

How to Apply to Become a Community School Sponsor

- 1) Determine if you are eligible to apply. Refer to the Community School Sponsor Application to see if your organization meets the eligibility requirements to apply.

Note: Qualified applicants granted tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code should review Ohio Administrative Code 3301-102-02 to see the provisions the Department will evaluate to determine if they are an “education-oriented entity.” Any of the 13 state universities listed in Ohio Revised Code 3345.011 interested in becoming a sponsor should review ORC 3314.02(C)(1)(e) to review the provisions they must meet to be eligible to apply to become sponsors.

- 2) Research the requirements and responsibilities of Ohio community school sponsors to make sure your organization has the resources, capacity and capability of carrying out these duties. Several documents and other information resources regarding community school sponsoring are available on the Ohio Department of Education website at education.ohio.gov/CommunitySchools. Laws and rules regarding sponsoring requirements are available in ORC [Chapter 3314](#) and OAC [Chapter 3301-102](#).
- 3) Contact the Office of Community Schools at community.schools@education.ohio.gov or (877) 644-6338 to inform the office of your interest in applying for community school sponsorship. A staff member from the Office of Community Schools will contact you to see if you are interested in participating in a technical assistance session regarding the sponsor application process. (Note: The technical assistance session is optional. You can apply without participating in a technical assistance session.)
- 4) If you opted to participate in a technical assistance session, attend your scheduled session with the Office of Community Schools (by phone or in person) to discuss the application process.
- 5) Start working on the Community School Sponsor Application. Contact the Office of Community Schools if you have any questions about the application process or sponsoring requirements.
- 6) At least three weeks prior to completing your application, contact the Office of Community Schools so that it can create an Epicenter account and provide additional instructions for your organization regarding the uploading of your completed application.
- 7) Submit your completed application electronically through your Epicenter account by the designated deadline.
- 8) The Department will review all submitted applications and supporting documentation and determine if the applicant should be approved or denied for a sponsorship agreement.
- 9) **If you are approved for a sponsorship agreement**, the Department will send you a letter of approval. The Department will then finalize the sponsorship agreement and send it to your organization for signature. When your organization returns the signed agreement, the Department will sign the agreement and send the final signed version to you. You may begin accepting school applications for the school year once the agreement is fully executed pursuant to your sponsorship agreement with the Department. Sponsorship authority is not granted until the sponsorship agreement is entered by both parties.
- 10) **If you are denied a sponsorship agreement**, the Department will send you a letter of denial specifying the reasons for the denial. Carefully read the reason(s) why your application was denied. In accordance with ORC 119.12, applicants not approved for sponsorship may file a notice of appeal of the decision 15 days after the mailing of the Department’s decision.