 10 END 3 PM, Tuesday June 11
- **Lodging & Meals:** Complete [this form](#) by May 31st.

Focus areas Renewal, Community Engagement, and tying it all together

Other Key Events:

NACSA Conference Registration Open | Houston, TX | Oct. 21-24



ONLINE TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Introduce TX authorizers to the state's charter history, educational landscape, and opportunities to expand great options for student and families;
- Provide districts with an introduction to authorizing – what it is and why it is important in the state of TX;
- Provide TX authorizers with foundational understanding of authorizing best practices.

MODULE OVERVIEW

Module 1: Overview of Authorizing in TX

Release Date: February 19, 2024

This session will introduce the concept of authorizing and its importance in the state of Texas. It will provide some historical background of the charter school movement and the historical transitions that have made authorizing what it is today nationally as well as an overview of where Texas stands in this history.

After completing this module, you will be able to:

- Articulate the history of charter school authorizing- both nationally and specific to the state of Texas.
- Identify the types of charter schools in Texas.
- Explain the purpose of SB 1882.
- Describe the role of authorizing and explain its importance in the state of Texas.
- Describe the general responsibilities of a charter school authorizer.

Module 2: Applications

Release Date: February 19, 2024

This module will walk through the importance of quality application review processes, including a high-level discussion of proposal requirements and guidance, fair and transparent quality-focused procedures, rigorous approval criteria and merit-based decision making.

After completing this module, you will be able to:

- Explain the purpose and components of the *Call for Quality Schools*.
- List the basic requirements necessary for a high-quality application.
- Describe the key elements of a quality application review process.
- Identify and implement best practices for conducting capacity interviews.
- List the TX specific requirements related to due diligence.

Module 3: Autonomy & Accountability

Release Date: April 15, 2024

This module will discuss the authorizer's responsibility to establish, maintain, and enforce high performance standards for all schools in their portfolio, including not only holding schools accountable for the academic performance of all their students, but also for financial and organizational performance. This module will also explore the authorizer's role in setting and communicating a new charter school's pre-opening requirements. After completing this module, you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning of the autonomy and accountability bargain and describe the authorizer's role in ensuring a balance.
- Describe the purpose of a strong charter contract.
- Identify the three components of performance.

Module 4: Ongoing Evaluation

Release Date: April 30, 2024

This module will look at ways in which authorizers conduct oversight activities that enable them to fulfill their statutory responsibilities, such as collecting evidence, measuring progress, and using established criteria to evaluate school performance data in transparent ways, including desk audits, site visits, and annual reporting. This module will also explore the authorizer's responsibility to ensure that all students and families have fair and equitable access to charter schools,

After completing this module, you will be able to:

- List strategies for continuing evaluation of a school.
- Explain the benefit of transparency in ongoing evaluation and provide examples where transparency can be implemented.

Module 5: Charter Renewal

Release Date: May 28, 2024

This module delves into the renewal process, and how authorizers utilize performance criteria, the charter contract, and summative evaluations to make high-stakes, merit-based renewal decisions. Possible outcomes include probationary, short-term, or full-term charter renewal; authorizers can also recommend non-renewal or revocation when necessary to protect student and public interests.

After completing this module, you will be able to:

- Define renewal and list the three types of renewal decisions.
- Explain the purpose of renewal decisions and what it means to make a merit-based decision.
- Describe the timeline of renewal decisions.
- Describe the steps an authorizer should take when non-renewal is decided.

Module 6: Engaging the Community

Release Date: May 28, 2024

This module explores how authorizers identify their communities' needs for particular school models. Learners will explore how to engage their community to help inform new charter applications and school models and how to communicate their priorities to potential applicants.

After completing this module, you will be able to:

- Explain the benefits that community authorizing can bring to the work of authorizing.
- Define your community stakeholders and begin selecting engagement strategies.

More About NACSA

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) is an independent voice for effective charter school policy and thoughtful charter authorizing practices that lead to more great public schools. Its research, policy, and consultation work advances excellence and accountability in the charter school sector. With authorizers and other partners, NACSA has built the gold standard for charter school authorizing. Through smart charter school growth, these authorizers will give hundreds of thousands of children an opportunity for a better education each year. More at www.qualitycharters.org.





Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Table of Contents

Overview 2

Ratings and Evaluation Criteria 4

 Rating the Standard 7

 Overall Rating..... 7

 Advanced Criteria..... 8

Evaluation Team..... 8

Evaluation Process 9

 Orientation..... 9

 Authorizer & School Surveys..... 9

 Relevant Authorizing Documents 10

 Authorizer Debrief 10

 Rubric Completion 10

Timeline..... 11

Appendix 14

 Evaluation Rubric 15

 Relevant Documents Table 38

 Authorizer Survey 40

 School Survey 41

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Overview

Georgia law requires an annual review of all charter school authorizers, to assess their “adherence to the principles and standards of charter school authorizing practices” approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE).¹ This evaluation tool is based on the 15 standards of quality practices in the [Georgia Principles and Standards for Charter School Authorizing](#) approved in December 2021.

This evaluation instrument outlines the legally required annual review of each Georgia charter school authorizer. This document is written for evaluators who have deep experience in authorizing *and* for evaluators with relevant expertise but limited experience applying that expertise in the public charter school context.

In order to provide direction and clarity for evaluators and to make the results actionable for authorizers, this evaluation organizes the 15 Georgia standards into five (5) main categories. The categories are introduced using the following guiding questions:

- I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity
 - a. Does the authorizer organize and retain a professional team with the subject matter expertise necessary to carry out the authorizer’s obligations?
 - b. Does the authorizer manage financial resources to support charter schools and clearly communicate how funds are allocated to schools pursuant to Georgia law?
- II. The Petition Process
 - a. Does the authorizer provide appropriate guidance and assistance to petitioners applying to open a new school?
 - b. Does the authorizer engage teams of qualified individuals to review petitions?
 - c. Does the authorizer clearly communicate the competency and capacity required for petition approval and make decisions based solely on those criteria?
- III. Performance Contracting
 - a. Does the authorizer publish clear requirements to ensure schools can open on time?
 - b. Do performance contracts between the authorizer and schools define each party’s obligations, reinforce the high standards required for renewal in for academic, financial, and operational performance, and identify any services to be provided under separate agreement?
 - c. Does the authorizer meet its contract obligations as established by Georgia law?
- IV. Oversight and Evaluation
 - a. Does the authorizer protect the public interest by holding schools accountable for governance, management, and stewardship of public funds?
 - b. Does the authorizer give schools timely notice of deficiencies or contract violations, and provide them time for remediation, prior to taking further action?
 - c. Does the authorizer uphold school autonomy in organizing, staffing, and delivering educational programs in pursuit of measurable outcomes for students?
- V. Renewal and Termination
 - a. Does the authorizer use a rigorous renewal process and clearly communicate criteria for renewal, non-renewal, or termination of contracts?
 - b. Does the authorizer base renewal decisions primarily on objective measures of student achievement?

¹ 2019 Georgia Code Title 20 – Education Chapter 2 - Elementary and Secondary Education Article 31 - Charter Schools Act of 1998 §20-2-2063.3. Code of principles and standards for charter school authorizers.

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

- c. Does the authorizer follow a closure protocol that enables orderly transitions for students and staff, and careful disposition of school funds and assets?

Each standard is graded in a completed evaluation rubric. One rubric is completed for each authorizer. The completed rubric rates the authorizer on each standard, includes any relevant evaluative comments, and provides an overall quality rating.

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Ratings and Evaluation Criteria

The process for evaluating authorizer practices and rating each authorizer is described and illustrated in an example table below.

Evaluators rate authorizers on each of the 15 standards using 1-6 evaluation criteria chosen based on their importance to the Georgia authorizing landscape. In making their decisions, evaluators rely on the following types of evidence:

- Documentation provided by the authorizer,
- A debrief and/or observations of the authorizer in practice, and
- Other interactions with stakeholders, such as school surveys or focus groups.

The evaluation process is designed to allow evaluators to conduct their evaluation in a reasonable time frame, to limit interruption to the normal operations of the authorizer and the schools in the authorizer's portfolio. Thus, evaluators complete as much of the evaluation as possible by reviewing existing documents. Surveys and other stakeholder interactions are limited and built as much as possible around existing workstreams and convenings. Meeting with the authorizer and, if appropriate, observing the authorizer staff and board in action, provide evaluators context and help them answer remaining questions.

Using this comprehensive body of evidence and their professional judgment, evaluators determine a Yes/No designation based on whether the evidence indicates that the authorizer has demonstrated adherence to Georgia's principles and standards for quality authorizing. For some criteria, depending on the evidence provided, evaluators will be able to easily select a designation of Yes or No. For other criteria, evaluators will need to carefully weigh the evidence provided and use their expertise and professional judgment to choose the appropriate designation.

Three examples are provided below, using the same standard, to illustrate how designations are made in light of the evidence available.

Category I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity				
Standard 1. Human Resources. The authorizer identifies appropriate personnel to carry out its authorizing obligations, including the point(s) of contact who will coordinate charter school support.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).				

Example A

The authorizer provided staff bios and resumes that demonstrated diverse expertise and cumulative depth of experience in charter authorizing and operations. School surveys indicated satisfaction with the staff's ability to fulfill

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

their authorizing function and support schools appropriately. The authorizer debrief confirmed the experience and capacity of the staff.

In this case, the evaluators can easily designate Yes for this criterion.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).	Submitted documentation aligns with the standard.	Staff demonstrated a wide range of relevant experience.	Schools rated the authorizer highly.	Yes

Example B

The authorizer did not provide current bios or resumes for all staff. The resumes provided were outdated and had only limited charter school or authorizing experience. It was not clear from the documentation how long each staff member had served on the authorizing team. School surveys reflected significant dissatisfaction with the staff. One school board member said, “it feels like we’re constantly having to train the authorizing staff on their jobs and what charter schools are.” The authorizer debrief did not allay any of the concerns manifested in the documentation review or school surveys.

In this case, the evaluators can easily designate No for this criterion.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).	Submitted documentation was incomplete and did not meet the standard.	The debrief did not provide any additional evidence to meet the standard.	Schools rated the authorizer poorly.	No

Example C

Current bios and resumes for all authorizing staff were submitted. The resumes showed deep education experience but limited charter school experience. School surveys were mixed regarding satisfaction with the staff’s ability to fulfill their authorizing function and support schools appropriately. One respondent noted, “The authorizing office connects us to experts across the district to help us with specific needs like Federal Programs compliance.” During the authorizer debrief, the staff explained how they work with experts across the district and showed an organization chart each authorizing team member uses to ensure regular communication with school district staff who support the charter schools.

In this case, the evaluators may recognize the shared allocation of resources that enables the authorizer to fulfill its functions. The evaluator can therefore designate Yes for this criterion.

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).	Submitted documentation showed some relevant experience.			Yes

Guiding Questions

These examples are intended to show how evaluators can, keeping some guiding questions in mind, rate authorizers on each criterion in consistent ways. Evaluators should use questions like these throughout the process:

1. Did the relevant documentation describe authorizing practices that are consistent with the evaluation criteria and quality authorizing standard?
2. Did the school survey responses support the authorizer's documented practices? In other words, is there a disparity between the authorizer's perception of how well it adheres to a standard and the perception of school board members or leaders regarding the same?
3. Did the authorizer's verbal commentary align with their documented processes and the relevant quality authorizing practice?
4. If the evaluators observed the authorizer in practice, did the authorizer's practices adhere to its stated procedures or policies?

The evaluation team must include details in the appropriate section of the rubric explaining the rationale behind each designation and note where there is misalignment between the standard, the authorizer's documentation, schools' responses, and authorizer commentary.

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Rating the Standard

Every authorizer is assigned a rating on each of the 15 standards. The three ratings are:

1. Needs Improvement (NI),
2. Adequate (AD), or
3. Exemplary (EX).

The number of evaluation criteria met determines the authorizer's rating. Each standard has a different number of associated evaluation criteria. Thus, the number of criteria required to earn a particular rating varies from standard to standard as illustrated within the rubric (See Table A, above, as an example). However, an authorizer that met no criteria will always earn a Needs Improvement rating for the relevant standard. And an authorizer that met all criteria will earn an Exemplary rating for the relevant standard.²

Overall Rating

In addition to receiving a rating on each standard, every authorizer is assigned an overall rating of Needs Improvement (NI), Adequate (AD) or Exemplary (EX)³. The overall rating is determined by the number of NI, AD, and EX ratings the authorizer received across all 15 Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing. This is outlined in Table B, below.

Districts in their first year of authorizing will receive a rating for each standard but will not receive an overall rating. Instead, they will be designated as a First Time Authorizer (FTA).⁴ This allows new authorizers to develop and improve their practices before being subject to the consequences related to receiving an overall rating of NI.

Table A. Overall Rating Scoring Table

OVERALL RATING (Across all 15 Standards)	
Rating	Criteria
Needs Improvement (NI)	Earned a majority (8 or more) NI ratings across all standards
Adequate (AD)	Earned any combination of ratings across standards except as designated for NI or E
Exemplary (EX)	Earned a majority (8 or more) E ratings and no NI ratings across all standards
First Time Authorizer (FTA)	Authorizer in its first year of authorizing

Per Georgia law § 20-2-2063.3, a charter school authorized by a local board of education that fails to meet the principles and standards of charter school authorizing on its annual evaluation for two consecutive years may petition to transfer its charter authorization to the SCSC. An overall rating of NI is the equivalent of failing to meet principles and standards of charter school authorizing. In any year an authorizer receives a NI rating, the SBOE may require the authorizer to submit a corrective action plan to remedies the areas of deficiencies identified in the evaluation process.

² The exception is, if only one evaluation criterion are associated with the given standard, then the authorizer will earn an Adequate rating.

³ The overall rating categories are established in SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06 Charter Authorizers, Financing, Management, And Governance Training.

⁴ The overall rating category of First Time Authorizer is established in SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.06 Charter Authorizers, Financing, Management, And Governance Training.

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Table B. Example of a completed Georgia Authorizer Evaluation Rubric for one standard

Standard 2. Financial Resources. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.1 and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2089, the authorizer allocates the required financial resources to support charter schools, treats charter schools no less favorably than other local schools within the system unless otherwise provided by law, and provides transparency on the availability and allocation of charter school funding.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer clearly publishes and shares the calculation of current and anticipated public funding for each charter school in accordance with law, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GaDOE/SBOE/SCSC- district allotment sheets - Local Districts- allotment sheet itemizing the calculation of state, local and federal allocations to be provided. 	Authorizer has posted to website under financial reports.	Authorizer described a reasonable timeline for annually publishing.	School did not respond with conflicting or negative information.	Y
Withholds no more than the legally allowable administration fee	As demonstrated on financial statements.	Affirmed	Affirmed	Y
The authorizer publishes a budget reflecting the total amount received from any authorizing fees and other sources, and how those funds are allocated. The authorizer publishes the administrative services provided based on the administrative fees withheld.	Budget was submitted, but not published on website.	Authorizer's description of services to schools was unclear.	School suggested that the authorizer over allocates monies to administrative tasks.	N
Number of Criteria Met:	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
	0-1	2	3	AD

Advanced Criteria

To encourage the development of transformational authorizing practices, advanced criteria have been added to supplement the evaluation of the Georgia standards. These advanced practices are aligned with national best practices. As such, these standards will **not** receive a rating of Needs Improvement, Adequate, or Exemplary, rather evaluators will provide at least one strength and one weakness based on findings from the documentation review, authorizer debrief, and school survey. The advanced criteria feedback will **not** impact the overall rating provided to an authorizer.

Evaluation Team

Evaluation teams should be comprised of at least two individuals with relevant expertise, and without a current relationship with the authorizer that could be perceived as a conflict of interest. The evaluation team may divide the evaluation roles and tasks among its members as it sees fit. However, in order to ensure clear, consistent communication and reduce duplicative messaging, one member of the evaluation team shall serve as the lead for each authorizer evaluation and act as the main point of contact for the authorizer, local boards of education and related charter schools. The evaluation team leader will have the following responsibilities:

- Send the updated relevant documents table to the authorizer after the initial website pull has been conducted,

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

- Consolidate the evaluation team's school survey follow-up questions and send them to the school,
- Navigate any responses to the survey,
- Consolidate the evaluation team's authorizer debrief questions,
- Lead the authorizer debrief conversation, and
- Share the final version of the evaluation rubric with the authorizer.

The authorizer must also designate a single point of contact to verify accuracy of information used by the evaluation team.

Evaluation Process

The authorizer evaluation process includes five main components:

1. Orientation,
2. Authorizer & School Surveys,
3. Relevant Authorizing Documents,
4. Authorizer Debrief, and
5. Rubric Completion.

Each component is described in more detail and an accompanying timeline is provided, below. The final product of the evaluation is a completed rubric (one for each authorizer) that assesses a charter authorizer's performance against the 15 Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing.

Orientation

The State Board of Education (SBOE) is required to provide for or approve training for its staff and local board of education members on the approved principles and standards.⁵ At least one member of each authorizing office must attend. While not required, supplemental learning materials that incorporate the Georgia context can be found in the [Georgia Authorizer Training learning suite here](#). Although not required in law, the SCSC will host an orientation to the evaluation process for its staff and the evaluation team prior to the evaluation start date. SCSC staff will also communicate with schools about the evaluation, timeline, and related requests. This training will cover the evaluation process, the authorizer rating structure, timelines, and due dates. Orientation should be completed no later than the month before an evaluation cycle start date. Related documentation and timelines will also be shared with charter school leaders prior to the evaluation cycle start date.

School Surveys and Focus Groups

All approved (operational and pre-opening) charter schools will be asked complete an [authorizer evaluation school survey](#). The survey questions align with standards and evaluation criteria included in the evaluation rubric. The survey is an opportunity for schools to explain their experiences with the authorizer and identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. If additional information is needed for the evaluation team to rate the authorizer on all criteria, the evaluation team may send follow up questions and ask schools to submit documentation to support claims in the survey responses. This is particularly important when a school rates an authorizers' practice negatively but provides no rationale or documentation supporting the response. The evaluation team lead will request follow-up responses from respondents, as necessary. When follow up questions or additional documentation are used to determine ratings, evaluators should note that in the rubric. Instead of conducting direct survey follow up, evaluators may convene a school leader focus group to address questions raised by survey responses.

⁵ Georgia law §20-2-2063.3. Part D.

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Relevant Authorizing Documents

Evaluators will gather as much of the required documentation as possible from the authorizer's website. Then, evaluators will [request outstanding](#) documents from the [Relevant Documents Table](#). Whenever appropriate, the evaluation team will give the authorizer discretion to select which documents the authorizer believes most clearly demonstrate the authorizer's adherence to the relevant criteria or standard. The authorizer is required to submit all remaining documents or, if applicable, a link to where the document is publicly available. The evaluation team will make notes and add ratings to each authorizer's evaluation rubric based on their initial review of the collected documents. The evaluation team will compile follow-up questions to ask the authorizer, especially when submitted documentation is unclear, incomplete, inconsistent, or conflicts with school survey responses. The evaluation team lead will consolidate and send follow up questions to the authorizer prior to the scheduled authorizer debrief discussion.

Authorizer Debrief

The authorizer debrief is an opportunity for the authorizer to identify how the submitted documentation demonstrates adherence to Georgia's standards, as measured by the evaluation rubric. The debrief discussion allows the authorizer to verbally explain processes and protocols, and to respond to any concerns the team derived from relevant school survey responses.

The evaluation team lead will contact the authorizer at the beginning of the evaluation to schedule a debrief discussion. Debrief discussions should occur within the timeframe indicated in the timeline below. The evaluation team lead will consolidate all questions, comments, and potential questions or concerns arising from the document review and school surveys and will send this information to the authorizer well before the debrief discussion. Following the debrief discussion, each evaluation team member will update their rubric considering additional understanding gained and evidence gathered.

Rubric Completion

This evaluation process relies on expert evaluators using the provided rubric to clearly and uniformly provide a rating for each Georgia authorizer on the 15 [Georgia Principles and Standards for Charter School Authorizing](#). During and after each stage of the evaluation process team members will make notes in the appropriate section of their individual GAE Rubric, identifying areas of misalignment between the standard quality practice as defined in the GAE rubric, the authorizer documentation, school feedback from survey responses and authorizer verbal commentary provided during the debrief. Once all authorizer debrief discussions have concluded, the evaluation team shall convene to discuss and review their individual assessments of authorizer performance. Individual team member rubrics will be used to draft a final comprehensive rubric for each authorizer at the end of the evaluation process. The evaluation team must come to a consensus for the overall rating for each authorizer as well as the rating for each standard for each authorizer. Authorizers will receive one completed evaluation rubric that incorporates the feedback from the evaluation team as a whole.

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Timeline

The evaluation cycle is estimated to last up to 10 weeks. Specific duties for each party are outlined by week (and day if applicable) in the table below. The evaluation team may adjust timelines if needed; however, school and authorizer deadlines must not be shortened unless agreed to by all parties. The process is ideally situated to occur in the summer months when districts and schools are not in session. Annually the SBOE will share specific dates and times for the evaluation process during the orientation training for local districts and authorizers. Orientation shall occur in the month prior to the evaluation cycle.

Week	Key Activities		
	Evaluation Team	Authorizers	Charter Schools
At least one month prior to evaluation	Attend SBOE provided orientation.	Attend SBOE provided orientation. Host an orientation to the evaluation process for its staff and the evaluation team. Notify schools about evaluation and timeline and send additional documentation.	
Week 1	Conduct desk audit (pull relevant documents from websites and request additional documents from authorizer). Ask identified school staff to complete School Survey.	Complete authorizer survey.	Complete School Survey.
Week 2	Independently review documentation and survey responses; Begin filling out authorizer evaluation rubric.	Send outstanding relevant documents to evaluation team.	Complete School Survey (responses due by end of week).
Week 3		Submit draft site visit schedule to evaluator for review.	

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Week 4	<p>Independently review documentation and survey responses; Fill out authorizer evaluation rubric.</p> <p>Draft and compile school survey follow-up questions.</p> <p>Conduct site visit (finalize schedule, travel to authorizer, conduct interviews and focus groups, observe authorizer practices, and/or conduct customized meetings).</p>	Participate in evaluation site visit. (staff and board interviews and observations).	Participate in evaluation site visit - school leader focus group(s).
Week 5	<p>Independently review documentation and survey responses; Fill out authorizer evaluation rubric.</p> <p>Send compiled list of survey follow-up questions (from all evaluators) to applicable schools.</p> <p>Schedule authorizer debrief discussions.</p>		Compile response(s) to survey follow-up question(s) and send to evaluation team.
Week 6	<p>Independently review answers to survey follow-up questions; Fill out authorizer evaluation rubric.</p> <p>Evaluation team meets to consolidate individual rubrics into one rubric for the authorizer and draft questions to discuss the authorizer debrief.</p>		
Week 7	Draft authorizer documentation debrief questions and send to authorizer, along with draft consolidated rubric.	Review debrief questions and draft evaluation rubric and prepare for authorizer debrief discussion (compile factual corrections and any supplemental information).	

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Week 8	Finalize preparations for authorizer debrief discussions.		
Week 9	Conduct authorizer debrief discussions.	Participate in authorizer debrief discussions.	
Week 10	Finalize and share evaluation rubric with the authorizer.		
Date determined by the authorizer	Present and discuss evaluation findings with board or decision-making body.	Participate in discussion of evaluation findings with board or decision-making body	

Georgia Charter School Authorizer Evaluation

Appendix

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Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation Rubric

Authorizer Name:

Date:

SUMMARY	RATING
Category I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity	
1. Human Resources	
2. Financial Resources	
Category II. The Petition Process	
3. Petition Application	
4. Petition Review	
5. Petition Decisions	
Category III. Performance Contracting	
6. Pre-Opening Period	
7. Performance Standards	
8. Contract Terms and Agreements	
9. Authorizer Obligations	
Category IV. Oversight and Evaluation	
10. Compliance Monitoring	
11. Intervention	
12. Upholds Charter School Autonomy	
Category V. Renewal and Termination	
13. Renewal Process	
14. Renewal Decisions	
15. Closure/Termination	
OVERALL RATING	

OVERALL RATING CRITERIA	
Rating	Criteria
Needs Improvement (NI)	Earned a majority NI (8 or more) across all standards
Adequate (AD)	Earned any combination of ratings across standards except as designated for NI or E
Exemplary (EX)	Earned a majority E (8 or more) and no NI across all standards
First Time Authorizer (FTA)	Charter authorizer in its first year of authorizing

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

<h3 style="margin: 0;">Category I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity</h3>				
Standard 1. Human Resources. The authorizer identifies appropriate personnel to carry out its authorizing obligations, including the point(s) of contact who will coordinate charter school support.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
<p>The authorizer has dedicated staff to supporting the charter schools in its portfolio.</p> <p>Whether staff are dedicated solely to charter school authorizing or have other duties, sufficient staff time and resources are allocated for the authorizer to fulfill its obligations, in light of the number of schools in the portfolio.</p>				
<p>Taken together, staff have adequate experience in charter authorizing or other relevant experience (e.g., education accountability, school funding and finance, education law and legal compliance).</p>				
<p>The roles and responsibilities of the authorizing office cover key responsibilities in a coherent structure, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Petition receipt and review, - Oversight of academic, financial, and operational performance, and - Designated point of contact for charter stakeholder inquiries. 				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3	
<p>Evaluator Comments:</p> 				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
<p>The authorizer demonstrates its commitment to high-quality authorizing by building a healthy organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizational values (behavioral expectations) are explicit and enforced. - If applicable, authorizing is a visibly important function of the larger “parent” organization. - Staffing supports the authorizer’s goals and plans for the future. 		
<p>Employment and management practices attract and retain a diverse, effective team of authorizing professionals. This includes leadership and professional development, clear decision-making criteria, and effective onboarding.</p>		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 2. Financial Resources. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2068.1 and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2089, the authorizer allocates the required financial resources to support charter schools, treats charter schools no less favorably than other local schools within the system unless otherwise provided by law, and provides transparency on the availability and allocation of charter school funding.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer clearly publishes and shares the calculation of current and anticipated public funding for each charter school in accordance with law, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GaDOE/SBOE/SCSC- district allotment sheets - Local Districts- allotment sheet itemizing the calculation of state, local and federal allocations to be provided. 				
Budget allocations for the school reflect an administrative fee that aligns with the charter contract and applicable law.				
The authorizer publishes a budget reflecting the total amount received from any authorizing fees and other sources, and how those funds are allocated internally. The authorizer publishes the administrative services provided based on the administrative fees withheld.				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3	
Evaluator Comments:				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth	
The authorizer's budget is sufficient and aligned to the authorizer's goals.				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Category II. The Petition Process

Standard 3. Petition Application. The authorizer publishes a written petition application in accordance with state requirements and timelines. The authorizer provides reasonable and timely technical assistance and is responsive to petitioner questions.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer publishes petition materials (application, timelines, process and guidance) online in an easy-to- find location.				
The authorizer clearly articulates petition requirements. Requirements are focused on written content rather than form (i.e. application length, font size, etc.).				
The authorizer publishes times and locations for petition submission that are reasonable and easy to be met by the petitioner.				
The authorizer publishes staff contact information for technical assistance.				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	
Evaluator Comments:				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
The authorizer conducts informational sessions about the petition process.		
The authorizer provides clear guidance around attendance possibilities (e.g., statewide, district, or other geographic limitations), funding structure for budget development, and requirements to align petitions to demonstrated community need.		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 4. Petition Review. The authorizer conducts petition review in accordance with state requirements. The petition review includes an evaluation team of no fewer than three individuals with diverse expertise, with at least one of the individuals having charter school experience. For the review of local charter petitions at least one of the individuals on the evaluation team shall have local district administrative experience.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The petition evaluation team includes at least three individuals that have varied and relevant skills and backgrounds (i.e. education, finance, school governance, charter experience, trained in petition review or have completed a relevant training).		-		
The authorizer publishes the petition evaluation criteria and the requirements for petition approval on the authorizer's website.				
The review process includes an interview.				
Petition review and interview process are free of conflict of interest.				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	
Evaluator Comments:				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth	
The authorizer trains evaluators to ensure consistent application of petition evaluation criteria. Evaluators discuss ratings and develop a list of questions to inform the interview.				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 5. Petition Decisions. The authorizer grants charters only to petitioners that have demonstrated competence and capacity to succeed in all aspects of the school, including a strong plan for improving student opportunities and outcomes. The authorizer makes petition decisions that are free from conflicts of interest.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Authorization decisions are based on evidence tied to the petition evaluation criteria, applicable accountability metrics, and legal requirements.				
If denied, petitioner is provided a written detailed description of deficiencies and information about how to reapply in the future.				
In the case of denied applications, the authorizer provides the applicant with detailed feedback to provide a public record of why the applicant was denied and assist the applicant if it wants to reapply in the future.				
Recommendations are shared with petitioners at least one week prior to the authorizing board meeting and within 90 days of receiving the complete application.				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	
Evaluator Comments: <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-top: 10px;"></div>				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
<p>Application decisions reflect rigorous consideration of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The educational program’s likelihood of success and the applicants’ capacity for educating children well, - The business and organizational plans’ viability, - The experience and capacity of the applicant team (board and proposed leaders) to implement the proposed educational, business, and organizational program, and to manage any service provider contracts. 		
<p>The authorizer board’s decisions generally align with staff recommendations. Conditional approvals are only granted for making specific technical changes and not as a means to allow the applicants to further develop proposals.</p>		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Category III. Performance Contracting				
Standard 6. Pre-Opening Period. The authorizer establishes clear and necessary, but not overly burdensome expectations for the pre-opening period including, but not limited to, expectations regarding facilities, student enrollment and board development.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has a pre-opening checklist or other process that clearly communicates to schools what key readiness requirements must be met to open. The checklist or process includes adequate timelines, deliverables, responsible parties, and notes which criteria may defer opening.				
Pre-opening expectations specify facility requirements that include, GaDOE Facilities Division sign off, obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy and submitting an Emergency Plan to required agencies.				
Pre-opening expectations specify student enrollment requirements including a minimum and maximum threshold to operate.				
Pre-opening expectations specify board development requirements including required trainings, policy development and operational oversight procedures.				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	
Evaluator Comments:				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth	
The authorizer uses the pre-opening process to build relationships, set expectations for school performance, and provide technical assistance to schools.				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Is there a history of schools opening despite not meeting all of the pre-opening requirements? If so, why?		
Is there a history of schools not opening on time? If so, why?		
In cases where a school's opening was delayed, did the authorizer make the decision early enough so that students and parents could make other arrangements?		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 7. Performance Standards. The authorizer, through the performance contract, establishes high academic, financial, and operational performance standards under which schools will be evaluated, using objective and verifiable measures of student achievement and growth as the primary measure of school quality.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Performance standards are included or referenced in the performance contract. These include clearly defined targets, thresholds or goals for each evaluation measure.				
Evaluation measures allow for annual review.				
Data sources used to evaluate performance are objective and verifiable.				
The authorizer measures academic performance using a framework that includes clearly defined expectations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student achievement • Student progress measures Expectations consider ALL students, including students with special needs, students with disabilities, and English Learners.				
Financial, operational and governance standards are grounded in best practice. Standards in these areas that are in addition to legal requirements are reasonable and not overly burdensome.				
The authorizer measures financial performance standards that enable the authorizer to assess and monitor schools' financial viability. These include clearly defined metric and targets to assess near-term performance and long-term financial sustainability.				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Operational standards include measures in the following areas: educational program compliance, financial oversight, governance and transparency, protecting the rights of students and employees, and ensuring a safe school environment.				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-2	3-5	6-7	
Evaluator Comments:				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth	
The authorizer reviews financial data and determines, based on the circumstances of each school, whether the school presents a low, medium, or high risk for financial failure. This includes assessing whether the school maintains and implements compliant policies and procedures for expending state and federal funds and maintains an appropriate and legally compliant level of transparency regarding budgeting and finance.				
<p>The authorizer verifies that its schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to applicable open meetings and records requirements. • Maintain compliant policies and procedures for serving special student populations, including students with disabilities and those identified as gifted, experiencing homelessness, or as English Learners (EL). • Adhere to the requirements of the charter contracts and applicable education laws, rules, and regulations. 				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 8. Contract Terms and Agreements. The authorizer executes an initial contract for a term of five years that clearly outlines the rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer. Agreements related to funding or in-kind services not required by OGGA §20-2-2068.1 or §20-2-2089 or that are not included in the charter contract, must be negotiated and executed in writing and signed by the local authorizer and charter school (for local charter schools) or the State Charter Schools Commission and state charter school (for state charter schools).

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Executes a contract with a legally incorporated, nonprofit governing board independent of the authorizer				
Initial contract terms are five years as stated in SBOE rule 160-4-9.-05				
The performance contract details the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, oversight, performance measures, and consequences for not meeting performance measures and material terms.				
The authorizer provides adequate and appropriate guidance to schools regarding what kinds of programmatic or operational changes constitute material changes that require authorizer approval.				
Specific services provided by the authorizer are negotiated and agreed to by both parties and are outlined in a separate written contract or service agreement, if applicable.				
Contract and/or related agreements establish equitable per-pupil funding terms or amounts as required by state law.				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-2	3-4	5-6	
Evaluator Comments:				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 9. Authorizer Obligations. The authorizer follows all authorizing obligations outlined in law, State Board Rule, and the charter contract.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer's contracts include or refer to the state and federal laws and other legal requirements the school must meet.				
A local board of education authorizer makes unused facilities (as defined by 20-2-2068.2 (h)(2)) available to local charters. The SCSC follows guidelines from the state properties commission.				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0	1	2	
Evaluator Comments:				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth		
The authorizer publicly posts a current list of unused facilities concurrently with the regular charter petition process.				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Category IV. Oversight and Evaluation				
Standard 10. Compliance Monitoring. The authorizer protects the public interest and holds charter schools accountable for their obligations of governance, management, and oversight of public funds. The authorizer defines, communicates, and effectively implements the processes, methods, and timing of collecting and reporting school performance and compliance information. The authorizer conducts school visits as appropriate and necessary, and annually publishes school performance data.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has a documented process for oversight and evaluation that aligns with the provisions of the performance contract.				
The authorizer has a documented process for conducting school site visits that includes a review of school performance and compliance in alignment with the contract, and/or subsequent agreements.				
The authorizer clearly communicates its oversight processes, including site visits, and how information gleaned from those activities is used to hold schools accountable.				
The authorizer conducts an on-site visit to each charter school at least once during the school's charter term.				
Each year, the authorizer publishes a report on its website with individual and aggregate level school performance results based on evaluation measures included in the contracts, comparing academic, financial, and organizational performance of each school to established expectations.				
	Needs Improvement (NI)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-2	3-4	5-6	
Evaluator Comments:				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
The authorizer knows, at any given time, how a school is doing.		
The authorizer provides clear technical assistance to schools to ensure timely compliance with new or revised laws.		
The authorizer differentiates its oversight to ensure that time and resources are allocated effectively based on school performance and capacity, as well as the authorizer's goals.		
Site visits are structured in a way that enables the authorizer to gather the information needed to evaluate the school appropriately and that respects school autonomy.		
School leaders understand their performance status.		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 11. Intervention. The authorizer gives schools evidence-based, and timely notice of contract violations or performance deficiencies and allows schools reasonable time and opportunity for remediation.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has an intervention protocol which determines when it may intervene and what consequences are possible (from a conversation to probation or other more serious actions). The intervention protocol includes actions that result from annual reviews using the performance framework and interventions required outside of “normal” monitoring findings (i.e. parent phone calls). This protocol is clearly communicated to schools.				
Following each compliance site visit the authorizer provides timely written notification that includes information collected during the site visit, a summary of findings and areas needing improvement. The findings are tied directly to applicable law or contract requirements.				
The authorizer provides written notice to the school of any contract breaches or areas of noncompliance in a reasonable timeframe.				
The authorizer allows the school adequate time to remedy any identified areas of noncompliance, respecting the school’s autonomy to determine how to remediate the noncompliance, when appropriate.				
	Needs Improvement (Ni)	Adequate (AD)	Exemplary (EX)	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2	3-4	
Evaluator Comments:				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 12. Upholds Charter School Autonomy. The authorizer upholds charter school autonomy in school level governance, including personnel decisions, financial decisions, curriculum and instruction, resource allocation, establishing and monitoring the achievement of school improvement goals, and school operations.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The contract and the authorizer’s practices recognize the school’s autonomy in school governance, instructional program implementation, personnel, and budgeting.				
Specific requirements not otherwise required under state law are either included in the charter contract or charter schools are <i>notified at least one year prior</i> to the requirement going into effect.				
	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Exemplary	
Number of Criteria Met:	0	1	2	
Evaluator Comments:				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Category V. Renewal and Termination				
Standard 13. Renewal and Termination Process. The authorizer clearly communicates to schools the criteria for charter termination, renewal and non-renewal that are consistent with the terms of the charter contract. The renewal process includes a written application and an opportunity for an interview.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Renewal process, criteria, and a general timeline are clearly communicated to schools well in advance of renewal and are published in a publicly accessible location. The process includes a written renewal application and an opportunity interview to make factual corrections or present supplementary evidence of performance.				
Renewal criteria are transparent, specific and align to performance standards and expectations outlined in the charter contract.				
The authorizer uses a track record of performance over multiple years to make renewal determinations.				
Revocation criteria are clearly communicated to schools. The authorizer provides written warning, timeline, and notice of anticipated termination prior to the end of the charter school renewal period.				
	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Exemplary	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	
Evaluator Comments:				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth	
Expansion and Replication The authorizer communicates clear processes, criteria, and standards for expansion and replication, so schools know when such applications are likely to be successful.				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 14. Renewal Decisions. The authorizer bases renewal decisions on a thorough analyses of the criteria outlined in the charter contract, with objective and verifiable measures of student achievement and growth as the primary measure of school quality. The authorizer ensures the renewal decision-making processes are free of conflicts of interest. The authorizer communicates renewal decisions to the school community and public within a timeframe that allows parents and students to exercise choices for the coming school year.				
Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
Renewal/nonrenewal recommendations are provided through prompt, written notification to the school's governing board and the public within a reasonable timeframe, following the availability of necessary data, as to provide parents and students time to exercise choices for the upcoming school year.				
Standard (5-year) renewal terms are only granted to schools that met established performance expectations outlined in the charter contract.				
Recommendations include a detailed, objective and evidence-based explanation for the decision.				
The authorizer uses policy or procedure to ensure individuals involved in the renewal decision are free from conflicts of interest.				
	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Exemplary	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0-1	2-3	4	
Evaluator Comments: <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Advanced Criteria	Strengths	Areas of Growth
<u>Expansion and Replication</u> The authorizer evaluates the prior performance of existing schools and the organization's capacity to grow in making expansion or replication decisions.		

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing: Authorizer Evaluation Rubric

Standard 15. Closure. In the event of school closure, either at the conclusion of the charter term or during the charter term, the authorizer oversees and ensures the school governing board and leadership carry out a detailed closure protocol that includes the provisions outlined in the charter contract, such as ensuring timely notification to parents; orderly transition of students and student records to new schools; and disposition of school funds, property, and assets in accordance with law, rule and contract terms.

Evaluation Criteria	Documentation Review	Authorizer Debrief	School Survey	Met Criteria? (Y/N)
The authorizer has a written policy for termination procedures that ensures timely notification to parents, orderly transition of students and student records to new schools, disposition of school funds, property, and assets in accordance with law and effectively implements policy in the event of a school closure.				
	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Exemplary	Rating
Number of Criteria Met:	0	1		
Evaluator Comments:				
Advanced Criteria	Strengths		Areas of Growth	
The authorizer has a plan that establishes clear roles and responsibilities with required steps for the orderly closure of a school. The authorizer provides support for transition of students to other schools.				

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: Relevant Documents Table

Relevant Documents Table

Authorizer Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year Established as Authorizer • Year first school opened • Authorizer Fee • Number of FTE staff • Number of Schools in Portfolio • Number of Schools Opening Next Year (if known) • Number of Students served by schools in portfolio • Percent of District/City/State (as applicable) Public Student Population • Portfolio demographic information: % economically disadvantaged, SpEd, Els • Link to list of current charter schools on authorizer's website – breakdown of number of schools managed by a CMO, EMO, virtual schools. Also include school type i.e., dropout recovery/Montessori/etc.
I. Authorizer Commitment & Capacity	Relevant Documents
1. Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter authorizer organizational chart to include currently filled and vacant positions and related job descriptions • Resumes or bios of all charter authorizer staff and related contractors
2. Financial Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorizer annual budget or documentation, with detailed line items indicating revenues and expenditures • Link to website where allotments sheets are published
II. The Petition Process	Relevant Documents
3. Petition Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the petition application for new schools • Documentation of the petition process, timeline, and directions • Link to petition liaison contact information on website • Link to application and application guidance on authorizer website
4. Petition Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bios/resumes of all individuals participating in the interview panel for the last 3 years • Written conflict of interest policy and signed affidavits by all interview panel participants • Description of petition review process to include related timelines and terms for granting interviews • Petition evaluation rubric • Interview schedule for the last 3 years including panel assigned to each interview • Link to where petition evaluation rubric can be found on authorizer's website
4. Petition Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of schools and petition decisions for the last 3 years (including one approval and one denial if available) • Copies of petition cycle recommendations from the last three application cycles • Copies of feedback provided to denied petitioners from the most recent application cycle • Petition scoring documents, comments and/or completed checklists • Copy of a recommendation email sent to petitioner

Table continued on next page

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: Relevant Documents Table

III. Performance Contracting	Relevant Documents
6. Pre-Opening Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A document outlining pre-opening obligations
7. Performance Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of executed charter school contracts and/or performance frameworks with related information highlighted • Link to where contracts and performance framework results can be found on authorizer website • Documentation of data sources and calculation method for each measure used to assess school performance
8. Contract Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of executed charter school contracts with related information highlighted
9. Authorizer Obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of executed charter school contracts with related information highlighted • List of unused district facilities • Copies of related contracts or agreements between the school and authorizer
IV. Oversight & Evaluation	Relevant Documents
10. Compliance Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of oversight and evaluation process • Link to where oversight and evaluation process can be found on authorizer's website • Documentation of process and timeline for conducting school visits • Link to where annual school performance reports can be found on authorizer's website
11. Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of a school site visit report • Copy of a school's corrective action plan in response to site visit report • Copy of a breach of contract or noncompliance communication to a school • List of current interventions – name of school, intervention start date, reason & status
12. Upholds Charter School Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written narrative or documentation of authorizer's process for data collections, compliance requirement review, and dealing with charter school complaints. • Written any agreement between two or more parties of the charter contract that is not the charter contract
V. Renewal and Termination	Relevant Documents
13. Renewal Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of charter school contracts with relevant information highlighted • Copy of the renewal application • Written documentation of the renewal process and timeline • Link to where renewal information can be found on authorizer's website
14. Renewal Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of renewal recommendations from the last 3 renewal cycles (including one renewal and one nonrenewal if available) • Copy of a communication sent to school with recommendation accompanying • Meeting minutes for renewal decisions and interviews • Conflict of interest (COI) policy and related signed COI forms from panelists
15. Closure/Termination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation outlining the authorizer's termination procedures, closure process and timeline • Any documentation required by the authorizer's termination policy (i.e. inventory sheets, final financial statements, directory of record information, etc.) • Copy of closure communication to parents • List of closures in the past 5 years including reason for closure

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: Authorizer Survey

Authorizer Survey ⁶

1. Describe your main goal(s) as an authorizing office over the next 1 – 3 years.
2. Describe your office’s progress toward the above goals, including what has helped you achieve your goals and/or have been barriers to your success.
3. How would you describe the performance of your schools?
4. As an authorizer, what are you doing well and how do you know?
5. As an authorizer, what are your greatest needs for improvement and how do you know?
6. What is the most difficult decision you have made as an authorizer? How did you feel about the outcome?
7. Do scarce financial and/or organizational resources impact your ability to do your job? If so, how?

Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Our application decision-making process is strong.					
We only grant charters to applicants who demonstrate a strong capacity to establish and operate a quality charter school.					
Our charter contract includes measurable goals for academic, organizational, and financial performance.					
We consistently monitor schools’ academic, organization, and financial performance.					
We utilize established intervention policies to communicate unsatisfactory performance to schools when appropriate.					
Renewal and revocation decisions are made based on evaluation of the school’s performance.					
We utilize authorizing tools in decision-making but understand that such tools assist – not dictate – decisions.					
The authorizing decision-making body supports staff recommendations regarding the approval, renewal, and revocation of charters.					
We respect the autonomy to which our schools are entitled and areas for individual school autonomy are reflected in the charter contract.					
We encourage the expansion of high-quality schools.					

⁶ The authorizer survey is included in the evaluation as an advanced practice and will not influence the overall ratings of the authorizer. Should the authorizer select this advanced practice, evaluators will use the results to inform the presentation and discussion of evaluation findings with the decision-making body.

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: School Survey

School Survey

School Name:

Date:

Authorizer Name:

Number of Years authorized by Authorizer:

Current Charter Contract End Date:

Authorizer Commitment and Capacity.	
My charter authorizing office has an adequate number of staff with relevant experience to carry out its duties.	Agree Disagree
I can readily find or have access to the calculation of earned funding for my school.	Agree Disagree
I believe my authorizer responsibly uses funds earned from its administrative withhold to provide relevant and adequate services to my school.	Agree Disagree
Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.	
Petition Process. ALL PARTIES THAT SUBMITTED AN APPLICATION IN THE MOST RECENT PETITION CYCLE WILL BE ASKED TO RESPOND TO THE QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION.	
Petition materials were posted on my authorizer's website in an easy to find location.	Agree Disagree
Times and locations for petition submission were clearly stated, accessible and convenient.	Agree Disagree
Staff were available to provide technical assistance	Agree Disagree
I was provided access to petition evaluation rubrics and had a sufficient understanding of what was required to have my application approved.	Agree Disagree
My application recommendation was shared with me at least one week prior to the authorizing board's meeting and within 90 days of receiving the application.	Agree Disagree
I believe the petition process was free from conflicts of interest.	Agree Disagree
Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.	

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: School Survey

Performance Contracting	
<p>ONLY SCHOOLS IN THEIR PRE-OPENING OR FIRST YEAR OF OPERATIONS ARE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION. OTHERWISE PLEASE LEAVE BLANK.</p> <p>Pre-opening expectations were clearly outlined to include timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties and establish criteria which may trigger a deferred opening.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>THIS QUESTION ONLY APPLIES TO SCHOOLS AUTHORIZED BY A LOCAL DISTRICT. IF YOU ARE A STATE CHARTER SCHOOLS, PLEASE LEAVE THIS QUESTION BLANK.</p> <p>I can readily find or have access to a list of my authorizer's unused facilities.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>The performance targets, thresholds or goals for my school are clearly defined within the charter contract and allow for annual evaluation.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>The academic performance standards in my charter contract include both student achievement and student progress measures.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>If changes, beyond what is captured in state law, occur to the performance expectations of my school, I am adequately notified through agreement via a charter contract amendment or I am given at least one year's notice before the change goes into effect.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>My authorizer has provided my school equitable per-pupil funding as prescribed under the law.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.</p>	
Oversight and Evaluation	
<p>My authorizer does not interfere with my school's autonomy in school governance, instructional program implementation, personnel, or budgeting.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>The process my authorizer uses to evaluate my school's performance is clearly documented and aligns with the academic, financial and operational goals as outlined in my charter contract.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>My authorizer has/will conduct at least one compliance site visit during my school's current charter term and the expectations and processes related to that site visit are clearly documented.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>Following each compliance site visit my authorizer provided a written notification that included information collected during the site visit and a summary of findings that are tied directly to applicable law or contract requirements</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>I can readily find on my authorizer's website my school's performance results based on evaluation measures included in the performance contracts.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>My authorizer notifies me of any contract breaches in a timely manner and I am provided a reasonable amount of time to remedy any identified areas of noncompliance.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Disagree</p>
<p>Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.</p>	

Georgia Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing Evaluation: School Survey

Renewal and Termination	
The criteria and process for charter renewal are published in a publicly accessible location and include a written application and interview opportunity.	Agree Disagree
The criteria in which my school will be evaluated on to determine renewal are clear and align with the performance expectations as outlined in the charter contract.	Agree Disagree
My authorizer assesses my school's performance over the course of the charter term. Multiple years of data are evaluated when reviewing my school's performance for renewal purposes.	Agree Disagree
ONLY SCHOOLS THAT HAVE GONE THROUGH THE RENEWAL PROCESS ARE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION. OTHERWISE PLEASE LEAVE BLANK. I believe the renewal process was free from conflicts of interest.	Agree Disagree
ONLY SCHOOLS THAT HAVE GONE THROUGH THE RENEWAL PROCESS ARE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION. OTHERWISE PLEASE LEAVE BLANK. My authorizer provided my school's renewal/nonrenewal recommendation via written notification to the school's governing board within a reasonable timeframe, following the availability of necessary data.	Agree Disagree
ONLY SCHOOLS THAT HAVE GONE THROUGH THE RENEWAL PROCESS ARE TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION. OTHERWISE PLEASE LEAVE BLANK. A detailed, objective and evidence-based explanation for the decision was included in the recommendation provided by my authorizer.	Agree Disagree
Please use the space below to provide additional information related to your answers to the above questions.	
Please use the space below to provide any additional information you think we should know about your charter authorizer that was not covered in the above questions.	

NOTE: The evaluation team may reach out to the school and request further information or supporting documentation related to any responses provided in the survey.

MISSOURI SPONSOR EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

CERTIFICATIONS

Please review and certify that the statements below are accurate by placing an “X” in the column indicated. If a certification is not applicable (i.e. in the instance a sponsor has not received a charter school application since its last evaluation), please write “N/A” and explain the reason in the “Note” column. If any statement is not accurate, please leave the second column blank and explain why the statement is not accurate in the “Notes” column. These certifications cover the time period since the sponsor’s last evaluation (the “Review Period”). The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the “Department” or “DESE”) reserves the right to request documentation, as needed, to substantiate the certifications.

The sponsor certifies and attests to the following:

Standard	Certify (“X”) or N/A	Notes
Sponsor Commitment and Capacity		
1A. All sponsorship staff and members of the sponsor’s decision-making body understand and are committed to supporting and advancing the purposes of Missouri’s charter school law and quality sponsorship practices.	Select	
1B. The sponsor is eligible to sponsor charter schools in accordance with section 160.400.2-5, RSMo.	Select	
1D. The sponsor provides or provides access to professional development opportunities for staff to achieve and maintain high standards of professional sponsoring practice and to promote continuous improvement.	Select	
1E. The sponsor has records showing that all individuals conducting sponsorship work who have contact with students have completed a criminal background check and Missouri’s Family Care Safety Registry (FCSR) check in accordance with section 168.133.1, RSMo.	Select	
1F. All sponsorship staff and members of the sponsor’s decision-making body comply with the charter school office’s or the sponsor’s conflict of interest policy with respect to the charter schools it sponsors.	Select	
1G. The sponsor regularly evaluates its work against Missouri’s charter school law and these standards, and develops and implements timely plans for improvement when it falls short.	Select	
Application Process and Decision-Making		
2A. Regarding any application received during the Review Period, the sponsor’s decision to approve or deny a charter is made within ninety (90) days of the filing of the	Select	

proposed charter, in accordance with section 160.405.2(2), RSMo.		
2A. Regarding any application received during the Review Period, the sponsor does not collect or impose a fee of any type for the consideration of a charter application and does not condition its consideration on the promise of future payment of any kind, in accordance with section 160.400.6, RSMo.	Select	
2I. Regarding any application received during the Review Period, the sponsor advises the charter applicant of the meaning of local education agency (LEA) status as it concerns the operation of the charter school as outlined in section 160.415.4, RSMo.	Select	
Charter Contract		
3D. To the extent the sponsor, outside of the charter school office, is providing any fee-based services to its charter schools, the sponsor clearly states, in writing, in the charter contract or elsewhere, that such services are not nor ever will be a condition of sponsorship.	Select	
Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation		
4L. The sponsor regularly communicates relevant professional development or training opportunities to charter board members.	Select	
Fiscal Oversight		
5A. The sponsor collects and reviews the annual financial audits of charter schools, conducted by qualified independent auditors as outlined in section 160.405.4(4), RSMo, and verifies that the annual audit summaries are published as outlined in section 165.121.5, RSMo.	Select	
5C. The sponsor confirms that the charter school's governing board has adopted adequate financial controls, including procedures for the charter board to review the monthly check register; the level of expenditure that necessitates board review and/or a board representative's signature on a financial check; and the establishment of a bank account, controlled by the charter board, in which all funds are deposited.	Select	
5F. The sponsor cooperates with the Department in its monitoring of charter schools' fiscal management of federal grant programs and considers any findings by the Department with respect to said fiscal management in the sponsor's decision-making.	Select	
5G. The sponsor ensures that each charter school submits the Annual Secretary of the Board Report (ASBR) and an	Select	

annual independent financial audit to the Department in the time frame outlined by Missouri statute, and verifies that no conflict of interest exists between the financial auditor and the person(s) who prepared the ASBR.		
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SPONSOR: _____

By: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

MISSOURI DRAFT SPONSOR EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

DOCUMENT SUBMISSIONS

To evaluate each sponsor on the sponsorship standards, the Department requires certain documentation. To reduce duplication of information previously received by the Department or available via the sponsor's website, the Department has indicated what information "it needs" from the sponsor below.

Please review the chart below and provide the documentation noted under "DESE Needs." Please note that certain documentation is only required "as applicable" – these items, shaded in green, should only be submitted if applicable to the sponsor for the Review Period. Please also note that certain submissions apply to more than one section but are only listed once.

When sample documents are requested (e.g., school performance reports, charter contracts, notices to schools), please provide two samples or recent examples. If two are not available (i.e., because you only received one charter application in the last three years), please state the corresponding reason in the notes section.

Please place an "X" in the third column to indicate the documents submitted and use the "Notes" column to provide any helpful context. To the extent any requested submissions are "not applicable," please place an "N/A" in the third column and explain the corresponding reason in the "Notes" column.

Section 1: Sponsor Commitment and Capacity			
Required Submissions	DESE Needs ("X")	Submitted ("X") or N/A	Notes
Organizational chart	Select	Select	
Staff roster with names and hiring date(s)	Select	Select	
Staff job descriptions and biographies	Select	Select	
<i>Submit as Applicable</i>			
<i>Contractor biographies or résumés and general description of duties</i>	Select	Select	

Section 2: Application Process and Decision-Making			
Required Submissions	DESE Needs	Submitted ("X") or N/A	Notes
Charter school application form and any corresponding guidance provided to applicants	Select	Select	
Charter school application evaluation criteria	Select	Select	
If NOT included above, existing operator addendum and corresponding evaluation criteria	Select	Select	
If NOT included above, ESP addendum	Select	Select	
<i>For sponsors that have received and reviewed applications during the Review Period:</i>			
<i>Evaluator training materials</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Résumés of application evaluators</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Completed application evaluation forms</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Applicant interview questions (template or recent examples)</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Notes or report from applicant interviews</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Recommendation reports or presentations to the sponsor's decision-making body regarding approval or denial of charter applications</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Notice letters to approved or denied applicants</i>	Select	Select	
Section 3: Charter Contract			
Required Submissions	DESE Needs	Submitted ("X") or N/A	Notes
Executed charter contracts	Select	Select	
Performance expectations (academic, financial, and organizational), if such expectations are not directly incorporated into the charter contract	Select	Select	

Section 4: Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation			
Required Submissions	DESE Needs	Submitted ("X") or N/A	Notes
Monitoring System protocol or other monitoring guidance documents	Select	Select	
Charter school submission schedule or monitoring calendar	Select	Select	
Charter school formal site visit schedules	Select	Select	
Communications to charter schools prior to a formal site visit	Select	Select	
Formal site visit reports or communication to schools post-formal site visit	Select	Select	
Completed monitoring reviews covering compliance with state and federal public education requirements regarding school operations (as further defined in Standards 4G & 4H in the Framework below)	Select	Select	
Completed monitoring reviews covering enrollment and admission practices	Select	Select	
Completed monitoring reviews covering charter school board governance	Select	Select	
Notices of contract violation, performance deficiency, or mandated intervention	Select	Select	
<i>If the Monitoring System protocol does NOT address, please also include guidance provided to schools on:</i>			
<i>Site visits</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Intervention</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Compliance with state and federal public education requirements regarding school operations</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Enrollment and admission practices</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Charter school board oversight</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Financial performance monitoring</i>	Select	Select	

Submit as Applicable			
<i>Notices of noncompliance in the following areas: enrollment and admissions, charter school board governance, and noncompliance with state or federal public education requirements regarding school operations</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Correspondence to schools based on the Department's identification of area(s) of noncompliance regarding state and federal requirements and guidelines for serving all students</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Follow-up communications to charter schools regarding status of contract violation, performance deficiency, or mandated intervention</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Communications between sponsor and charter school's board and leadership regarding sponsor's annual report</i>	Select	Select	
Section 5: Fiscal Oversight			
Required Submissions	DESE Needs	Submitted ("X") or N/A	Notes
Documentation evidencing sponsor tracking of school financial performance	Select	Select	
Submit as Applicable			
<i>List of schools identified as "financially stressed" during the Review Period</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Notices to schools identified as financially stressed</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Monitoring reports and communications with schools identified as financially stressed</i>	Select	Select	

Section 6: Renewal, Replication, Expansion, Revocation, and Closure Decision-Making			
Required Submissions	DESE Needs	Submitted ("X") or N/A	Notes
Renewal policy and process materials (for both regular and expedited processes) provided to charter schools	Select	Select	
Replication and expansion policy and process materials (for both regular and expedited processes) provided to charter schools	Select	Select	
Revocation policy and process materials provided to charter schools	Select	Select	
Closure policy and process materials provided to charter schools	Select	Select	
List of schools identified as "high-quality charter schools" (if any) during the Review Period	Select	Select	
For sponsors that have renewed or nonrenewed any charter schools during the Review Period			
List of any renewal decisions during the Review Period	Select	Select	
List of any charter schools that qualified for expedited renewal during the Review Period	Select	Select	
Charter school cumulative performance reports	Select	Select	
Sponsor renewal recommendation reports	Select	Select	
Renewal/nonrenewal notices to charter schools	Select	Select	
For sponsors that have considered replication or expansion requests during the Review Period			
List of any replication and expansion decisions during the Review Period	Select	Select	
Replication and expansion recommendations	Select	Select	
For sponsors that have revoked any charter schools during the Review Period			
List of any revocation decisions during the Review Period	Select	Select	

<i>Notices of revocation</i>	Select	Select	
<i>For sponsors that have closed charter schools during the Review Period</i>			
<i>List of any closures during the Review Period</i>	Select	Select	
<i>Completed closure tracking documents or checklists</i>	Select	Select	

MISSOURI DRAFT SPONSOR EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The Department will use the framework below to evaluate sponsors on the identified sponsorship standards. The framework includes a description of the standard; applicable statutory references; the evaluation criteria the Department will use to determine a rating; and the documentation the Department will review, as applicable.

Section 1: Sponsor Commitment and Capacity

Standard 1C: Sponsor Staffing and Expertise		Applicable Statute: N/A
The sponsor employs, contracts for, or otherwise provides personnel at a staffing level appropriate and sufficient to carry out its sponsorship duties, which require expertise that includes, but is not limited to, education leadership, curriculum, instruction, assessment, special education, federal programs, performance accountability, data analysis, law, finance, and nonprofit governance.		
Evaluative Criteria		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor maintains adequate staffing over the course of the evaluation period to fulfill its sponsorship responsibilities. Each staff member has a clear job description, which includes the employee's title, duties, responsibilities, and reporting structure. Sponsorship staff and contractors (if applicable) collectively have expertise and experience in education leadership, curriculum, instruction, assessment, special education, federal programs, performance accountability, data analysis, law, finance, and nonprofit governance. 		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational chart Staff roster with names and hiring date(s) Staff job descriptions and biographies Contractor biographies or résumés and general description of duties (if applicable) 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standards 1H and 1I: Sponsor Annual Report to Joint Committee on Education		Applicable Statute: 160.400.11-12, RSMo
<p>The sponsor provides an annual report to the joint committee on education that includes sufficient data and information to demonstrate that the sponsor is in material compliance with applicable sections of Missouri's charter school law.</p> <p>As part of this annual report, the sponsor submits, on the form provided by the Department, documentation showing that ninety percent (90%) of state funds expended during said fiscal year, are expended for sponsoring in support of the sponsor's charter school sponsorship program or as a direct investment in the sponsored charter schools.</p>		
Evaluative Criteria		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor submits an annual report to the joint committee on education demonstrating compliance with Missouri's charter school law. • Sponsor expends, for all applicable years, 90% of state funds in support of the sponsor's sponsorship program or as a direct investment in sponsored charter schools. 		
Documentation		
N/A, DESE has copies of said annual reports		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Section 2: Application Process and Decision-Making

Standard 2B: Charter School Application and Criteria	Applicable Statutes: 160.405.1(1)-(17) and 160.405.2(5), RSMo
The sponsor develops and makes readily available a charter application that includes comprehensive questions to elicit the information needed for a rigorous evaluation of the applicant's plans and capacity; clearly articulates any chartering priorities, including the priority to serve high-risk students; and includes clear criteria for the evaluation of applications.	
Evaluative Criteria	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sponsor's charter application requires applicants to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A mission and vision statement for the charter school; ○ A description of the charter school's organizational structure and bylaws of the governing body; ○ A financial plan for the first three (3) years of operation of the charter school including provisions for annual audits; ○ A description of the charter school's policy for securing personnel services, its personnel policies, personnel qualifications, and professional development plan; ○ A description of the grades or ages of students being served; ○ The charter school's calendar of operation, which includes at least the equivalent of a full school term; ○ A description of the charter school's educational program and curriculum; ○ A description of the charter school's pupil performance standards and academic program performance standards, which must enable each pupil to achieve such standards and contain a complete set of indicators, measures, metrics, and targets for academic program performance, including specific goals on graduation rates, and standardized test performance and academic growth; ○ Procedures, consistent with the Missouri financial accounting manual, for monitoring the financial accountability of the charter; ○ Preopening requirements so that new charter schools meet all health, safety, and other legal requirements prior to opening; ○ A description of the charter school's policies on student discipline and student admission, which includes a statement, where applicable, of the validity of attendance of students who do not reside in the district but who may be eligible to attend under the terms of judicial settlements and procedures that ensure admission of students with disabilities in a nondiscriminatory manner; ○ A description of the charter school's grievance procedure for parents or guardians; and ○ A description of the special education and related services that are available to meet the needs of students with disabilities. • The sponsor's charter school application is made available to the public on its website. • The sponsor gives priority to charter school applicants that propose a school oriented to high-risk students and to the re-entry of dropouts into the school system. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sponsor makes public clear application evaluation criteria that are used to judge the charter application, including the priority given to certain charter school applicants. 		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charter school application form and any corresponding guidance provided to applicants Charter school application evaluation criteria 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standards 2C and 2D: Existing Operator Applicants		Applicable Statute: 160.415.7, RSMo
<p>The sponsor differentiates or supplements application requirements and corresponding evaluation criteria for applicants and proposed education service providers (ESPs) (that intend to contract with applicants for substantial educational or charter school management services), that currently oversee or manage charter schools in Missouri or other states (“existing operators”). The sponsor’s application requires existing charter school operators provide specific information about their prior track record and performance.</p>		
Evaluative Criteria		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor’s charter school application form or addendum requires existing operators to submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific information about the existing operator’s prior academic achievement, particularly if the applicant has operated or is operating charter schools in Missouri; Information about the operator’s successful management of nonacademic school functions, including financial and organizational performance; An explanation of any never-opened, terminated, or nonrenewed charter schools within the last five (5) years; A description of the existing operator’s proposed growth plan; and The existing operator’s most recent financial audit. Sponsor has developed corresponding evaluation criteria for existing operators to ensure that the operator’s overall track record is factored into sponsor’s decision-making. 		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charter school application form or existing operator addendum Corresponding evaluation criteria 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standard 2E: Third-Party Educational Service Providers		Applicable Statute 160.415.7, RSMo
For applicants that intend to contract with an ESP for substantial educational or charter school management services, the sponsor ensures that the application requires a draft of the proposed management services agreement, which includes the items listed below, and a disclosure of existing or potential conflicts of interest.		
Evaluative Criteria		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sponsor's charter school application form or addendum requires applicants that intend to contract with an ESP for substantial educational or charter school management services to submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A draft contract or management services agreement that clearly identifies the roles of the charter school board; staff and ESP; the scope of services to be provided; the measures by which the ESP will be evaluated; the compensation structure, including all fees to be paid to the ESP; financial controls; methods of contract oversight and enforcement; and conditions for contract renewal and termination; and ○ A disclosure and explanation of any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the charter school governing board and proposed ESP or any affiliated business entities. 		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter school application form or ESP addendum 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standards 2F and 2G: Application Evaluation – Evaluators, Training, and Norming		Applicable Statute: N/A		
Applies only to sponsors that have received charter applications during the Review Period.				
The sponsor engages teams of qualified application evaluators with relevant educational, organizational (governance and management), financial, and legal expertise to review and evaluate the charter application according to the established evaluation criteria and provides orientation or training to application evaluators to ensure consistency in the application of the approval criteria.				
Evaluative Criteria				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sponsor engages teams of qualified application evaluators with relevant expertise and experience in the following areas: education, organizational leadership and operations (governance and management), finance, and legal.• The sponsor provides training or orientation to application evaluators.• The sponsor uses both training and clear evaluation criteria to ensure rigor and consistency across application evaluations in the analysis of new charter school applications.• The sponsor’s application evaluations demonstrate rigorous and consistent application of the approval criteria.				
Documentation				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluator training materials• Resumes of application evaluators• Completed application evaluation forms				
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	PARTIALLY MEETS: Sponsor meets some but not all the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria	NOT APPLICABLE

Standard 2H: Applicant Capacity Interview		Applicable Statute: N/A	
<i>Applies only to sponsors that have received charter applications during the Review Period.</i>			
The sponsor conducts an in-person capacity interview with each qualified applicant to examine the applicant’s experience and capacity, and conduct due diligence to examine the applicant’s experience, capacity, and track record of performance.			
Evaluative Criteria			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sponsor conducts in-person capacity interviews with each qualified applicant.• Sponsor uses the interview to examine the applicant’s experience and capacity.• Sponsor conducts due diligence to examine each applicant’s experience, capacity, and track record of performance.• Sponsor incorporates information from the capacity interview into its decision-making.			
Documentation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant interview questions (template or recent examples)• Notes or reports from an applicant interview			
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria	NOT APPLICABLE

Standards 2J, 2K, and 2L: Application Decision-Making and Notice to Charter School and Department		Applicable Statutes: 160.400.11(2) and 160.405.2-.3, RSMo		
Applies only to sponsors that have received charter applications during the Review Period.				
The sponsor grants charters only to applicants that have demonstrated competence and capacity to succeed in all aspects of the charter school, with consideration to any available information about schools previously operated in Missouri, if applicable, and consistent with the published application evaluation criteria.				
The sponsor promptly notifies applicants of approval or denial and, if the charter is denied, notifies the applicant in writing explaining the factors that determined the decision. In addition, the sponsor submits an electronic copy of each approved charter, accompanied by a statement finding that the application meets the statutory requirements and the monitoring plan under which the sponsor will evaluate the academic performance of the charter school, to the Department for review by November 10th of the year prior to the proposed opening date.				
Evaluative Criteria				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sponsor grants charters only to those applicants that have demonstrated competence and strong capacity for establishing and operating a quality charter school.• In deciding whether to grant a charter, the sponsor considers any available performance information about applicants that currently or previously operated schools in Missouri or elsewhere in the United States.• The sponsor promptly notifies each applicant in writing about the sponsor’s decision, providing a clear explanation of the factors that contributed to the decision.• The sponsor submits to the Department an electronic copy of each approved application along with a statement indicating that the application meets the statutory requirements, and the sponsor’s plan for evaluating the academic performance of the charter school by November 10th of the calendar year prior to the proposed opening date.				
Documentation				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed application evaluation forms and corresponding recommendation reports or presentations to the sponsor’s decision-making body regarding approval or denial of charter applications• Notice letters to approved or denied applicants				
Note: DESE will also review the correspondence provided to the Department regarding said decisions.				
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	PARTIALLY MEETS: Sponsor meets some but not all the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria	NOT APPLICABLE

Section 3: Charter Contract

Standards 3A and 3C: Contract General Provisions	Applicable Statutes: 160.400.16 and 160.405.1-.14, RSMo
<p>The sponsor executes a charter contract with each charter school that articulates the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding: school autonomy, funding, administration and oversight, outcomes, the measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences, and other material terms.</p> <p>If a charter school contracts with an ESP for substantial educational or school management services, the sponsor ensures that the charter contract clearly establishes the primacy of the charter contract over the management services contract.</p>	
Evaluative Criteria	
<p>The charter contract must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be executed with a Missouri nonprofit corporation for an initial term of five years; • State the autonomies to which charter schools are entitled, based on statute, waiver, or sponsor policy, including those relating to the school's authority over educational programming, staffing, budgeting, and scheduling; • Articulate pre-opening requirements to ensure that the charter school meets all health, safety, and other legal requirements prior to opening; • State the responsibility and commitment of the charter school to adhere to essential public-education obligations, including admitting and serving all eligible students so long as space is available, and not expelling or counseling out students except pursuant to a legal discipline policy approved by the sponsor; • Outline the performance deficiencies that mandate intervention, including a graduation rate lower than 70 percent in three of the last four years, annual performance reports lower than the resident district, or identification as a persistently lowest achieving school by the Department; • Describe the process for placing a charter school on probationary status (for no more than twenty-four (24) months) for breach of contract or for failure to meet performance expectations, adhere to generally accepted standards of fiscal management, or comply with provisions of the charter. A charter school may only be placed on probation once during the current term of the charter; • Outline the conditions that may lead to revocation, including underperformance in the annual performance report for three of the last four years or a violation of the law or public trust that imperils students or public funds, and the sponsor's corresponding revocation process; • Articulate the sponsor's charter school amendment policy and process, including the types of material modifications that require sponsor approval and the requirement for sponsors to submit any such amendments to the Department within thirty (30) days for approval; 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate the sponsor's charter school closure procedures, including the requirement that unobligated assets of the charter school be returned to the Department for distribution; • Articulate that the charter school board members are subject to the same liability for acts while in office as if they were local public school district board members and that the charter school board may participate in the Missouri public entity risk management fund; • Articulate that the charter school must maintain a surety bond in an amount determined by the sponsor based on the cash flow of the school or an insurance policy covering all employees in the amount of \$500,000 or more that provides coverage in the event of employee theft; and • Articulate that the contract between the sponsor and the charter school is primary to any contracts for services that the charter school may execute, and that all requirements and compliance remain the responsibility of the entity that holds the charter regardless of third-party service contracts. 		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executed charter contracts 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standard 3B: Performance Expectations		Applicable Statutes: 160.405.4 and 160.405.9(2), RSMo
The sponsor includes in the charter contract or incorporates by reference clearly defined performance expectations for the term of the contract, the sources of data to evaluate charter school performance against these expectations, and the targets that the charter school must meet to earn renewal.		
Evaluative Criteria		
<p>The charter contract must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate pupil academic performance expectations and corresponding sources of data for all students and significant student subgroups within the charter school. Such expectations must include a requirement that the charter school's results on its annual performance report meet or exceed the district in which the charter school is located, for the applicable grade level and for three out of the last four years; • Articulate financial performance expectations and corresponding sources of data, which measure both near-term and long-term financial health, including, but not limited to, requirements that charter schools do not have a negative operating fund balance, a combined fund balance of less than three percent of the funds expended during the previous fiscal year, and expenditures that exceed receipts for the most recently completed fiscal year; • Articulate organizational performance expectations and corresponding sources of data, including, but not limited to, compliance with all governance-related laws, the fulfillment of all state and federal requirements regarding fair and appropriate service to students with disabilities and the maintenance of a safe and operationally sound facility; and • Articulate the academic, financial, and organizational performance expectations that form the basis for renewal of the charter school. 		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executed charter contracts • Performance expectations, if such expectations are not directly incorporated into the charter contract 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Section 4: Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation

Standards 4A and 4B: Performance Accountability and Compliance Monitoring System		Applicable Statute: N/A	
The sponsor implements a comprehensive performance accountability and compliance monitoring system (the “Monitoring System”) that meets the following criteria and defines and communicates this Monitoring System to charter schools, including the process, methods, and timing of gathering and reporting charter school performance and compliance data.			
Evaluative Criteria			
The Monitoring System: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is clearly defined in the charter contract;• Provides the sponsor with the information necessary to make thorough and evidence-based intervention, probation, renewal, nonrenewal, and revocation decisions;• Protects student and public interests while preserving charter school autonomy and minimizing charter school reporting burdens and redundancies; and• Is communicated clearly to charter schools, including the annual process, methods, and timing of gathering and reporting performance and compliance data.			
Documentation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executed charter contracts• Monitoring System protocol or other related guidance materials• Charter school submission schedule or monitoring calendar			
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	PARTIALLY MEETS: Sponsor meets some but not all the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standard 4C: Charter School Site Visits		Applicable Statute: N/A	
The sponsor visits each charter school as appropriate and necessary for collecting data that cannot otherwise be obtained and in accordance with the contract, while ensuring that the frequency, purposes, and methods of such visits respect charter school autonomy and avoid operational interference.			
Evaluative Criteria			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sponsor informs charter schools about how often (e.g., mid-term, annually, prior to renewal, etc.) and when it can expect a formal site visit, understanding that the sponsor may also conduct informal site visits.• In advance of formal site visits, the sponsor communicates the purpose and objectives of the visit to the charter school.• The sponsor differentiates its formal site visits based on criteria such as the charter school’s size, point in charter life cycle (e.g., pre-opening, mid-term, renewal, etc.), and/or record of academic, organizational, and financial performance (e.g., intervention status, high-performer, etc.).• The frequency, purpose, and methods of site visits respect charter school autonomy (e.g., avoid critiquing inputs to the academic model).• After formal site visits, the sponsor sends a written report or communication, as promptly as capacity allows, to the charter school to clarify the school’s status and encourage communication on any latent or ongoing issues.• Site visit reports and communications are objective and, as such, do not contain prescriptive technical assistance or directives that may infringe upon schools’ rightful autonomy.			
Documentation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring System protocol (if it covers site visits) or site visit protocol• Charter school formal site visit schedules• Communications to charter schools prior to a formal site visit• Formal site visit reports or communications to schools post-formal site visit			
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	PARTIALLY MEETS: Sponsor meets some but not all the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standard 4D: Communication and Intervention		Applicable Statute: 160.405.8(1)(a), RSMo	
The sponsor communicates regularly with charter schools, as needed, including both school leaders and governing boards, and provides timely notice of contract violations, performance deficiencies, and mandated interventions, including probationary status.			
Evaluative Criteria			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sponsor gives schools clear, adequate, evidence-based, and timely notice of contract violations, performance deficiencies, and mandated interventions.• After providing notice, the sponsor actively monitors charter school progress and enforces stated consequences to ensure such violations, deficiencies, and other performance issues are corrected; and, if such issues are not corrected, takes subsequent appropriate actions.			
Documentation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring System protocol or other guidance materials that cover intervention• Notices of contract violation, performance deficiency, or mandated intervention• Follow-up communications to charter schools regarding status of contract violation, performance deficiency, or mandated intervention			
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	PARTIALLY MEETS: Sponsor meets some but not all the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standard 4E: Charter Performance Annual Reports		Applicable Statute: 160.405.7, RSMo
The sponsor evaluates and publishes on the sponsor's website an annual performance report for each charter school, which includes an analysis of each charter school's performance and progress toward meeting the expectations and targets stated in the charter contract, including subgroup performance and essential compliance requirements, and clearly communicates evaluation results to the charter school's governing board and leadership.		
Evaluative Criteria		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sponsor reviews and evaluates each charter school's annual academic, financial, and organizational performance in comparison to the performance expectations set forth in the charter contract. Based on this review and evaluation, the sponsor publishes, on its website, an annual report for each charter school and communicates the results of this annual evaluation and corresponding report to the charter school's governing board and leadership. As part of this annual performance report, the sponsor also reviews the charter school's compliance with certain statutory requirements, including: (1) participation in the statewide system of assessments, (2) distribution of the Department-prepared annual report card, (3) collection of baseline data during the first three years of operation to determine the longitudinal success of the charter school, (4) a method to measure pupil progress toward the pupil standards adopted by the state board, and (5) publication of each charter's annual performance report. 		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications between sponsor and charter school's board and leadership, regarding sponsor's annual report <p>Note: DESE will also review the annual reports for each charter school available on the sponsor's website.</p>		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standard 4F: Charter School Autonomy		Applicable Statute: N/A
The sponsor refrains from directing charter school decisions or choices that are appropriately within a school's purview under the charter law or contract.		
Evaluative Criteria		
The sponsor does not direct charter school decisions or choices that are appropriately within a school's purview under the charter law or contract. Examples of such decisions typically include curricular programs, internal assessment systems, school schedule, general staffing (excepting special education and other specialized services), and other program components.		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executed charter contracts • Monitoring System protocol or other related guidance materials • Notices of contract violation, performance deficiency, or mandated intervention • Formal site visit reports or communication to schools post-formal site visit 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standards 4G & 4H: State and Federal Compliance Monitoring		Applicable Statutes: 160.261; 160.420; 160.518; 162.670; 162.710; 167.020; 167.115-117; 167.161; 167.164; 167.171; 168.133; and 171.031, RSMo
The sponsor monitors compliance with all state and federal requirements and guidelines regarding services to students, including, but not limited to, special education; all title programs; career and technical education; food service; and services for foster, homeless, immigrant, and English learner students. The sponsor also monitors compliance with specific state public education requirements applicable to charter schools, as outlined below.		
Evaluative Criteria		
<p>With regard to the provision of education and services to students with disabilities, including compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; all title programs; career and technical education; food service; services for foster, homeless, and immigrant students; service to English learner students; and student discipline, the sponsor ensures that its charter school(s) submit the required data and information to Department in a timely manner and, to the extent the Department identifies and communicates any related compliance issues to the sponsor, the sponsor ensures that its charter school(s) addresses and resolves such issue(s) in a timely manner.</p> <p>The sponsor monitors and ensures legal compliance with the following components of school operations: notification of criminal conduct to law enforcement authorities; the participation of all eligible students in the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP); the provision of the minimum amount of school time required; transmittal of charter school records to a requesting school official; for charter school employees and board members, timely completion of criminal history background checks and the family care safety registry checks; maintenance of policies consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines to the extent applicable; and certification of staff and participation in the appropriate employee retirement system.</p>		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring System protocol or other guidance materials that cover compliance with the state and federal public education requirements regarding school operations outlined in the second paragraph above Completed monitoring reviews regarding compliance with the state and federal public education requirements regarding school operations outlined in the second paragraph above. Notices of noncompliance to a school regarding the state and federal public education requirements regarding school operations outlined in the second paragraph above (if applicable) Correspondence to schools based on the Department's identification of area(s) of noncompliance (if applicable) 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standards 4I & 4J: Enrollment and Admission Practices		Applicable Statutes: 160.410.1-3 and 160.405.2(5), RSMo
The sponsor verifies that charter schools admit students through a nondiscriminatory process that grants admission to resident and nonresident students eligible to attend through an urban voluntary transfer program or from an unaccredited school district and monitors the admission process of any charter school where capacity is insufficient to enroll all students who submit a timely application, to ensure that the process complies with statute.		
Evaluative Criteria		
<p>The sponsor verifies that charter schools admit students who meet one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are residents of the district in which the school operates; • If the students are nonresidents, they must be eligible to attend under an urban voluntary transfer program or from an unaccredited school district; • In the case of a workplace charter school, any student whose parent is employed in the business district; and • In the case of a charter school whose mission includes student drop-out prevention or recovery, any nonresident students must be from the same or an adjacent county (where the school is located) and reside in a residential care facility, a transitional living group home, or an independent living program, and have last enrolled in a school in the same district where the charter school is located. <p>The sponsor verifies that enrollment procedures grant applicants an equal chance of admission, except for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools may establish a geographical area around the school whose residents will receive a preference for enrolling in the school, provided that such preferences do not result in the establishment of racially or socio-economically isolated schools and that preferences conform to any applicable Department policies; • Schools may give preference for admission to: children whose siblings attend the school or whose parents are employed at the school; in the case of a workplace charter school, children whose parent is employed in the business district; students receiving free and reduced lunch; and “high-risk students,” as defined in statute. <p>The sponsor verifies that schools do not limit admission based on race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, income level, English language proficiency, or athletic ability (the only permissible limitations are for age group, grade level, or gender, if the school is a single-gender school).</p>		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring System protocol or other guidance materials that cover enrollment and admission practices • Completed enrollment and admission monitoring reviews • Notices of noncompliance to a school that has not met expectations in this area (if applicable) 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standard 4K: Charter School Board Compliance		Applicable Statutes: 105.483-485; 105.492; 109.255; 160.400.15; 160.405.1(13); and 610.010-030, RSMo
The sponsor monitors the charter school board's compliance with various governance-related laws, including, but not limited to, those outlined in the criteria below.		
Evaluative Criteria		
<p>The sponsor ensures that the charter school board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducts its business in accordance with Missouri Sunshine Laws regarding records, votes, notices, closed meetings, electronic communication, and fee limitations; • Maintains conflict-of-interest policies and procedures to ensure that no member of the charter school's board holds any employment with the charter school nor has any substantial interest in any entity employed by or contracting with the board; • Maintains a policy to promptly address parent or guardian grievances; • Retains necessary board records as required by the general record retention schedule and the public school record retention schedule published by the Secretary of State; and • Submits the ethics commission's annual report in the appropriate form and substance, and according to the designated timeline. 		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring System protocol or other guidance materials that cover charter school board oversight • Completed governance compliance monitoring reviews • Notices of noncompliance to a school that has not met expectations in this area (if applicable) 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Section 5: Fiscal Oversight

Standards 5D and 5E: Financial Performance	Applicable Statutes: 160.405.8 and 160.417.2, RSMo
The sponsor evaluates each charter school's financial performance against the expectations and targets stated in the charter contract and follows detailed procedures to notify any schools identified as financially stressed, providing time for these schools to remedy the situation.	
Evaluative Criteria	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sponsor evaluates each charter school's financial performance against the expectations and targets stated in the charter contract through its established Monitoring System. • By October 1st (annually), the sponsor identifies any charter school that is "financially stressed," as defined by statute. • By November 1st (annually), the sponsor notifies the governing board of any charter school that is identified as "financially stressed." • The sponsor ensures that notices of "financially stressed" include the reason for the designation, the outcomes that the school must achieve to exit this designation, and a request for a budget and education plan from the charter school to resolve the school's financial issues. In addition, notices must include the steps that the sponsor may take, including revocation, if the charter does not appropriately remedy the financial stress by March 1st of the same school year. • Within forty-five (45) calendar days of said notice, the sponsor must receive and review the charter school's budget and education plan, which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assurances that adequate educational services to students of the charter school will continue uninterrupted for the remainder of the current school year while meeting the minimum amount of required school time; ○ Procedures the charter school will take to communicate the financial condition of the school to stakeholders; ○ Details about the actions that will be taken by the school, including deadlines and responsible individuals, to address its financial condition; and the ○ Outcomes that the charter school must achieve to exit the designation of financial distress. • The sponsor places "financially stressed" schools on probation, as appropriate, and no more than once within a 24-month period. 	
Documentation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sponsor's established financial performance expectations or financial performance framework • Guidance to charter schools regarding the sponsor's monitoring of school financial performance • Documentation evidencing tracking of school financial performance • List of schools identified as "financially stressed" during the Review Period (if applicable) • Notices to a school identified as financially stressed (if applicable) 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring reports and communications with schools identified as financially stressed (if applicable) 			
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	PARTIALLY MEETS: Sponsor meets some but not all the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Section 6: Renewal, Replication, Expansion, Revocation, and Closure Decision-Making

Standards 6A, 6B, 6C, 6D, and 6E: Renewal Process and Decision-Making	Applicable Statutes: 160.400.11(5) and 160.405.9(2)-(3), RSMo
<p>The sponsor bases the renewal process and renewal decisions on thorough analyses of a comprehensive body of objective evidence defined by the charter contract; provides each charter school, in advance of the renewal decision, a cumulative performance report; grants renewal to charter schools that have achieved the performance expectations in their charter contracts; and promptly notifies each school in writing about the sponsor's renewal or nonrenewal decision.</p> <p>To the extent the charter school qualifies for an expedited renewal process, the sponsor implements a streamlined renewal process, which decreases the burden on the charter school.</p>	
Evaluative Criteria	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the renewal process, the sponsor conducts a thorough analysis of a comprehensive body of objective evidence defined in the charter contract, including academic, operational, and financial performance measures. Prior to making a renewal decision, the sponsor provides each school with a cumulative performance report that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizes the school's performance record over the charter term in accordance with performance expectations in the charter contract; and States the sponsor's summative findings concerning charter school performance and the school's prospects for renewal. The sponsor grants renewal to charter schools that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve the performance expectations and reach corresponding targets stated in the charter contract; Are organizationally and fiscally viable; and Adhere to the terms of the contract and applicable laws. The sponsor promptly notifies each school in writing about the sponsor's renewal or nonrenewal decision, including an explanation of the reasons for the decision. The sponsor identifies schools for expedited renewal that have been classified as accredited for three of the last four years and that are fiscally viable. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For schools that qualify for expedited renewal, the sponsor establishes, publishes, and implements a streamlined renewal process that decreases the burden on the charter schools and the amount of time between submission of the renewal application and the sponsor's decision. Components of an expedited renewal process may include: fewer application requirements, a more targeted document request, or a shorter renewal site visit. 			
Documentation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewal policy and process materials (for both regular and expedited processes) provided to charter schools List of any renewal decisions during the Review Period (if applicable) List of schools that qualified for expedited renewal during the evaluation period (if applicable) Charter school cumulative performance reports (if applicable) Sponsor renewal recommendation reports (if applicable) Renewal and nonrenewal notices to schools (if applicable) 			
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	PARTIALLY MEETS: Sponsor meets some but not all the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standards 6F and 6G: Expedited Renewal, Expansion, and Replication		Applicable Statute: 160.408, RSMo	
The sponsor also provides “high-quality charter schools” with opportunities for expedited replication and expansion, and the sponsor bases decisions to approve additional charter school sites or to expand grade levels on thorough analyses of a comprehensive body of objective evidence defined by the charter contract.			
Evaluative Criteria			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sponsor establishes and implements a transparent process for schools to apply to replicate or expand, using clear criteria, including the “high-quality schools” designation as outlined in statute, to assess such applications.• The sponsor approves or denies replication or expansion applications based on a comprehensive body of objective evidence.• The sponsor identifies “high-quality charter schools” according to the definition provided in statute and provides these “high-quality charter schools” expedited processes for replication and expansion.• The sponsor’s decision to approve or deny an expedited replication or expansion request is made within sixty (60) days of the filing of the proposed charter.			
Documentation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replication and expansion policy and process materials (for both regular and expedited processes) provided to schools• List of any replication and expansion decisions during the Review Period (if applicable)• List of schools identified as “high-quality charter schools” during the Review Period and opportunities made available to them for expedited replication and expansion (if applicable)• Replication and expansion recommendations (if applicable)			
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	PARTIALLY MEETS: Sponsor meets some but not all the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standards 6H and 6I: Revocation		Applicable Statute: 160.405.8, RSMo	
The sponsor revokes a charter during the charter term if there is clear evidence of underperformance or violation of law or the public trust that imperils students or public funds; and, in the event of a revocation, the sponsor provides charter schools written notice and establishes clear procedures to conduct an administrative hearing regarding the potential revocation.			
Evaluative Criteria			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sponsor maintains and implements a policy to revoke a charter during the charter term if there is:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Clear evidence of underperformance as demonstrated in the charter school’s annual performance report in three of the last four school years; or○ A violation of the law or the public trust that imperils students or public funds.• The sponsor proactively communicates with the governing board of a charter school that is at risk of revocation regarding the status of the school and revokes a charter if the school has failed to successfully remediate documented performance gaps by the established deadline.• At least sixty (60) days before revoking a charter, the sponsor notifies the governing board of the charter school, in writing, of the proposed action and the grounds for such action.• The sponsor grants an administrative hearing to any charter school whose board requests an administrative hearing within two (2) weeks of receiving a revocation notice.• The sponsor has clear procedures for conducting an administrative hearing regarding the proposed charter revocation.• The sponsor ensures that contract terminations are effective at the conclusion of the school year, unless the sponsor determines that continued operation of the school presents a clear and immediate threat to the health and safety of the children.			
Documentation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revocation policy and process materials provided to schools• List of any revocation decisions during the Review Period (if applicable)• Notices of revocation (if applicable)			
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	PARTIALLY MEETS: Sponsor meets some but not all the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

Standard 6J: Closure Procedures		Applicable Statute: 160.405.1(15), RSMo
The sponsor maintains and implements a clear charter school closure process, including, but not limited to, clear procedures to ensure the orderly transition of student records, archival of business operations, transfer of personnel records, submission of financial reports, resolution of financial obligations, disposition of charter school assets, and a notification plan to inform parents or guardians, among other stakeholders, of the closure action within thirty (30) days of the decision to close.		
Evaluative Criteria		
<p>The sponsor develops and maintains charter school closure policies and procedures, which cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The notification of parents and guardians of the students, the local school district, the retirement system in which the charter school's employees participate, and the state board of education of the closure within thirty (30) days of the closure decision; • The orderly transition of student records to new schools and the archival of student records; • The preservation, archiving, or transferal (as applicable) of relevant business operations documentation and personnel records; • The preparation and submission of final financial reports; • The resolution of any remaining financial obligations; and • The disposition of the charter school's assets in a procedure respecting when public funds have been used to purchase such assets. <p>In the event of charter school closure, the sponsor effectively implements its established closure process and procedures.</p>		
Documentation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closure policy and process materials provided to schools • List of any closures during the Review Period (if applicable) • Completed closure tracking documents or checklists (if applicable) 		
RATING	MEETS: Sponsor meets the criteria	DOES NOT MEET: Sponsor does not meet the criteria

MISSOURI SPONSOR EVALUATION SYSTEM

PROCESS AND RATING

Background. As required by section 160.400.17, RSMo, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the “Department” or “DESE”) evaluates sponsors every three years (or at any time for cause) for compliance with the Standards for Charter Sponsorship. To evaluate sponsors on compliance with the Standards for Charter Sponsorship, the Department has developed a system, which includes two parts: (1) Certifications and (2) the Evaluation Framework. Below is a summary of the evaluation process and corresponding timeline.

Process.

1. **Request for Documents and Timeline.** The Department will first review the documentation it has on file from the sponsor (since its last evaluation, the “Review Period,” e.g., September 1, 2016 – August 30, 2019). After this review, the Department will provide the Document Request List to the sponsor. The Document Request List will indicate the documents the Department requests, as applicable, from the sponsor for the evaluation. In addition to the Document Request List, The Department will also provide the sponsor with a timeline for the sponsor evaluation. A general and approximate timeline is provided below for reference, but it will be adjusted, as needed, for each individual evaluation.
2. **Submission of Documents.** After receipt of the Document Request List from the Department, the sponsor will collect the requested documents, as applicable, and upload these documents to an online shared drive, as specified by the Department. The online shared drive will include six folders – one folder for each section labeled accordingly (i.e. 1. Sponsor Commitment and Capacity, 2. Application Process and Decision-Making, etc.). The sponsor will also upload a completed copy of the Document Request List (indicating which documents have been submitted and any notes) to the online shared drive.
3. **Submission of Certifications.** In addition to the requested documents, the sponsor will also complete and upload a signed copy of the Certifications to the online shared drive. The Sponsor will label the document “Certifications.”
4. **Department Review.** After the Department reviews the Certifications and the requested documents, it will notify the sponsor (via email) if the Department needs any additional documentation or has any clarification questions. The sponsor will be given a specific period to provide any additional documentation and respond to the Department’s clarifying questions. Once the Department has finished its review, the Department will rate the sponsor on the Standards for Charter Sponsorship.

5. **Sponsor Meeting; Review of Preliminary Ratings.** After the Department has completed its review, the Department will schedule a meeting with the sponsor to review and discuss the sponsor's preliminary ratings. The Department will provide a copy of the preliminary ratings to the sponsor at least five (5) business days in advance of the meeting. If the sponsor disagrees with any of the preliminary ratings, it will have an opportunity to provide the Department with specific documentation to support its position and/or remediate the identified issues, as described below.
6. **Remediation.** If the sponsor failed to meet any of the applicable Standards for Charter Sponsorship, the Department may defer its issuance of a final overall sponsor evaluation rating; inform the sponsor of any necessary remediation; and offer the sponsor the opportunity to remediate such issues during a "Remediation Period." The remediation and the length of the Remediation Period, which will be no longer than sixty (60) days, will be determined by the Department. After expiration of the Remediation Period, the Department will review the sponsor's progress and then will issue its final overall sponsor evaluation rating.
7. **Final Overall Sponsor Evaluation Rating.** After reviewing any additional documentation provided by the sponsor and expiration of any Remediation Period (if applicable, see #6 above), the Department will issue the final overall sponsor evaluation rating.

The sponsor will receive an overall rating of "**In Compliance**" with the Standards for Charter Sponsorship if:

- a. The sponsor has met all applicable Standards for Charter Sponsorship; or
- b. The sponsor has met all applicable Standards for Charter Sponsorship, aside from minor, outstanding issues, for which the sponsor has a Department-approved plan,¹ **and** none of the outstanding issues (individually or collectively) has had a critically adverse impact on the sponsor's ability to fulfill its duties .

The sponsor will receive an overall rating of "**In Material Noncompliance**" with the Standards for Charter Sponsorship if the sponsor has not met the criteria for an overall "In Compliance" rating as stipulated above in 7(a) or 7(b). :

8. **State Board of Education (SBOE) Meeting.** A sponsor receiving an overall rating of "In Compliance" may be required to attend a SBOE meeting where the rating is presented, to answer any questions SBOE members may have.

¹ If a sponsor does not fully remedy the minor issues by the timeline articulated in the Department-approved plan, the Department may amend the final overall sponsor evaluation rating.

9. **Public Hearing and Proposed Corrective Action.** If the sponsor receives an overall rating of “In Material Noncompliance” with the Standards for Charter Sponsorship, the Commissioner of Education will schedule a public hearing to present the areas of noncompliance and proposed corrective action that the Commissioner will recommend to the SBOE. Corrective action by the Department may include withholding the sponsor’s funding and suspending the sponsor’s authority to sponsor a school that it currently sponsors or to sponsor any additional school until the sponsor is reauthorized by the SBOE.
10. **Opportunity to Respond and Final Determination of Corrective Action.** After receipt of the Commissioner’s recommendation regarding the proposed corrective action, the sponsor will have thirty (30) days to provide a written statement and other documentation to show why the proposed corrective action should not be taken. The SBOE then will determine the final corrective action.

Sample Approximate Timeline

Action	Timeline
DESE Sends Document Request List and Timeline to Sponsor	Early to Mid-August, 2019
Sponsor Submits Requested Documents and Completed Certifications to DESE	Early to Mid-September 2019
DESE Reviews Submitted Documents	September – October 2019
DESE Submits Additional Document Requests/Requests for Clarification to Sponsor (if needed)	Early November 2019
Sponsor Submits Response to Additional Document Request and Request for Clarification	Early December 2019
DESE Meets with Sponsor to Discuss Preliminary Ratings	February 2020
Sponsor Remediation Period; Sponsor Submits Any Documentation to Support Change in Rating(s) to DESE	By Mid-April 2020
DESE Issues Final Sponsor Evaluation Ratings	Early May 2020

December 20, 2022

Nexus at NACSA AUTHORIZER EVALUATION REPORT

HAWAI'I STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
Authorizer

Cathy Ikeda
Chairperson

Yvonne Lau
Interim Executive Director



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Nexus Authorizer Evaluation Report: Hawai'i State Charter School Commission
December 20, 2022



CONTENTS

ABOUT THE EVALUATION	4
Purpose and Process	4
ABOUT NEXUS AT NACSA	5
ABOUT THE HAWAII STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION	5
Charter and District Schools	5
Charter School Openings and Closings Over Time	5
Key Facts on Authorizing and Policy Context	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	8
STRENGTHS AND SPOTLIGHTS	9
RECOMMENDATIONS - ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY & COMMITMENT	13
Evidence and Analysis	13
RECOMMENDATIONS – APPLICATIONS & SCHOOL OPENING	20
Evidence and Analysis	20
RECOMMENDATIONS – SCHOOL MONITORING & INTERVENTION	22
Evidence and Analysis	22
RECOMMENDATIONS – RENEWAL, EXPANSION & CLOSURE	25
Evidence and Analysis	25
LOOKING FORWARD	28
Helpful Resources and Programs	28
APPENDIX	28
BIOGRAPHIES	28



ABOUT THE EVALUATION

Purpose and Process

This evaluation is designed to provide the authorizer with a reflective, formative analysis of its primary strengths, priorities for improvement, and recommendations for moving forward. Through this evaluation, NACSA hopes to provide the authorizer with critical feedback that will accelerate the adoption of practices that will lead to stronger outcomes for students and communities.

This evaluation is based on NACSA's *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*, which is recognized as the leading framework for authorizing best practices, having been written explicitly and implicitly into numerous state charter school laws. Consistent with NACSA's *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*, this evaluation assesses the authorizer's core responsibilities in the following areas:

1. Organizational Capacity and Commitment;
2. Applications and School Openings;
3. Monitoring and Intervention; and
4. Renewal, Expansion, and Closure.

This evaluation is also guided by key findings from NACSA's Quality Practice Project (QPP), an initiative that seeks to build a stronger evidence base between authorizing practices and student outcomes. Through this research, NACSA studied the practices of authorizers with a range of performance profiles and identified certain practices and perspectives, which correlate with strong student and public-interest outcomes. The key findings from this initiative, which are incorporated into this evaluation, include:

- ***Commitment.*** Great authorizers reflect their institution's commitment to quality authorizing. Authorizing is visible, championed, and adequately resourced, rather than buried in a bureaucracy. The people responsible for day-to-day authorizing functions have influence over decision-making.
- ***Leadership.*** Great authorizers are dedicated to a mission of giving more children access to better schools through the proactive creation and replication of high-quality charter schools and the closure of academically low-performing charter schools.
- ***Judgment.*** Great authorizers make decisions based on what will drive student outcomes, not based on checking boxes or on personal beliefs.

This evaluation is the culmination of a process, which included an extensive document review, data analysis, surveys, multiple conversations and discussions with the authorizing staff, and a two-day site visit, during which the evaluation team interviewed authorizing staff, leadership, board members, and charter school leaders.



ABOUT NEXUS AT NACSA

NACSA believes that authorizers are responsible for ensuring that charter schools are good schools for children and the public. As an independent voice for quality charter school authorizing, NACSA uses data and evidence to encourage smart charter school growth. NACSA works with authorizers and partners to create the gold standard for authorizing and build authorizers' capacity to make informed decisions. NACSA also provides research and information that help policymakers and advocates move past the rhetoric to make evidence-based policy decisions.

Nexus at NACSA is the first and only consulting group to make the connection between people and practice. People make change happen. That's why we purposefully weave organization and people development into every solution to maximize improvement and success.

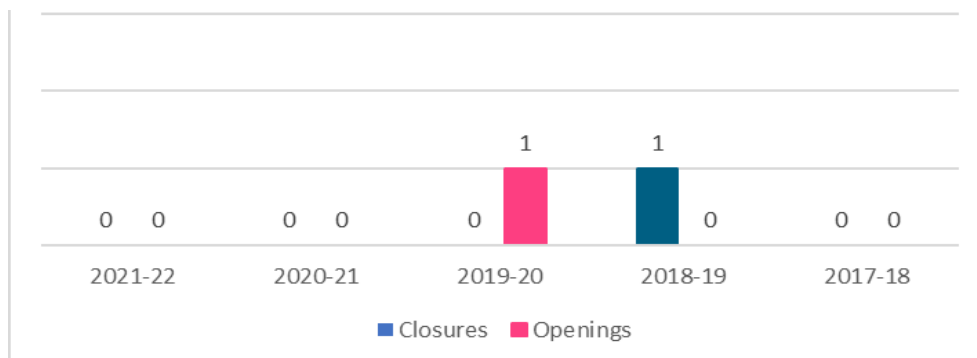
More at www.qualitycharters.org.

ABOUT THE HAWAII STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

Charter and District Schools

	CHARTER	DISTRICT
No. of Schools	37	295
Student Enrollment	12,029 (as of 6/30/22)	159,503 (21-22 SY)
Subgroup Percentages		
• FRL	34	50
• SPED	10	10
• EL	3	10

Charter School Openings and Closings Over Time



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Key Facts on Authorizing and Policy Context

Year of first charter

- 1994 (conversions)
- 1999 (new schools)

Key historical/political context

- Hawai'i is noteworthy nationally as having one central "school district" operated by the Hawai'i Board of Education, rather than locally controlled school districts.
- The state's first charter school law grew out of dual movements to "address both general public demand for more local control of the schools and Native Hawaiian demands for culturally sensitive educational opportunities for Hawaiian children."
- In the legislative statement behind the 1994 bill creating "student-centered schools," the legislature noted its focus on "school empowerment" and that "any meaningful reform will require restructuring from the bottom up with emphasis on the individual school as the basic management unit of the educational system." (L. 1994, c. 272 §1)
- Additionally, the state's charter school law builds on efforts to expand Native Hawaiian and Hawaiian Immersion educational options, such as the establishment of the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program (HLIP) within the Department of Education in 1987 (See History of HLIP)

Important legislation

- 1994: legislation enacted permitted teachers and parents to collectively petition to convert an existing school to a "student-centered school," granting the school charter-like autonomy. (L 1994, c. 272)
- 1999: legislation establishing New Century Charter Schools. All existing "student-centered schools" would be considered charter schools under new legislation, which also would permit establishment of new, stand-alone charter schools. The Hawaii Board of Education was established as sole authorizer. (L 1999, c. 62)
- 2011: Legislature establishes charter school task force in order to review and propose legislative reforms to the state's charter school program. NACSA was commissioned to assist. (L 2011, c. 130 §7)
- 2012: Legislature enacts Act 130, significantly overhauling the existing charter school law, including establishing the Hawaii Public Charter School Commission as an independent authorizing board, as well as creating avenues for additional entities (such as colleges and universities, non-profit organizations, or county and state agencies) to apply to the Hawaii Board of Education for authorizing authority. The legislation also established a more robust charter contract and accountability system. (L 2012, c. 130)
 - Despite reforms to permit additional entities to apply to act as authorizers, no such alternative authorizers have been approved
- Subsequent amendments:
 - Gradual amendments since (including 2013 (L 2013, c. 159), 2014 (L 2014, c. 99), 2015 (L 2015, c. 114), 2016 (L 2016, c. 113), 2019 (L 2019, c. 269) and 2021 (L 2021, c. 167)) to strengthen the charter law in alignment with best practices



Key components of charter school law

- The 2012 law radically reformed Hawai'i's charter school law, and established Hawai'i's legislative framework as a model for adopting best practices and policies for charter school authorizing
 - Establishes Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission (HSPCSC) as an independent authorizing board
 - Establishes pathway and rigorous expectations for additional entities that seek authorizing authority
 - Establishes Hawaii Board of Education with important oversight of authorizers, as well as rigorous authorizer accountability framework
 - Charter school law includes, and instructs authorizers and potential authorizers, to adopt many best practices of quality authorizing, such as principles and standards, comprehensive contracts, and performance frameworks.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its inception in 2012, the Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission (the Commission) has worked diligently to achieve its mission to “authorize high-quality public charter schools throughout Hawai'i by soliciting, evaluating, and approving applications for new schools; negotiating and executing sound school contracts; monitoring performance and legal compliance of our schools; and determining renewal, nonrenewal, or revocation of their charter contracts.” The new strategic plan is evidence of the commitment by the Commission and Commission staff to not only establish practices and policies to achieve its mission, but to do so with the aloha spirit as a guiding principle, and to ensure alignment with national best practices. Throughout its history, the Commission has exemplified a desire to learn, grow, and improve, and to honor the unique context, needs, and aspirations of culture and communities of Hawai'i.

The Commission underwent a NACSA evaluation in 2017 and willingly and openly sought out this 2022 version. The process has yielded a final report that is focused on the Commission's strengths, highlights, and areas of improvement. These come together under targeted recommendations that can be implemented, over time, to ensure a high-quality, community-responsive, and culturally relevant portfolio of charter schools will exist to serve Hawai'i's students and families. This evaluation may present slightly different from the prior one in that the Commission's current challenges are less technical in nature and more focused on the complexities of navigating the contextual and landscape challenges. The Commission has made great strides and progress in strengthening its processes, policies, and procedures to align with NACSA's *Principles and Standards* and to reflect the communities it serves. The work ahead needs to focus on establishing a clear vision, agreed-upon definitions, a common understanding amongst all stakeholders, and strong relationships that are based on shared goals and clear accountability structures.

With 23 schools up for renewal in 2023, the Commission has a great opportunity to demonstrate its practices and beliefs in action. The Commission has the tools and has taken the time to attempt to build stakeholder buy-in to make these high-stakes decisions with data, evidence, and high-expectations. There is a commitment to understanding mission-specific impact and a belief in creating a common definition of high-quality that is based on multiple measures – and the patience and willingness to take the time to do this effectively. Yet, there remains disparate beliefs and views amongst school stakeholders, making this difficult work to implement. More time is needed to work with schools to build their understanding of the flexibilities given in Contract 4.0, as well as the autonomy for accountability bargain.

The Commission staff is unique in its cohesiveness, its support and belief in leadership, and its demonstrated strength in team dynamics. The structure of the staff has evolved, and will continue to do so, to meet the needs of the schools and to attempt to best navigate the challenging roles and responsibilities unique to Hawai'i authorizing. There are developing relationships between the Commission staff and school stakeholders, and a commitment to improving dialogue and understanding. Commission members ask great questions, seek training and best practice, and are steadfast in their beliefs of the opportunities charters present.



The pieces are in place to make challenging decisions and hold schools accountable to their promises.

STRENGTHS AND SPOTLIGHTS

Organizational Capacity and Commitment

A quality authorizer engages in chartering as a means to foster excellent schools that meet identified needs, clearly prioritizes a commitment to excellence in education and in authorizing practices and creates organizational structures and commits the human and financial resources necessary to conduct its authorizing duties effectively and efficiently.

Reference: NACSA's Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, Standard 1: Agency Commitment and Capacity; and Leadership, Commitment, Judgment: Elements of Successful Charter School Authorizing: Findings from the Quality Practice Project, pgs. 10 –15.

Strength #1: The Commission establishes a clear mission for its work as a statewide authorizer, aligned to Hawaii charter school law, as well as a unique vision for authorizing a portfolio of high-quality, diverse schools.

Strength #2: The Commission has a well-defined strategic plan outlining clear goals with associated strategies and milestones.

Strength #3: The Commission has a strong, well-qualified, conscientious, and committed staff that carries out a wide range of responsibilities on a tight budget for a sizable portfolio of schools.

Strength #4: The Commission has adopted a shared definition of “high-quality” school that articulates specific Characteristics of High-Quality Public Charter Schools and has begun to align its policies and practices with this definition



PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

Commission leadership has demonstrated a commitment to developing and fostering a culture and climate that contributes to strong organizational health. Organizational cultures are created either intentionally or by default, with the latter, unfortunately, being more common. Organizations often underestimate the role culture can play in organizational performance and impact, but it is clear that leadership recognizes its importance and is deliberate and thoughtful about creating a work environment and internal processes and policies that promote psychological safety, a sense of purpose, and high levels of commitment and engagement among staff.

Staff spoke to receiving ongoing, clear, and consistent communication from leadership as well appreciation for having clear expectations and direction combined with autonomy and trust for getting work done without micromanagement. Staff acknowledged that they ask a lot of one another but feel supported in their work and are comfortable asking for help or guidance when needed. This is supported by results from the



organizational health and team dynamics assessment, which indicate that the Commission staff is a cohesive team with high levels of commitment, trust, and clarity around organizational roles and priorities.

Applications and School Opening

A quality authorizer implements a comprehensive application process that includes clear application questions and guidance; follows fair, transparent procedures and rigorous criteria; includes an interview of all qualified applicants; and grants charters only to applications that demonstrate strong capacity to establish and operate a quality school.

A quality authorizer uses the pre-opening process to build relationships, set expectations, and provide technical assistance to schools, and does not let schools open that have not demonstrated their readiness to serve students.

Reference: NACSA's Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, Standard 2: Application Process & Decision Making; and Leadership, Commitment, Judgment: Elements of Successful Charter School Authorizing: Findings from the Quality Practice Project, pgs. 16 – 20.

Strength #1: The Commission continues to execute a robust charter application process, including publicly issuing a Request for Proposals aligned to national best practices, using a clear evaluation rubric which is included in the RFP, utilizing external and local expert evaluators as part of application review teams, interviewing all qualified applicants, and providing a public hearing for all applicants.

Strength #2: The Commission's RFP includes a clearly publicized timeline that allows sufficient time for each stage of the application process and clearly explains the review components.

Strength #3: The Commission thoughtfully composes application review teams to include representation from each of its functional areas in addition to utilizing external expert reviewers with relevant professional experience and knowledge of the Hawai'i charter context to evaluate all complete submissions.

Strength #4: Since 2018, the Commission has further bolstered its reviews by bifurcating the process into parallel evaluations with separate teams focused on "applicant capacity" or "application clarifications." Both application review teams evaluate the application components, interview each applicant group, seek follow-up clarification from applicants if needed, and jointly recommend approval or denial to the Commissioners.





PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

The Commission offers guidance to prospective applicants through information sessions prior to application submission to clarify expectations and respond to questions. Full information from the RFP Orientation is posted afterward on the Commission website. This practice demonstrates the Commission's commitment to an intentionally rigorous, but clear and attainable, application process.

School monitoring and Intervention

A quality authorizer defines and incorporates into the charter contract clear, measurable, and attainable academic, financial, and organizational performance standards and targets that the school must meet as a condition of renewal.

A quality authorizer conducts contract oversight that competently evaluates performance and monitors compliance; ensures schools' legally entitled autonomy; protects student rights; informs intervention, revocation, and renewal decisions; and provides annual public reports on school performance.

Reference: NACSA's Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, Standard 3: Performance Contracting and Standard 4: Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation; and Leadership, Commitment, Judgment: Elements of Successful Charter School Authorizing: Findings from the Quality Practice Project, pgs. 13 – 15.

Strength #1: The Commission provides clarity for the schools in its portfolio, as well as the public, regarding all accountability expectations and measures (ex. Charter Contract 4.0, Performance Framework).

Strength #2: The Commission provides clear and transparent timelines related to key oversight requirements and reporting structures.

Strength #3: Despite the unique geographical context, the Commission has direct lines of communication with the schools in its portfolio and is acutely aware of "on-the-ground" school issues because of the relationships it has fostered, the community connections it has built, and the requirements it has laid out.

Strength #4: Commission staff provides for multiple opportunities for stakeholder engagement as part of its ongoing oversight and monitoring procedures. Evidence of this commitment to ensuring stakeholder buy-in was seen as it relates to the charter contract, renewal timelines and procedures, and Commission staff structure.

Strength #5: The Commission's strategic plan continues to serve as a guiding document that is attempting to connect the strategic pillars, the definition of high-quality, the charter contract (4.0 version), the performance framework, and the related monitoring processes.





PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

The Commission’s mission to authorize high-quality charter schools throughout the state and to do so with “Aloha” and three overarching values: Mohala (our work results in the blossoming of our schools); Pili (we are tied to our schools); and Pono (we do this work for accountability and uprightness at all times) –is a commitment that lives strongly throughout all of the authorizing work. This connection to Akahai (kindness with tenderness), Lōkahi (unity with harmony), ‘Olu’olu (agreeable with pleasantness), Ha’aha’a (humility with modesty) and Ahonui (patience with perseverance) permeate the work and the approach that both Commission members and Commission staff take. This spirit and community connection exist throughout all aspects of the charter lifecycle- from application to renewal. But, more vividly, authorizing aloha has come to mean truly listening to, learning from, and highlighting the uniqueness and beauty of the school communities themselves.

The Commission releases a monthly newsletter that is not only informative, but that highlights and spotlights a school success with each release. Stories from the community, data that tells a compelling story, development wins of school leaders, volunteer awards and recognitions, and other key information is shared and celebrated. Commission meetings not only provide for community input and voice, but also acknowledge these similar stories and trends in a timely and relevant manner. By building this narrative and by bringing aloha into key authorizing decisions, the portfolio at large, and the charter context, are strengthened.

Renewal, Expansion, and Closure

A quality authorizer designs and implements a transparent and rigorous process that uses comprehensive academic, financial, and operational performance data to make merit-based renewal decisions and revokes charters when necessary to protect student and public interests.

A quality authorizer encourages high-performing charter schools to expand through a transparent process based on clear eligibility standards and historical performance records.

Reference: NACSA’s Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, Standard 5: Revocation and Renewal Decision Making; and Leadership, Commitment, Judgment: Elements of Successful Charter School Authorizing: Findings from the Quality Practice Project, pgs. 16 – 17.

- Strength #1: The Commission has successfully transitioned its portfolio from prior versions of its charter contract to its current version (4.0) which is a more expansive, clear, and strategically aligned accountability document.
- Strength #2: The Commission conducts site-visits for each of the schools going through renewal within any given cycle and provides a detailed site visit summary report as part of the renewal protocol.
- Strength #3: The Commission’s renewal reports are detailed, thorough, aligned to the performance framework, and provide context for decision

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making.

- **Strength #4:** The Commission’s staff is dedicated, resourced, and committed to conduct its authorizing responsibilities and has restructured to align skillsets to accountability structures and school needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS - ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY & COMMITMENT

A quality authorizer engages in chartering as a means to foster excellent schools that meet identified needs, clearly prioritizes a commitment to excellence in education and in authorizing practices and creates organizational structures and commits human and financial resources necessary to conduct its authorizing duties effectively and efficiently.

Evidence and Analysis

The Commission has made progress in critical aspects of organizational capacity and commitment by developing a comprehensive strategic plan and developing a shared definition of a “high-quality” school. The Commission has opportunities to strengthen its organizational capacity and commitment by focusing on three key areas that emerged as themes throughout the evaluation process. The majority of the recommendations outlined below can be generally categorized as opportunities related to 1) Commissioner and staff alignment; 2) clarity around significant organizational definitions and expectations; and 3) continuous improvement. While there are critical recommendations that fall outside these three areas, the recognition that most of the recommendations fall within these three areas suggests they are key levers for growth and improvement.

Commissioner and Staff Alignment

Results from both the Authorizer Self-Evaluation, focus groups with staff, and interviews with Commissioners indicate that while there has been improvement in the relationship between staff and Commissioners, relationship-building for the sake of understanding and alignment remains an area of continued focus. Staff would like to have more interactions with Commissioners, as they believe the more Commissioners have insight into their processes, the more likely they would be to understand the rigor with which they make their recommendations. When responding to the question, “If the organization were to invest in one thing from an internal operations or teamwork perspective, what would have the greatest positive impact on your work?” one staff member responded with “decision-making process of our Commissioners and the link between staff and the Commission.” Follow-up comments by other staff in response to this comment indicated agreement. “Emotions get involved and sometimes our Commissioners respond to the emotions. Less emotion and more alignment with our statutory requirements.”

Commissioners reported that the staff works very hard, and they recognize the work is incredibly complex. While generally Commissioners report that staff does a good job of making sure Commissioners have what they need and that staff is “available and accessible,” some reported that they would like to see “both sides” share information more freely.

Commissioners indicated that some have had more opportunities to interact with



staff than others, and that it would be helpful if there were increased or different types of opportunities for interaction.

Comparing responses from the staff's completion of the Authorizer Self-Evaluation to the Commissioners' responses indicate there is strong alignment between staff and Commissioners in the following areas:

- Consistent monitoring of schools' performance
- Providing transparent and timely information about schools' performance (to the schools)
- Using established intervention policies to communicate unsatisfactory performance to schools
- Encouraging the expansion of high-quality schools

The same comparison indicates that working to create greater alignment in the following specific *authorizing* functions would be beneficial:

- Application decision-making process
- Providing transparent and digestible information to the public about policies, procedures, and portfolio performance
- Establishing and nurturing productive relationships with school communities and other key stakeholders
- Decision-making alignment and support of Commission on staff recommendations regarding the approval, renewal, and revocation of charters
- Respecting the autonomy of schools

Clarity Around Significant Organizational Definitions and Expectations

Staff consistently reported that one of the enabling factors that allow them to do their jobs and accomplish their work goals is ongoing, clear, and consistent communication. They report strong systems in place for internal communication and coordination and believe the strategic plan has helped establish clear priorities. Commissioners also reported that the work done to develop a thoughtful strategic plan provides the Commission with a clear path forward to strengthen Hawaii's charter schools.

To take this strength to the next level, the Commission would benefit from creating the utmost clarity around certain organizational definitions and expectations. Similar to comments made in the previous paragraph, staff reported a desire for the Commission to ensure their decision-making process is clear, that they understand their role in the process of making decisions, and that there is a "clear link between what is being delivered and the decision-making process." There is a desire to hold schools accountable in service of getting better results, and this is not always apparent in how decisions are being made; this was noted by both staff and some Commissioners. Some Commissioners also reported that there is a lack of understanding as to the function of the Commission from some schools as well as some Commissioners, with one Commissioner sharing that, "sometimes I think we have been acting more like staff, overstepping." Comments from some school leaders during focus groups validated that there is a lack of understanding regarding the role of the authorizer, with some indicating that their understanding of an authorizer is that it serves as a support organization.



The Commission has worked hard to develop its Characteristics of High-Quality Public Schools, which is no easy feat. Recognizing that this definition is relatively new, it is not surprising that it has not yet been fully understood or internalized. The next step is to refine it from the lens of measurement. As one Commissioner pointed out, “people bring a lot of their own experiences and backgrounds into reviewing/assessing. When it comes to something like quality, I think you can only go so far in coming up with some objective measures.”

While it is challenging to come up with objective measures, it is critical to connect the dots between the Performance Framework and the Characteristics of High-Quality Public Schools so that constituents understand that they are not different sets of expectations and that ultimately, the Performance Framework is the tool for assessing how schools are living up to the Characteristics of High-Quality Public Schools. It is clear from both Commissioner interviews and school leader focus groups that they are not making this connection, as Commissioners and school leaders had varying responses to questions around defining school quality.

Continuous Improvement

The work that has been done to develop a clear and comprehensive strategic plan has laid a strong foundation for the Commission moving forward as a cohesive organization. It is also clear that despite the challenges that come with interim leadership, leadership has created a climate and culture in which staff feel trusted and committed to doing what is right for students; comments in staff focus groups and the results from the staff organizational health survey were overwhelmingly positive.

To ensure that the Commission continues to build upon its strong foundation, the Commission would benefit from focusing on ensuring there are mechanisms in place to reflect on and evaluate its work on an ongoing basis. Responses from Commissioners to questions on the Authorizer Self-Evaluation indicate inconsistency regarding goals, identifying progress being made toward goals, and recognizing and understanding the Commission’s strengths and areas for improvement. Interviews with Commissioners also indicated differences in perspective on the rigor with which decisions are being made. As previously noted, staff concurred with this assessment.

Commissioner interviews also indicated the need for a clear and objective process for evaluating the Executive Director’s performance, and in turn the office’s performance, on a regular basis. Commissioners’ comments during the interviews suggested they were either unclear on the process for evaluating the Executive Director’s performance or felt the current process was insufficient.

Having standard tools and processes in place for ongoing reflection and assessment of behaviors, actions, and results is critical to ensure organizations do what they say and adhere to agreed-upon expectations, policies, and procedures.



Short-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Obtain a permanent Executive Director. It is clear that having an Interim Executive Director for an extended period of time has been a hinderance for the Commission. Regardless of the strength of any individual serving in an interim leadership role, the uncertainty – for both the individual and the rest of staff – that comes with having interim leadership is detrimental to optimal organizational performance. One of the key components of psychological safety at work is certainty, and the lack of clarity around the status of the timeline for selecting a permanent Executive Director weighs heavily on all staff.

It also detracts from the Commission’s relationship with schools and may be contributing to some schools’ unwillingness to take responsibility for their deficiencies. Stakeholders also tend to become more vocal when there is interim leadership; this is often an attempt to sway the decision-making process.

The Commission needs to develop a strong and transparent selection process and timeline for onboarding a new Executive Director and clearly communicate it to staff and school leaders. While feedback on the Executive Director position profile can and should be obtained from various stakeholders, and various stakeholders should be involved in components of the selection process, it should be made clear that decision-making authority lies solely with the Commission.

Recommendation #2: Develop a process and format for objectively evaluating the Executive Director’s performance on an ongoing basis. As mentioned above, there does not seem to be a clear process or format for evaluating the Executive Director’s performance. Objective performance evaluations are critical for

bridging the gap between expectations and actual outcomes and ensure there is alignment around critical priorities and behavioral expectations. In the case of the Executive Director, performance evaluations also serve to evaluate organizational performance. While “formal” performance evaluations may be necessary for things such as compensation adjustments, ongoing informal performance assessments are critical to ensuring the organization is staying focused on priorities and agreed upon goals and outcomes and helping the organization to be more proactive versus reactive.

Recommendation #3: Develop a process and format to ensure Commissioners are continuously reflecting on and evaluating themselves and their decisions with respect to strategic goals and a clarified definition of school quality and are ensuring that community needs are being met by effectively bringing in community voice. Similar to ongoing evaluation of the Executive Director, the Commissioners should be engaging in continuous reflection and evaluation to ensure they are living up to expectations and holding themselves accountable to commitments and decisions that are aligned with clearly stated performance expectations and criteria. Absent ongoing reflection and evaluation, it becomes too easy to rely on subjective information to assess organizational process and effectiveness and to fall back on undesirable behaviors. Additionally, it requires discipline to follow through on consistently demonstrating behaviors associated with organizational values and employing tools and processes that have been developed for decision-making and other aspects of organizational effectiveness; having mechanisms for assessing the Commission’s fidelity to predetermined processes and effectiveness



in working together greatly increases the probability of consistently applying new practices and processes.

Tools and processes for ongoing reflection and evaluation do not need to be complex or time-consuming, but they do need to be focused and used consistently. Examples of self-reflection and self-evaluation mechanisms include things such as “Exit Tickets” at the end of committee or full Commission meetings or after-action reviews when critical decisions are made. Nexus at NACSA is happy to provide more examples and support in developing such tools.

Recommendation #4: Make organizational values more tangible/observable by Commissioners and staff by co-creating Action Indicators; ensure organizational values are integrated into all aspects of the work.

Organizational values are important as they should be the bedrock of how behavioral norms are defined and how decisions are made to achieve goals and fulfill the mission. Ideally, values need to authentically define how organization members operate, behave, and interact on a day-to-day basis. They should be ingrained into the organization

Long-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Provide consistent and ongoing training for all Commissioners on their role and commitments as Commissioners and quality charter school authorizing. While Commissioners reported they received onboarding and training when joining the Commission and spoke to the Interim Executive Director and other team members taking time to go over information and review documents, the onboarding process has not been developed into a standard experience. Ongoing training and development for Commissioners also seems to be lacking.

through embedding them into team member performance expectations, accountability measures, and organizational processes and policies.

While the Commission operates with the “Aloha Spirit” as defined in Hawai‘i Revised Statutes and has also adopted the overarching values of Mohala, Pili, and Pono as descriptors of the Commission’s beliefs and ethos, it would be challenging to use them as organizational values are intended because they are lacking clear indicators of what they look like when being lived out successfully. To strengthen the utility of the Commission’s values, the team should work together to create clear and specific Action Indicators for each organizational value. Action Indicators help make ambiguous concepts more tangible and clearer by outlining observable behaviors that demonstrate that a value is being lived.

Once Action Indicators are developed, work should be done to ensure the values are embedded into organizational processes and policies, such as decision-making matrices, performance management processes, and onboarding and professional development, etc.

To help address challenges related to some Commissioners not fully understanding the function of an authorizer and/or not fully understanding their role and responsibilities as Commissioners, a standard and comprehensive plan for onboarding new Commissioners should be developed and faithfully implemented with all new Commissioners. In addition to focusing on the role of an authorizer and key responsibilities and commitments of Commission members, onboarding should include



components related to the Commission’s organizational values, core authorizing processes, decision-making matrices and other tools or processes for operational effectiveness. An overview of authorizing best practices and resources available to Commissioners should also be included.

A strong onboarding process and content will provide new Commissioners with a strong foundation from which to build, and it is equally important to provide ongoing training and development to reinforce concepts from onboarding, to continue to build Commissioners’ knowledge and expertise, and to support changes and new learnings from the Hawai’i environment and the field at large. Developing a “standard” curriculum for professional development combined with opportunities to explore and address changing, or emerging best practices will help keep critical concepts and practices top-of-mind when making decisions. When possible, it is generally beneficial for staff and Commissioners to participate in such professional development together as it helps ensure that everyone is getting the same information at the same time and will also support trust and relationship-building between staff and Commissioners.

Recommendation #2: Commissioners and staff co-create and align on a decision-making matrix, rooted in the organizational values, to be used by the Commission and staff for all organizational and charter lifecycle decisions.

As discussed in the Evidence & Analysis section, the link between decisions made and the decision-making process is not always clear and there is the perception that decisions are not consistently being made based on objective evidence, data, and clear criteria. To strengthen the Commission’s decision-making, as well as to increase trust, confidence, and transparency in the process, staff and Commissioners should work

together to create a standard decision-making matrix to be used by both the staff and Commission for all organizational and charter lifecycle decisions. While the matrix may need to be modified depending on the decision, a standard set of criteria, rooted in the organization’s values, should serve as the basis for all decision-making. Creating and faithfully employing a matrix will help strengthen decision-making in several ways including, though not limited to:

- Ensuring organizational values and priorities are reflected in decisions
- Providing a measure of objectivity and consistency to all decisions
- Demonstrating how outcomes reached are linked to the decision-making process
- Minimizing time spent debating extraneous information that is not actually relevant to the decision

Recommendation #3: Identify staff members to serve as Relationship Managers for a set of specific schools. Feedback from all parties indicates that there continues to be an “Us versus Them” mentality between the Commission and schools. This tension results from multiple factors but is certainly greatly impacted by (some) schools’ misunderstanding of the role of the authorizer. One way to strengthen relationships, that is also relatively manageable, is to establish Relationship Managers for schools. Relationship Managers serve as points of contact for a set of schools so that the schools have one go-to person for any questions or concerns they have. This does NOT mean that the Relationship Managers need to be experts in all areas. They do need to be “experts” in customer service and know where within the organization to get information or answers they may not have at the ready. This approach also does not



“prohibit” schools from talking to other staff members and vice versa. It does address concerns from schools that they don’t know who to go to or that they don’t get responses from staff. Staff serving in this role must be committed to ensuring that the school’s issue is resolved, question is answered, etc., even if that staff member is not responsible for addressing it him/her/themselves.

A side benefit to this approach is that staff begin to develop a more comprehensive picture of their schools’ strengths, needs, areas of improvement, and challenges. Information can then be shared with all staff in a systematic way.

Recommendation #4: Explicitly connect the dots between the Characteristics of High-Quality Public Schools and the Performance Framework; help all stakeholders make the connection between the two documents. The Commission should be acknowledged and recognized for its work in developing its Characteristics of High-Quality Public Schools. Developing a shared understanding around school quality is a challenging process and creating a “definition” serves as a critical first step. The next step is to clearly connect the “narrative” description of a high-quality school (e.g., Characteristics of High-Quality Public Schools) with the Performance Framework, which should serve as the mechanism for measuring schools’ effectiveness in living out the definition. While the connection between the two documents is called out within the Characteristics of High-Quality Public Schools document, the Commission and its stakeholders would strengthen the synergy between the two documents by creating

specific links. Without explicitly connecting the two documents, and employing various strategies to over communicate the connections, stakeholders will likely remain confused or unclear about the purpose of each document and can continue to cite uncertainty about the Commission’s definition and expectations around quality and performance.

Overcommunication and communication of the connection in a variety of ways will be key to this “sticking” with stakeholders.

Strategies for connecting the dots include:

- Developing an annotated version of the Characteristics of High-Quality Public Schools that references the specific measures in the Performance Framework connected to the various components of the Characteristics document
- Creating visual graphics for each component of the Performance Framework (e.g., academic, organizational, and financial) that highlight connections to the Characteristics document
- Highlighting sections of the Characteristics document and corresponding measures in the Performance Framework through a regular series of newsletters focused solely on this topic

Connecting the dots and “cross-walking” the two documents will also identify any potential areas of misalignment or if critical components are missing from either document.



RECOMMENDATIONS – APPLICATIONS & SCHOOL OPENING

A quality authorizer implements a comprehensive application process that includes clear application questions and guidance; follows fair, transparent procedures and rigorous criteria; includes an interview of all qualified applicants; and grants charters only to applications that demonstrate strong capacity to establish and operate a quality school.

A quality authorizer uses the pre-opening process to build relationships, set expectations, and provide technical assistance to schools, and does not let schools open that have not demonstrated their readiness to serve students.

Evidence and Analysis

The Commission's new charter application process has consistently been one of the organization's main strengths. Prior to the pandemic, the Commission generally released an RFP and held a corresponding application cycle each year. This process was temporarily halted for several years during COVID-19 related closures and budgetary uncertainty. In the interim, Commission staff initiated an internal strategic planning process that ultimately informed the 2020 RFP. Going forward, Commission staff intend to continually embed components of the organization's strategic vision and priorities into annual iterations of its RFP, including feedback from review team members and successful and unsuccessful applicants.

As RFP cycles and timelines are not statutorily prescribed in Hawai'i charter law, the Commission has the freedom to schedule application due dates and review process timelines to best suit its internal workflow.

Short-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Develop an annual timeline for the RFP process to streamline internal planning, balance workflow, and provide a generous amount of lead time to potential applicants to improve quality and completeness of submissions in each cycle. Best practice dictates that applicant groups commit between nine and eighteen months developing a comprehensive proposal for submission; by providing more predictability for RFP release and submission due dates, all potential applicants can backwards plan from their intended cycle.

Recommendation #2: Post the annual RFP and rubric for public comment prior to finalization; summarize changes made/not

made in a posted document to maintain transparency across stakeholder groups. While some may criticize if not all suggestions are adopted, over time, this formal opportunity for review and input will promote increased acceptance and compliance.

Recommendation #3: Provide additional training for reviewers prior to each application cycle to ensure they are appropriately normed on ratings and have a shared understanding about the necessary level of detail in their evaluations. Though this will entail additional time on the front end for the training and may require more time for each reviewer to document their findings more



comprehensively, this practice will allow for greater detail to be shared across internal staff, the Commissioners, and during any appellate actions.

Recommendation #4: Increase the specificity of written documentation of deficiencies for unsuccessful applicants to provide unmistakable clarity as to where they failed to meet expectations. Though this documentation should not exhaustively list every weakness found within the application, and should not prescribe solutions to remedy them, a frank description of how far below the standard the submission rated is helpful for

Long-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Utilize a rotation of all internal staff as application reviewers as professional development to build upon their understanding of the interconnections of authorizing tasks and oversight over the course of the charter life cycle. This not only spreads the additional work across the staff in an equitable and more manageable way, but many authorizers find that the intentional deployment of staff from different departments and backgrounds to evaluate proposals enhances the review panels' understanding of the administrative, financial, and other practical strengths and challenges that applicants are likely to encounter when implementing their school design. Including all staff in the applications process also pays dividends in building institutional knowledge.

Recommendation #2: Require applicants to demonstrate the multiple capacities necessary to meet and exceed proposal expectations and likelihood of operating a successful school; for example, include

applicants in considering the next steps for their application.

Recommendation #5: Create and disseminate an online survey to evaluate applicant groups' experience through the application process after each cycle to collect qualitative feedback on staff communication, timelines, and other components. These results, collected from both successful and unsuccessful applicants, can provide important insight into the process, and help the Commission ensure all of its practices are aligned to its ultimate goals.

performance task components to capacity interview protocols designed to assess groups' commitment to accountability. Over time, application narratives and program designs can become formulaic to meet rubric requirements, but techniques to evaluate skills, attitudes, and group dynamics in-person are an effective strategy to better understand the individuals involved. Paid consultants, vendors, and others who may have helped prepare the application, but who will not play an ongoing role in the operation of the proposed school, should not be present for these interviews to not skew the results.

Recommendation #3: Utilize demographic and school performance data to identify neighborhoods in need of additional choice options (including specific models desired by community stakeholders); prioritize these by listing them in the RFP. While this is a far-reaching strategy, over time, it will ensure that the Commission's portfolio of schools serves the most vulnerable students in the state.



RECOMMENDATIONS – SCHOOL MONITORING & INTERVENTION

A quality authorizer defines and incorporates into the charter contract clear, measurable, and attainable academic, financial, and organizational performance standards and targets that the school must meet as a condition of renewal.

A quality authorizer conducts contract oversight that competently evaluates performance and monitors compliance; ensures schools’ legally entitled autonomy; protects student rights; informs intervention, revocation, and renewal decisions; and provides annual public reports on school performance.

Evidence and Analysis

The Commission continues to carry out its work with the spirit of Aloha and with the values of Mohala, Pili, and Pono, throughout all its oversight activities. Oversight, all the work that an authorizer does between approval and renewal, is eighty percent of an authorizer’s role. It takes time, requires clarity and consistency, and must be conducted with alignment to the authorizer’s overarching contract and performance expectations.

The Commission continues to commit itself to honoring the Aloha spirit with the values of Mohala, Pili, and Pono, while honoring school autonomy, and seeking a high-quality portfolio of schools. This is evident in the Commission’s current strategic plan, in the Contract 4.0, and in the numerous ways in which the Commission communicates with the schools (site visit letters, NOCs, resolutions, etc.). This respect and trust of both the schools’ unique missions and the importance of Hawaiian culture is demonstrated through the written practices and policies the Commission has and in the actions the Commission takes. This often works in a cohesive and collaborative way, for example, in the words of one school leader, “The Commission respects my school’s autonomy, and our engagement is appropriate.” Or, another example, the Mission Aligned Initiatives, which allow for the schools to provide a written narrative describing the effectiveness of their mission.

Yet, the focus on authorizing with aloha has created a difficult environment to establish, adhere to, and act upon a clear, data-driven, and overarching definition of high-quality. In balancing the uniqueness of the schools’ environments, the important value of understanding and navigating the Hawaiian culture, and the critical need for a relentless focus on literacy and numeracy, there is a confluence of challenges in implementing an accountability framework. Albeit different perspectives, this is one thing that school stakeholders, Commission members, and Commission staff could agree upon- “we have multiple measures of school success, yet no one is clear in which one applies where.” This practice, an important piece to keep communities at the center, is creating confusion and tension.

The Notice of Concern (NOC) practice is an example of this conflation. It is being utilized per contractual and legal guidance, but it is not being used to make, inform, or guide high-stakes decisions. NOCs are oftentimes further complicated due to the nature in which the Hawai’i charter school law creates a difficult environment for accountability given the ways charter schools are defined and limited by state law and the lack of clarity between the authorizer and Department of Education roles.



All stakeholders acknowledged an increased commitment to school site visits, both for informational and evaluative purposes. School stakeholders mentioned this as a concern, with one interviewee saying that their school has “only had one Commission visit in 23 years,” and one other saying that “our visits have been top-down and only designed to find something wrong.” This was countered by one interviewee saying that this process has “changed over the last year and that the new structure is clear and aligned to the Contract.” Regardless of each school’s view on the adherence to the process, there needs to be a clear commitment to the purpose of them (and clarity around the type of visit at which time: ex. Evaluative for renewal, informational for NOC, relationship driven for community building) and to the information discussed, gathered, analyzed, and utilized.

Short-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Examine what information is included within the site visit process and reporting procedure; ensure language focuses on data and quantitative information and minimizes room for interpretation. Site visits are an important tool in an authorizer’s toolkit, used to understand what is happening on the ground at a school. This information can be used in multiple ways, and the purpose of the visit should always be clearly communicated to the schools prior to the visit. It is a recommended practice to provide the school with a “summative” document highlighting the findings from the visit. When this is done in relation to a non-high stakes visit, it can be informal, and is important to document. When it is conducted and related to a high stakes visit, such as part of renewal, the documentation should be clear, concise, and based on quantitative data. Data points should not be left up to interpretation and should not include informal observations or summary terms. This change in practice will allow for the site visit report to be a key part of the renewal “story.” It will be an additional data point to triangulate in decision making and it will serve as a document that can be utilized to drive and impact change.

Recommendation #2: Continue to further develop the overall vision, roles and responsibilities, and correlation to each process, expectation, and contract area for

staffing structure. The current staffing structure has evolved over time based on the Commission’s concerted effort to provide clarity of roles and responsibilities internally and externally. This has been observed and acknowledged by multiple stakeholders and has allowed for more direct lines of communication between Commission staff and schools. An example of this is the Frameworks team. In order for this structure and organizational approach to be even more effective and efficient, it is recommended to provide not just an organizational chart for all to utilize, but a chart that reflects roles, responsibilities, and contractual areas of oversight as it relates to contract terms. In doing this, all stakeholders will understand the alignment between the who, the what, the why, and the where of the accountability expectations.

Recommendation #3: Create model Mission Aligned Initiative (MAI) goals or samples to demonstrate the performance expectations, the connection between mission achievement and student performance, and opportunities to measure the effectiveness. The Commission has embraced the spirit of multiple measures of school quality by incorporating the MAI goals into the performance framework. The Commission was an early adopter of this practice and



should be lauded for their work in this area. The next phase of this work is to evolve the understanding of excellence, continuing to emphasize (and measure) student literacy and numeracy, while expanding evaluations to assess other skills and qualities. Using multiple measures is not a tool for keeping open schools that do not serve students well. It is a more comprehensive approach to evaluating the impact schools are (or are not) having. The connectivity between the mission measures and student outcomes needs to be clarified and structured with an inherent connection between the two.

Recommendation #4: Conduct an internal review of the Notice of Concern (NOC) process to evaluate the timelines, expectations, and actions the Commission has taken related to NOC concerns. In reviewing historical data,

Long-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Continue to negotiate with the DOE to make clear lines of authority regarding oversight of non-authorizing, administrative, and federal Staffing and Resources program duties. The Commission and the Department of Education continue to strive for an effective and productive working relationship in which schools and students are at the center. Hawai'i's charter school law is unique in the way that funds are dispersed, charter schools operate, oversight occurs, and authorizing happens. It creates opportunities for confusion if communication is not explicit. It can also create challenges for effective monitoring and oversight if authorizing staff is not equipped with the information or data, or if it is not funded and structured in such a way that the actions can work in collaboration.

An example of this is related to special education. The DOE has direct oversight and responsibilities as it relates to special education services at charter schools. The

look for trends and outcomes. Utilize this data to create NOC guardrails, or criteria, that align issues/concerns with required resolutions and timeframes. The Commission continues to utilize the NOC process as a key part of its accountability system. There is a missed opportunity with the NOC process to truly utilize it as a tool not only for compliance monitoring, but as a tool that helps drive quality, improvement, and outcomes. As such, time spent on reviewing the utilization of the process can demonstrate important data upon which change can occur. Schools need to be provided clear and manageable deadlines, outcomes, and expectations which are not just checklists, but exist to fix the issues that emerged. Schools need to be provided with terms that "best fit" the issues noted and that address the necessary changes in a timely manner aligned to the severity of the concern.

DOE works directly with schools, informs the Commission if there are any issues, and then relies upon the Commission to rectify the concern. The Commission utilizes its NOC process to address the issue but has little authority over how the issue must be addressed, the data needed to understand and navigate the issue, or the ability to work directly with the schools in addressing said concerns. This process then becomes complicated and time consuming when, often, critical changes need to occur to be compliant. Too often, this is putting students and schools at risk. Undergoing this negotiation will be challenging and require policy and practice changes but is critical to address effective monitoring and oversight.

Recommendation #2: Utilize the developed tools, resources, and contract language to align expectations and accountability in a thorough and transparent way. The



Commission has the statutory authority, as well as the foundational tools and resources, strengthened by Contract 4.0, to define accountability expectations. The next step is to create alignment between the expectations and all of the key authorizing practices and policies. This needs to start from a clear definition of high-quality and connect through from application to renewal.

Recommendation #3: Implement Mission Aligned Initiative (MAI) training or partnership opportunities with both applicant (new) and existing schools. Utilize the training to model exemplars and to work in tandem with the schools to determine multiple measures and approaches to successfully align mission to student performance. The Commission's commitment to utilizing MAIs as part of its performance evaluation is to be lauded.

Evaluating school performance is the heart of authorizing. To do it well, authorizers need to get the right information. Data on student literacy and numeracy is critical and will often come from standardized assessments. AND, more is needed, beyond just stating mission goals. The alignment between MAIs and student outcomes needs to be carefully evaluated and discussed to create the right evaluation methods to see impact on student performance and wellness.

The Commission should work with schools to define these active ingredients, or the ways in which the impact can be measured and aligned. By working with schools that are doing this well, there is an opportunity to study, practice, learn, and share with others and then incorporate lessons learned into the Commission's accountability expectations.

RECOMMENDATIONS – RENEWAL, EXPANSION & CLOSURE

A quality authorizer designs and implements a transparent and rigorous process that uses comprehensive academic, financial, and operational performance data to make merit-based renewal decisions and revokes charters when necessary to protect student and public interests. A quality authorizer encourages high-performing charter schools to expand while establishing clear eligibility standards for school past performance and a clear process for considering expansion and replication requests.

Evidence and Analysis

In order to make the high-stakes decisions related to renewal, expansion, and closure, an authorizer needs to have an accountability framework that aligns to all of the key pieces of the charter lifecycle, from approval to renewal. This consistency of expectations and actions is critical to ensure the Commission's mission can be achieved and that charter schools in Hawai'i exist to serve the students, families, and communities of Hawai'i. The Commission is during its current strategic plan which lays out its mission, vision, and key strategies that will be utilized to achieve their goals. This work is commendable and challenging.

In discussions with Commissioners and school stakeholders, there were inconsistencies related to the question of how one recognizes and defines success in schools. While the strategic plan's reference of high-quality was



mentioned amongst some Commissioners, it was not once referenced by school stakeholders, and no one asked could define it as it related to actual measures or metrics. This lack of clarity was further complicated by the school's desires to define success independently and without any approval or insight from the Commission. An example is one participants' response that success in their school was based on "we've been around for longer than the Commission has existed." These disparate stances are not just barriers of understanding, but also barriers to true accountability and a successful and mission-driven charter landscape. If a common, metric driven, set of measures cannot be established to drive and define quality (and, as referenced, there should be multiple measures with clear goals) then high-stakes decisions can't be made, schools that are doing well cannot expand and grow, and the portfolio cannot demonstrate the uniqueness, the choice, and success it is poised to have.

In the second year of the strategic plan, the Commission has made great strides towards achieving its goals. The new Charter Contract 4.0 is thorough and transparent and, after this upcoming round of renewals, will serve as a foundational accountability document for all Hawai'i charter schools. Although some school stakeholders continue to feel like the contract infringes on their school's autonomy, the Commission conducted a detailed and open process for soliciting and listening to feedback. The "infringement" that a few stakeholders mentioned relates to an issue that came up throughout stakeholder meetings related to a perceived disagreement about the balance of accountability and autonomy.

This challenge is difficult to manage because regardless of the strength and clarity of the legal structure, it crosses over into behavioral and relational, making it difficult for schools to actually see, as one Commissioner stated, "the vast amount of flexibility schools actually have under the Contract." This is a common area of misalignment or perceived disagreement, and it will continue to take time, discussion, and practice to find a more stable "common" ground.

Short-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Continue to refine and communicate clear renewal expectations, process, and timeline(s). Provide opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback and incorporate said feedback, when appropriate, into the process to ensure high-expectations are aligned with stated outcomes, student success, and school-based needs.

Recommendation #2: Set a higher bar for renewal and make the difficult decision to non-renew or revoke the charters of schools that have chronically failed to make sufficient improvement or progress. The Commission has non-renewed one school in its history as an authorizing body but continues to have schools that are not meeting performance

expectations. Renewal is the high-stakes decision that is a crucial lever an authorizer must determine quality. Renewal is a decision informed by both qualitative and quantitative data and which is both an art and a science based upon multiple data points. Renewal work is difficult and critical and must embody evidence collected over time through the performance framework.

The Commission has the tools to define high-quality and hold schools accountable toward meeting the high-quality bar. The Commission must be willing to make difficult decisions when a school is not living up to its expectations. The Commission must trust its processes, its strategy, its



staff, and its vision in order to create a portfolio of high-quality schools for Hawai'i's students.

Recommendation #3: Create a clear path for school expansion requests and criteria for approval. Determine how a school should apply for expansion (amendment request, revised application, etc.) and lay out expectations related to approval. Authorizers should create a clear process for identifying those schools that are meeting or exceeding performance expectations and that may be poised to serve additional students through expansion, replication, or serving additional grades. For those schools that meet the stated expectations and readiness criteria, there should be a clear path for expansion that is not overly bureaucratic or burdensome. Some best practice recommendations are:

- Authorizer's criteria and standards for school operator past performance is exceptionally clear. Schools seeking to replicate or expand know if they should even apply or not.

Long-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Utilize a comprehensive definition of high-quality (aligned with strategic vision) to encompass multiple measures of school quality. This expansive definition should remain committed to excellence in literacy and numeracy, and be

- Replication application is not automatically approved, even for schools that meet past performance criteria and standards. The review for potential replicators is different but never automatic and never without a thorough review. Decisions for replication are based on several factors (e.g., capacity to replicate, potential location), but are most heavily weighted on past academic, financial, and organizational performance.
- Authorizers provide incentives for replication or expansion (e.g., reducing per-student oversight fee and expedited application process, charter amendment process rather than new or expedited application process, access to facilities).

Recommendation #4: Link the Commission's closure protocol as an exhibit referenced within the Charter Contract. As it is a critical part of the overall contractual accountability, it should be included to not only be transparent but connect all aspects of the lifecycle through the overarching contractual language.

inclusive of school, mission, and culturally specific indicators. The definition should then be applied across all authorizing policies and practices.



LOOKING FORWARD

Below is a suggested timeline for implementation of the recommendations made in this report. A more detailed visual and table will be submitted to The Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission under separate cover. When referring to this suggested timeline, it is important to consider local context and capacity, among other nuances.

	2023												2024				
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May
	Obtain a permanent ED																
	Site visit process and reporting																
	Link Closure Protocol																
KEY:																	
Organizational Capacity and Commitment																	
Applications and School Opening																	
Monitoring and Intervention																	
Renewal, Expansion & Closure																	
	Develop MAI goal samples																
	Higher renewal bar																
	Expansion Requests Process																
	Communicate renewal expectations																
	process and format for evaluating ED																
	process for Commissioners self-reflecting and evaluating																
	org. values more tangible/observable																
	vision, roles, responsibilities																
	NOC process																
	Develop timeline for RFP process																
	Identify neighborhoods needing options																
	New ED work w/DOE																
	MAI Training																
	Identify staff to serve as Relationship Managers																
	Align expectations and accountability																
	Use definition of High-Quality																
	train Commissioners on role																
	decision-making matrix																
	RFP feedback																
	Characteristics of HiQual Pub Schools Framewrk																
	Develop perf. Task																
	Develop Survey																
	Reviewer Training																

Helpful Resources and Programs

- [Communities at the Center](#)
- [Multiple Measures](#)
- [Closure Protocol](#)

APPENDIX

Survey and interview data used to gather information for the creation of this report will be provided separately.

BIOGRAPHIES

Amy Ruck Kagan, Managing Partner, Nexus at NACSA Consulting Services

Amy leads a team that works directly with hundreds of authorizers across the country to strengthen the field and the professionals working within it, so all students have access to quality school options.

PEOPLE • PRACTICE • EXCELLENCE

Nexus Authorizer Evaluation Report: Hawai'i State Charter School Commission
December 20, 2022



Amy has dedicated her career to improving public education. Before joining NACSA, Amy served in leadership roles within the charter sector, including the Director of Portfolio Management at Highmark School Development and as the founding Executive Director of Philadelphia Charters for Excellence, Philadelphia's leading advocate for quality charter schools. She also served as the Deputy Commissioner of Innovation for the state of New Jersey, where she oversaw all things school choice for the Department of Education: charter schools, interdistrict public school choice, non-public schools, portfolio districts, and all related practices and policies.

She has experience building accountability and performance management systems and finding areas of flexibility and autonomy for quality operators. She firmly believes all education policies must improve education options and outcomes for students.

Amy started her career in public education as a teacher and remains committed to a students-first philosophy. She is determined to see an education landscape that is choice-oriented, reform-centered, and non-discriminatory.

Kasey Miller, Senior Partner, Nexus at NACSA Consulting Services

Kasey Miller works with a diverse portfolio of clients, helping them to strengthen their authorizing practices and policies leading to more great public schools for all kids.

Prior to her current role, Kasey served as NACSA's Chief of staff, establishing and managing processes, supports, and systems that marry NACSA's strategy and culture so that all of NACSA's work is aligned with achieving its mission.

Kasey has also served as NACSA's Vice President of Talent & Engagement, where she played a vital role in developing, growing, and retaining excellent professionals in the charter school authorizing field through NACSA's human capital initiatives and programs.

She holds master's degrees in social work, organizational development, and training and development, all from Loyola University-Chicago. Her bachelor's degree is from Ohio University's Scripps College of Communication.

Kasey believes that access to quality educational options is a fundamental right and that until every student is in a quality school, we are not living up to our potential as a society.

Heather Wendling, Project Director, WestEd

Heather Wendling is a Project Director on WestEd's School Choice Team. She currently leads a three-year grant to establish and operate New York State's first technical assistance resource center ("NY-RISE") and provide professional development to its 351 charter schools. Heather previously served as the Director of Learning at the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, and as a Senior School Evaluator and the Director for New Charters at the SUNY Charter Schools Institute. Through these roles, Heather accumulated vast knowledge of the national charter landscape, led a variety of resource-



development initiatives, and developed customized learning solutions that reflected best and evolving practices in the sector to address specific stakeholder challenges.

Earlier in her career, Heather worked in charter and traditional public schools as a Teach for America Corps member in Philadelphia and New York as a special education teacher, coordinator, and instructional coach in both elementary and middle school settings. Heather earned her BA in Political Science from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, her JD from the University of Connecticut School of Law, and her MST degree from Pace University Graduate School of Education.



Application for Authorization to Sponsor Charter Schools in Nevada

Background

As outlined in Title 34, Chapter 388A of the Nevada Revised Statute, the primary purpose of charters schools in the state is to serve the best interests of all pupils, including pupils who may be at risk. To open and operate, each charter school must be sponsored by a public oversight entity that has previously received state approval to sponsor one or more schools. A sponsor's fundamental role is to hold each of the schools in its portfolio accountable for the terms of its performance contract, by executing responsibilities which include approving, monitoring, evaluating, renewing, and, if necessary, closing charter schools if they do not satisfactorily achieve agreed upon performance goals.

Per NRS 388A.220, eligible entities to sponsor one or more charter schools in Nevada currently include the board of trustees of a school district, college or university within the Nevada System of Higher Education, or a city or county within the state. Any eligible entity that wishes to become an approved charter school sponsor in Nevada must complete this application according to the guidance and instructions set forth within this set of documents.

Quality sponsorship requires specialized knowledge, skills, commitment, and adherence to essential professional standards in order to effectively deliver quality educational opportunities for students and communities and achieve the purposes of Nevada's charter school law, as noted above. As a result, this application features questions ranging from the theoretical (how would the applicant's mission be furthered by sponsoring charter schools?) to the very practical (how many full-time positions will this work require, and what financial resources are available to fund them?) and many in between, all designed to evaluate the multiple facets this complex work demands. This application also requires the submission of a workplan that sponsors will design and commit to completing to guarantee all the necessary human capital, systems, and policies are fully developed and in place, or materially ready to be implemented prior to officially commencing the responsibilities of sponsoring charter schools.

The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) commends those who explore this opportunity and apply to become approved sponsors, as the amount of self-reflection, visioning, and strategic planning required to complete the application process and prepare to take on additional responsibilities demonstrates a true commitment to high-quality charter schools and improved outcomes for students.

New Sponsor Application Instructions: Section A

All applicants must provide narrative responses for each Section A request outlined below. Strong responses will, at a minimum, clearly address the indicators bulleted below each question.

- Submit one PDF of no more than 15 pages named SPONSORNAME_SECTIONA_APRIL2024.
- Submit relevant attachments (organizational chart, job descriptions, resumes, five-year operational budget, and conflict of interest policy) as one PDF named SPONSORNAME_SECTIONAATTACHMENTS_APRIL2024.

Section A: Agency Commitment and Capacity

This section provides applicants an opportunity to demonstrate their capacity and commitment to fulfill the responsibilities of a charter school sponsor in Nevada.

1. Sponsoring Mission: *Does the applicant have a clear and compelling mission for sponsoring charter schools?*

- a. Identify the applicant's clear and compelling mission and indicate how it fully aligns with the intent of NRS 388A.
- b. Describe how the applicant will carry out or further its mission by sponsoring charter schools.

2. Sponsor's Organizational Goals: *Does the applicant have clear organizational goals and timeframes for achievement that are aligned with its sponsoring mission and Nevada's charter school statute?*

- a. Identify the applicant's clear organizational goals, criteria, and timeframes for achievement.
- b. Indicate how the organizational goals align with the authorizing mission and NRS 388A.

3. Sponsor's Structure of Operations: *Will the applicant operate with a clear structure of duties and responsibilities sufficient to effectively oversee a portfolio of charter schools?*

- a. Describe a clear structure of duties and responsibilities that will be sufficient to effectively oversee and meet the needs of the portfolio of charter schools, including how the structure will be updated, if and when necessary.
- b. Provide an organizational chart, including the full-time equivalencies of these positions, that shows clear lines of reporting and authority/decision-making and, if applicable, showing projected organizational changes due to proposed expansion over the next five years.
- c. Describe how the applicant will appropriately manage, retain, and safeguard school and student information and records relating to authorizing.

4. Authorizing Staff Expertise: *Will the applicant have the appropriate experience, expertise, and skills to sufficiently oversee its portfolio of charter schools?*

- a. Provide the background and experience of proposed sponsor staff (such as through resumes and/or vitae), including individuals both paid (e.g., staff) and unpaid (e.g., board members) as well as

contractors hired by the applicant, that collectively demonstrate the applicant's appropriate experience, expertise, and skills to sufficiently oversee a portfolio of charter schools.

- b. Include job descriptions for all proposed sponsorship staff, including those that will be hired in the future.

5. Sponsor Knowledge and Skill Development of Leadership and Staff: *Does the applicant have a plan to build the knowledge, skill base, and network of its sponsoring leadership and staff through professional development?*

- a. Describe the applicant's work to date to develop the foundational understanding of authorizing needed to submit this application at staff and leadership levels.
- b. Describe the frequency and nature of potential professional development and how these activities will align with the applicant's operations, mission, and organizational goals for overseeing its portfolio of charter schools.

6. Sponsor's Operational Budget for the Portfolio of Charter Schools: *Does the applicant have a plan to allocate resources commensurate with its stated budget, and the needs and responsibilities of sponsoring a portfolio of charter schools?*

- a. Include an anticipated five-year budget (for example, FY 2025-FY 2029) outlining the following:
 - Anticipated revenue sources such as fees collected annually from schools and additional funds from outside sources.
 - Anticipated expenditures such as staff, travel, lease, consultants, office costs (e.g., equipment, supplies), etc.
 - Anticipated staff expenditures and personnel budget increases in relation to portfolio growth.
- b. Provide the target number and size of schools for the portfolio of charter schools for a five-year period, and the rationale for this projection.

7. Authorizer Operational Conflicts of Interest: *How will the applicant implement a clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning a portfolio of charter schools?*

- a. Include the applicant's clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning the portfolio of charter schools.

New Sponsor Application Instructions: Sections B-E

All applicants must provide a **two-part response** for each of the requests outlined below. Sections B through E provide applicants with the opportunity to describe the standards, practices, and processes they will utilize to make high stakes decisions including new school, renewal, and other actions based on a charter school's academic, operational, and financial performance. These sections each contain two essential parts:

(a) a required narrative response, and;

(b) a link to corresponding process documents that illustrate how that particular sponsoring responsibility will be executed. If applicants elect to utilize an existing process, such as that of the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority or a state model resource in lieu of developing their own processes and documentation, please identify and link to these.

- Submit one PDF of no more than **15 pages** named SPONSORNAME_SECTIONBCDE_APRIL2024.
- Include relevant links to documents in the submission checklist named SPONSORNAME_SUBMISSIONCHECKLIST_APRIL2024.

Section B. Application Process and New School Decision Making

Charter school sponsors play a pivotal role in the opening of new schools; it is essential that they utilize a robust process to grant charters only to those applicants who clearly demonstrate the academic vision and financial and operational capacity necessary to govern and operate high-performing schools. They create a methodical, merit-based, and rigorous structure for reviewing academic, operational, and financial plans, and guide the sponsor toward rigorous yet fair judgments about each. When the criteria are clearly communicated to applicants, as they should be, they provide committees to form with a clear sense of what is expected of them and what constitutes a strong proposal. Specific, publicized evaluation criteria also help sponsors ensure consistency in application reviews. They are worthwhile in themselves, but also are a strong shield against questions of bias and favoritism that could form the basis for an appeal of any decision to deny a charter. Establishing common standards that all applicants must meet for approval, and making sure applicants and the sponsor both understand them, help identify which schools will truly serve students best.

8. New Charter School Decisions: *Will the applicant implement clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate new charter school proposals? Does the applicant outline decision-making standards and processes that will promote the growth of high-quality charter schools?*

- a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific new charter application policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations, if any, you will make to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.

- b. Submit transparent, rigorous, and comprehensive new charter school application instructions and questions, evaluative criteria, timelines, review standards and processes, and applicant guidance that align with each of the requirements articulated in NRS 388A.246.

9. Determining Readiness to Open: *Will the applicant utilize clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate a new charter school's readiness to open to serve students and families?*

- a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific ready to open policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations, if any, you will make to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.
- b. Submit documentation that includes the pre-opening tasks, in alignment with NRS 388A.270(1)(c), that the sponsor has determined must be completed before the commencement of operation to ensure that the charter school meets all building, health, safety, insurance, and other legal requirements, and a description of the process for proactively monitoring the activity of all schools between new charter award and projected opening, assessing sufficiency of documentation, and intervening when necessary.

Section C. Performance Contracting

Charter contracts make school-based autonomy and accountability real and are thus critical for making the charter school concept work. Charter contracts protect school autonomy and safeguard schools from inappropriate intervention while at the same time establishing performance standards that enable sponsors to hold schools accountable for results. They make clear the school's obligation to uphold the public trust and protect students' rights.

Sponsors are generally encouraged to customize a contract template and process in ways that maintain a common approach to accountability among a portfolio of schools while also making contract creation and negotiation as simple and straightforward as possible.

10. Contract Term, Negotiation, and Execution: *How will the applicant execute contracts that clearly define material terms and rights and responsibilities of the school and the applicant as a sponsor?*

- a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific contracting policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations, if any, you will make to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.
- b. Submit a charter contract template that complies with NRS 388A.270 and articulates the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, administration and oversight, outcome measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences, and other material terms. Describe how renewal and change in authorizer contracts will be fully executed no later than 60 days before the charter school commences operation and describe under what circumstances and how the applicant will execute contract amendments for material changes to current school plans when necessary (not in lieu of conducting renewal evaluations).

11. Performance Outcomes and Standards: *Will the applicant utilize a performance framework under which it executes contracts with clear, measurable, and attainable performance outcomes and standards? Will the applicant implement clear and consistent processes designed to protect charter schools' autonomy while also holding them accountable to its academic, financial, and operational performance outcomes and standards?*

- a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific performance management policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations, if any, you will make to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.
- b. Submit a comprehensive performance framework addressing the following elements:
 - The performance framework identifies the primary purpose of the charter schools in its portfolio is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement and identifies additional purposes per statute.
 - The performance framework defines clear, measurable, and attainable academic, operational and financial performance outcomes and standards for all schools in its portfolio and consequences to hold charter schools accountable for meeting or not meeting performance outcomes and standards.
 - The performance framework is included in the charter contracts the applicant executes with schools.
 - If the comprehensive performance framework allows for flexibility in negotiating performance outcomes with schools individually, describe a plan to establish contract outcomes/goals that are specific and strategic, measurable, attainable, results-based, and time-bound.

Section D. Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation

Nevada sponsors are charged with ensuring comprehensive charter school oversight that maintains high standards of school performance, upholds school autonomy, and safeguards the student and public interest. Per NRS 388A.223(e), Nevada sponsors have a responsibility to monitor schools in accordance with applicable law and in accordance with the terms and conditions of a school's charter contract, along with the performance and compliance record of each school. Further, full transparency between a sponsor and its schools promotes school quality. While charter schools are expected to proactively monitor their own performance to inform ongoing improvement efforts, they also need to know how their sponsors view their progress. When contracts contain explicit goals and performance frameworks that show what acceptable progress looks like, it becomes relatively easy to give schools detailed, annual feedback based on data the sponsor has collected over the past year.

12. Sponsor's Processes for Ongoing Oversight of the Portfolio of Charter Schools: *Will the applicant have robust processes to monitor and oversee charter schools in the areas of academics, operations, and finances?*

- a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific financial oversight policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations, if any, you will make to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.
- b. Provide (1) the academic, financial, operational and legal reporting charter schools will be responsible for providing to the sponsor; (2) an oversight plan that clearly establishes the criteria, processes, and procedures the applicant will use to competently evaluate academic, financial and operational

performance and monitor compliance with applicable law; (3) how evaluative findings will be communicated to individual schools via annual reports; and (4) how the applicant's ongoing oversight informs its standards and processes for technical support, intervention, termination, and renewal decisions for its portfolio of charter schools.

13. Sponsor's Standards and Processes for Interventions, Corrective Action, and Response to Complaints: *Will the applicant implement clear and comprehensive standards and processes to address complaints, intervention, and corrective action?*

- a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific intervention policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations, if any, you will make to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.
- b. Submit the (1) clear and comprehensive standards, procedures, and processes to address and resolve complaints, including forms if applicable; (2) clear and comprehensive standards, procedures, and processes for intervention and corrective action; and (3) how the applicant's standards and processes for intervention, corrective action, and response to complaints align with its ongoing oversight of the portfolio of charter schools.

Section E. Renewal, Closure, and Revocation Decision Making

Charter schools agree to accept greater accountability for outcomes in exchange for greater autonomy over inputs but should have a clear understanding from the outset of what it will take to earn renewal of their charter. The charter contract expresses a school's commitment to achieve certain academic and operational goals and outcomes; renewal criteria state the standards that will govern the renewal decision itself. They should answer the question, "how good is good enough for this school to continue?" and form the bases of a sponsor's annual reporting to schools and the public on each charter school's performance and progress. There should be several years of relevant data in hand when the renewal decision-making process starts.

When schools fail to meet the goals in their charter contracts, they risk non-renewal- a sponsor's decision not to renew a charter at the end of its term. Revocation, as distinguished from non-renewal, may occur at any time during the charter term when there is clear evidence of extreme violations or failings that warrant termination of the charter to protect student and public interests.

14. Charter School Renewal or Termination Decisions: *Will the applicant utilize clear and comprehensive standards and processes to make high stakes renewal and termination decisions? Does the applicant outline charter school renewal and termination decision standards and processes that will promote the growth of high-quality charter schools?*

Describe transparent and rigorous standards, procedures, timelines, and review processes designed to use comprehensive academic, financial, operational and student performance data to make high stakes, merit-based renewal decisions and terminate charters when necessary to protect student and public interests.

- a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific renewal and non-renewal policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations, if any, you

will make to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.

- b. Share documented processes and/or templates for formal written evaluations of each charter school's performance to be disseminated before the sponsor renews the charter contract; the standards for determining consequences for meeting or not meeting performance standards; and a school closure plan, including the applicant's role in the orderly closure of a school in the event of termination, revocation, nonrenewal or voluntary relinquishment of the charter.

New Sponsor Application Instructions

All applicants must provide a PDF response to the request outlined below named SPONSORNAME_WORKPLAN_APRIL2024.

Section F. Sponsor Workplan

The Department recognizes that the applicant will not have every single authorizing policy, system, and procedure in place in a finalized state for its future sponsorship of charter schools upon submission of this application. As a result, and to demonstrate the sound planning needed to be ready to take on such responsibilities, applicants must submit a workplan in their preferred format with a clear timeframe and appropriate milestones that clearly shows how they will develop the internal capacities and implement the policies necessary for high quality oversight of charter schools prior to releasing their first Request for Proposals for New School Applications. Strong responses will align with applicants' narrative responses and include details as to responsible individuals or groups and how they will be held accountable for completion of the workplan.

This workplan should include, but not be limited to, plans for the following:

- Internal and external communications to internal staff, the public, the applicant's school community and to potential charter school applicants or transfer schools.
- Timing and sequencing for adapting the submitted policy, process, and template documents and implementation plans to local context.
- Staff recruitment and hiring plan for sponsorship-related positions.
- Local needs assessment to identify K-12 educational and community needs in alignment with NRS 388A.220 and the applicant's mission and organizational goals as stated in Section A of this application.
- Ongoing professional development on quality authorizing principles and practices.
- Systems for charter-school related data collection and compliance reporting per state requirements.

Form 1 – Assurances

Name of Applicant Entity:

LEGALLY BINDING

By signing this form, I/we acknowledge that I/we am/are aware of sponsorship responsibilities in their entirety as stated within the application materials and shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and provisions stated therein, should the entity be approved to sponsor charter schools in the state of Nevada.

I/we hereby assure and agree to comply with all conditions of the approved application and submit required documents and certifications as required, should the entity be approved as a sponsor, and that the entity is committed to serving as a sponsor unless the NDE terminates the organization's ability to sponsor charter schools under NRS 388A.220.

Applicant's Identified Official with Authority

(Provide the name, title, and signature of person with legal authority to certify on behalf of the applicant.)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Applicant's Primary Sponsoring Contact (if different from above)

(Provide the name, title, and signature of applicant's primary sponsoring contact, if different from above.)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Form 2 – Applicant Contacts

Name of Applicant Entity:

Please list individuals involved in the development of this application.

Name	Role/Position	Email Address	Phone Number

Application for Authorization to Sponsor Charter Schools in Nevada – Review Rubric

Applicant Name	
Entity Type	
Date Application Submitted	
Date of Applicant Interview	
Reviewer Name	
Preliminary Recommendation	

Overview and Rating Criteria

Nevada’s sponsor approval process is designed to assess how effectively an applicant proposes to fulfill the role of a charter school sponsor based on the requirements set out in state statute and regulation.

Reviewers will read and evaluate each application section individually and as a cohesive whole, and then assign one of the following ratings for each response.

- Meets expectations:** The applicant’s response and documentation demonstrate substantial compliance with state law, fulfillment of Nevada’s purposes for sponsoring charter schools, and nationally recognized, effective sponsorship practices. Beyond compliance, the applicant’s response also provides sufficient detail to demonstrate a thoughtful, high-quality approach to both planning and execution of sponsoring responsibilities and an overall alignment to their stated mission and identified community needs. To earn a meets expectations rating, applicants do not need to have every process formally in place; reviewers can and should use their professional judgment to assess whether the applicants have amassed or will secure the necessary capacity to do so based on the comprehensiveness of their rationale, page limits notwithstanding.
- Approaches expectations:** The applicant’s response and documentation demonstrate either inconsistent compliance with state law, fulfillment of Nevada’s purposes for sponsoring charter schools, and/or nationally recognized, effective sponsorship practices; OR, the applicant’s response does not provide adequate detail to clearly demonstrate a thoughtful, high-quality approach to both planning and execution of sponsoring responsibilities and an overall alignment to their stated mission and identified community needs. Specific requests for additional information and clarification will be provided.
- Does not meet expectations:** The applicant’s response and documentation does not demonstrate compliance with state law, fulfillment of Nevada’s purposes for sponsoring charter schools, or nationally recognized, effective sponsorship practices. The applicant’s response fails to describe a thoughtful or high-quality approach to both planning and execution of sponsoring responsibilities and an overall alignment to their stated mission and identified community needs. Specific deficiencies will be identified and shared with the applicant.

In order to be approved as a charter school sponsor, an applicant must receive a “meets expectations” rating on a majority of rubric items, with no final “does not meet expectations” ratings.

Section A: Agency Commitment and Capacity

This section provides applicants an opportunity to demonstrate their capacity and commitment to fulfill the responsibilities of a charter school sponsor in Nevada.

1. Sponsoring Mission: *Does the applicant have a clear and compelling mission for sponsoring charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Identify the applicant's clear and compelling mission and indicate how it fully aligns with the intent of NRS 388A.			
b. Describe how the applicant will carry out or further its mission by sponsoring charter schools.			

2. Sponsor's Organizational Goals: *Does the applicant have clear organizational goals and timeframes for achievement that are aligned with its sponsoring mission and Nevada's charter school statute?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Identify the applicant's clear organizational goals, criteria, and timeframes for achievement.			
b. Indicate how the organizational goals align with the authorizing mission and NRS 388A.			

3. Sponsor's Structure of Operations: *Will the applicant operate with a clear structure of duties and responsibilities sufficient to effectively oversee a portfolio of charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Describe a clear structure of duties and responsibilities that will be sufficient to effectively oversee and meet the needs of the portfolio of charter schools, including how the structure will be updated, if and when necessary.			
b. Provide an organizational chart, including the full-time equivalencies of these positions, that shows clear lines of reporting and authority/decision-making and, if applicable, showing projected organizational changes due to proposed expansion over the next five years.			
c. Describe how the applicant will appropriately manage, retain, and safeguard school and student information and records relating to authorizing.			

4. Sponsoring Staff Expertise: *Will the applicant have the appropriate experience, expertise, and skills to sufficiently oversee its portfolio of charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Provide the background and experience of proposed sponsor staff (such as through resumes and/or vitae), including individuals both paid (e.g., staff) and unpaid (e.g., board members) as well as contractors hired by the applicant, that collectively demonstrate the applicant's appropriate experience, expertise, and skills to sufficiently oversee a portfolio of charter schools.			
b. Include job descriptions for all proposed sponsorship staff, including those that will be hired in the future.			

5. Sponsor Knowledge and Skill Development of Leadership and Staff: *Does the applicant have a plan to build the knowledge, skill base, and network of its sponsoring leadership and staff through professional development?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Describe the applicant's work to date to develop the foundational understanding of authorizing needed to submit this application at staff and leadership levels.			
b. Describe the frequency and nature of potential professional development and how these activities will align with the applicant's operations, mission, and organizational goals for overseeing its portfolio of charter schools.			

6. Sponsor’s Operational Budget for the Portfolio of Charter Schools: *Does the applicant have a plan to allocate resources commensurate with its stated budget, and the needs and responsibilities of sponsoring a portfolio of charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
<p>a. Include an anticipated five-year budget (for example, FY 2025-FY 2029) outlining the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anticipated revenue sources such as fees collected annually from schools and additional funds from outside sources. ▪ Anticipated expenditures such as staff, travel, lease, consultants, office costs (e.g., equipment, supplies), etc. ▪ Anticipated staff expenditures and personnel budget increases in relation to portfolio growth. 			

b. Provide the target number and size of schools for the portfolio of charter schools for a five-year period, and the rationale for this projection.			
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7. Sponsor's Operational Conflicts of Interest: *How will the applicant implement a clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning a portfolio of charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Include the applicant's clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning the portfolio of charter schools.			

Section A: Overall Strengths and Weaknesses.

Please describe the applicant's strengths and weaknesses to support the ratings provided above.

Section A: Prioritized Questions for Applicant Interview OR Request for Amendment

What are the top five questions you'd ask?

Section B. Application Process and New School Decision Making

8. New Charter School Decisions: *Will the applicant implement clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate new charter school proposals? Does the applicant outline decision-making standards and processes that will promote the growth of high-quality charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific new charter application policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and			

what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Submit transparent, rigorous, and comprehensive new charter school application instructions and questions, evaluative criteria, timelines, review standards and processes, and applicant guidance that align with each of the requirements articulated in NRS 388A.246.			

9. Determining Readiness to Open: *Will the applicant utilize clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate a new charter school's readiness to open to serve students and families?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific ready to open policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Submit documentation that includes the pre-opening tasks, in alignment with NRS			

388A.270(1)(c), that the sponsor has determined must be completed before the commencement of operation to ensure that the charter school meets all building, health, safety, insurance, and other legal requirements, and a description of the process for proactively monitoring the activity of all schools between new charter award and projected opening, assessing sufficiency of documentation, and intervening when necessary.			
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Section C. Performance Contracting

10. Contract Term, Negotiation, and Execution: *How will the applicant execute contracts that clearly define material terms and rights and responsibilities of the school and the applicant as a sponsor?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific contracting policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Submit a charter contract template that complies with NRS 388A.270 and articulates			

<p>the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, administration and oversight, outcome measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences, and other material terms. Describe how renewal and change in authorizer contracts will be fully executed no later than 60 days before the charter school commences operation and describe under what circumstances and how the applicant will execute contract amendments for material changes to current school plans when necessary (not in lieu of conducting renewal evaluations).</p>			
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11. Performance Outcomes and Standards: *Will the applicant utilize a performance framework under which it executes contracts with clear, measurable, and attainable performance outcomes and standards? Will the applicant implement clear and consistent processes designed to protect charter schools' autonomy while also holding them accountable to its academic, financial, and operational performance outcomes and standards?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
<p>a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific performance management policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.</p>			

<p>b. Provide a comprehensive performance framework addressing the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The performance framework identifies the primary purpose of the charter schools in its portfolio is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement and identifies additional purposes per statute. • The performance framework defines clear, measurable, and attainable academic, operational, and financial performance outcomes and standards for all schools in its portfolio and consequences to hold charter schools accountable for meeting or not meeting performance outcomes and standards. • The performance framework is included in the charter contracts the applicant executes with schools. • If the comprehensive performance framework allows for flexibility in negotiating performance outcomes with schools individually, describe a plan to establish contract outcomes/goals that are specific and strategic, measurable, attainable, results-based, and time-bound. 			
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Section D. Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation

12. Sponsor's Processes for Ongoing Oversight of the Portfolio of Charter Schools: *Will the applicant have robust processes to monitor and oversee charter schools in the areas of academics, operations, and finances?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific financial oversight policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Describe (1) the academic, financial, operational and legal reporting charter schools will be responsible for providing to the sponsor; (2) an oversight plan that clearly establishes the criteria, processes, and procedures the applicant will use to competently evaluate academic, financial and operational performance and monitor compliance with applicable law; (3) how evaluative findings will be communicated to individual schools via annual reports; and (4) how the applicant's ongoing oversight informs its standards and processes for technical support, intervention, termination, and			

renewal decisions for its portfolio of charter schools.			
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13. Sponsor's Standards and Processes for Interventions, Corrective Action, and Response to Complaints: *Will the applicant implement clear and comprehensive standards and processes to address complaints, intervention, and corrective action?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific intervention policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make, if any, to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Share the (1) clear and comprehensive standards, procedures, and processes to address and resolve complaints, including forms if applicable; (2) clear and comprehensive standards, procedures, and processes for intervention and corrective action; and (3) how the applicant's standards and processes for intervention, corrective action, and response to complaints align with its ongoing oversight of the portfolio of charter schools.			

Section E. Renewal, Closure, and Revocation Decision Making

14. Charter School Renewal or Termination Decisions: *Will the applicant utilize clear and comprehensive standards and processes to make high stakes renewal and termination decisions? Does the applicant outline charter school renewal and termination decision standards and processes that will promote the growth of high-quality charter schools?*

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
a. Explain how your organization developed or selected these specific renewal and non-renewal policies, processes, and/or template documents; the top three potential adaptations you will make to align them with local context and implement them in a high-quality manner; and what challenges you anticipate in their implementation.			
b. Share documented processes and/or templates for formal written evaluations of each charter school's performance to be disseminated before the sponsor renews the charter contract; the standards for determining consequences for meeting or not meeting performance standards; and a school closure plan, including the applicant's role in the orderly closure of a school in the event of termination, revocation, nonrenewal or voluntary relinquishment of the charter.			

Sections B, C, D, and E: Overall Strengths and Weaknesses

Please describe the applicant's strengths and weaknesses to support the ratings provided above.

Sections B, C, D, and E: Prioritized Questions for Applicant Interview OR Request for Amendment

What are the top five questions you'd ask?

Section F. Sponsor Workplan

The Department recognizes that the applicant will not have every single authorizing policy, system, and procedure in place in a finalized state for its future sponsorship of charter schools upon submission of this application. As a result, and to demonstrate the sound planning needed to be ready to take on such responsibilities, applicants must submit a workplan in their preferred format with a clear timeframe and appropriate milestones that clearly shows how they will develop the internal capacities and implement the policies necessary for high quality oversight of charter schools prior to releasing their first Request for Proposals for New School Applications. Strong responses will align with applicants' narrative responses and include details as to responsible individuals or groups and how they will be held accountable for completion of the workplan.

Request	Fully Addressed? (Yes/No)	Questions?	Rating
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This workplan should include, but not be limited to, plans for the following:

- Internal and external communications to internal staff, the public, the applicant's school community and to potential charter school applicants or transfer schools.
- Adapting policy, process, and template documents and implementation plans to local context.
- Staff recruitment and hiring plan for sponsorship-related positions.
- Local needs assessment to identify K-12 educational and community needs in alignment with the applicant's mission and organizational goals, as stated in Section A of this application.
- Ongoing professional development on quality authorizing principles and practices.
- Systems for charter-school related data collection and compliance reporting per state requirements.

Section F Workplan: Overall Strengths and Weaknesses

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Section F Workplan: Prioritized Questions for Applicant Interview OR Request for Amendment