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| --- | --- |
| Authorizer |  |
| Name of Proposed School |  |
| School IRN |  |
| Proposed District of Location and Address  (if not available, intended neighborhood) |  |
| Date School Proposes to Open |  |
| Focus of Proposed School  (general education, dropout prevention & recovery, special education) |  |
| OCS Lead |  |

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| **Issues and Concerns** |
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**We are requesting authorizers submit the following documents along with each preliminary agreement for a new charter school planning to open in the 2015-2016 school year:**

1. A copy of the completed application submitted by the developer, including:
   1. First year budget with monthly detail showing expected cash flow; and,
   2. Expected assets and liabilities on September 1st.
2. A copy of the authorizer’s rubric or scoring guide used to assess the developer’s application, including the approval criteria and score for the developer’s application;
3. Names of individuals who reviewed the developer’s application and their relationship to the authorizer;
4. Interview;
5. A copy of the authorizer’s governing board’s minutes approving the preliminary agreement;
6. A copy of the lease for the new school’s intended facility;
7. A copy of any management contracts and/or service agreements that are at or above $5,000 and/or a description of services expected to be contracted to a single vendor at a cost of $5,000/year or more;
8. A list of the new school’s governing authority members’ names and resumes; and
9. If the authorizer intends to sell services to the new school, a description of those services.

| **Item / OCS Notes** | | | |
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| **Copy of the developer’s application to the authorizer.** | | | **item provided**  **(YES /** NO**)** |
| Things to look for in the application:   * Comprehensive, detailed application questions cross-reference the four main areas of school planning and operations [education plan, governance, finance (including market research), and accountability]. * The application requires the developer to provide strong evidence and great detail on all of the following:   + a clear and compelling mission and vision;   + a quality educational program;   + a solid business plan (including market and community research);   + an effective governance and management structure;   + staffing for people with diverse knowledge in education, school finance, etc.; and   + clear evidence of capacity to successfully execute its plan. * If the proposed school replicates an existing school(s) that has been open for a minimum of two academic years, the developer is required to provide strong evidence and great detail on all of the following:   + Clear evidence of capacity to operate a new school successfully while maintaining quality in existing schools;   + Document educational, organizational, and financial performance records based on all existing schools;   + Must present a growth plan, business plan, and most recent financial audits; and,   + Meet multiple indicators of effectiveness in all of the following areas: high academic, organization, and financial success to earn approval for replication.   The applicant must explain any never-opened, terminated, or non-renewed school. | | | |
| Notes on the depth and content of the application: | | | |
| **Proposed School’s Education Plan** | | | |
| What is the intended enrollment area for the school?  (e.g., district, adjacent, statewide, etc.) |  | | |
| What grade levels will be initially served?  Does the school plan to expand grade levels? |  | | |
| What is the estimated enrollment in the first year?  Does the school plan to expand enrollment after year 1? |  | | |
| What will the method of instructional delivery be?  (e.g., site-based, online, blended, etc.) |  | | |
| Staffing Plan…. |  | | |
| **Developer History** | | | |
| Questions to answer regarding the developer:   * What is the developer’s name? * Is the developer involved with other currently operating charter schools? * Is the developer affiliated with any school that never-opened, failed to launch, suspended prior to the end of the contract, or was non-renewed or terminated? * If the developer is affiliated with existing schools, what are the academic performance levels of these schools? | | | |
| Notes on Developer History: | | | |
| Management Company or Operator (If applicable) | | | |
| Name of affiliated management company or operator. |  | | |
| If operated by a management company, the following information needs to be examined:   * List of charter schools with current or prior affiliations with the Management Company or operator; including affiliations with out of state charters. * Academic performance of the charter schools currently being operated by the new school’s management company. | | | |
| Notes on Management Company: | | | |
| **Recycled School** | | | |
| What evidence exists to prove that the proposed school is NOT a “recycled school” (e.g., new sponsor, new building, new staff, new students, new operator, and new governing authority)? | | | |
| Notes on Recycled School: | | | |
| **Copy of authorizer’s completed scoring rubric for the developer’s application.** | | **item provided**  **(YES / NO)** | |
| Things to look for in the completed rubric:   * The authorizer uses a scoring rubric to evaluate the quality of the developer’s application. * The scoring rubric includes clear criteria or standards that the review team must use to evaluate the quality of the developer’s application. * The scoring rubric includes a numeric threshold accepting or rejecting the developer’s application.   Questions to answer:   * Did the application meet the numeric threshold for approval? * Were concerns raised by the review team about the developer’s application? If yes, what were those concerns, and how were they addressed in the preliminary agreement? * Did the authorizer include a formal written conflict of interest statement to be signed by every internal and external reviewer of the applicant? | | | |
| Notes on Scoring Rubric: | | | |
| **Names of the individuals who reviewed the developer’s application, their relationship to the authorizer, and their expertise in authorizing charter schools.** | | **item provided**  **(YES / NO)** | |
| Things to look for in reviewers:  The reviewers have practiced in charter schools or authorizing for several years, have diverse expertise (an certification where appropriate) in the following areas:   * + Curriculum, instruction, and assessment;   + Special education and ELL instruction;   + School accountability;   + School facilities;   + School law;   + School finance; and,   + School governance. * The reviewers include members of the authorizer’s governing board.   Questions to answer:   * What evidence exists that the reviewers of the school’s academic plan have expertise in the academic focus of the proposed new school?   Does the authorizer contract with external sources to review new school applications? If so, what is their expertise? | | | |
| Notes on Expertise of Reviewers: | | | |
| **Copy of authorizer’s governing board minutes approving the preliminary agreement.** | | **item provided**  **(YES / NO)** | |
| Things to look for:   * The governing board officially voted to approve the application; and * Any concerns regarding the developer’s application were addressed in the preliminary agreement**.** | | | |
| Notes on Governing Board Approval: | | | |
| **A copy of the lease for the new school’s intended facility. (Item 11)**  **No specific location in Dayton, Ohio.** | | **item provided**  **(**YES / **NO)** | |
| Things to look for:  What is the proximity of the new school to other currently operating schools? **N/A.** | | | |
| Notes on leased facility: | | | |
| **A copy of any management contracts and/or service agreements that are at or above $5,000 and/or a description of services expected to be contracted to a single vendor at a cost of $5,000/year or more.** | | **item provided**  **(Yes / NO)** | |
| Things to look for:   * How many service contracts were provided by the authorizer and for what services? * What services will the school be contracting from its authorizer? | | | |
| Notes on contracts: | | | |
| **Market and Community Research** | | | |
| Things to look for in the market research:   * The developer examined the proximity of choice options and niche schools, and examining unmet community needs, such as lack of schools with specialized focus.   Questions to answer regarding the Business Plan:  Will the school meet an identified need? | | | |
| Notes on Business Plan and Market Research: | | | |
| Business Plan (including Start-Up and First-Year Operations) **Not Included but there is a Financial Plan** | | | |
| Questions to answer regarding the Business Plan:   * What financial support has the developer received to date? * What financial support does the developer anticipate receiving in the near future? * Does the school have a viable pre-opening start-up budget that will allow the school to successfully operate for at least three months, based on the size and scope of the school? * Does the school have a viable first-year operating budget that will support the size and scope of the school? (monthly cash flow details are included in the application). | | | |
| **A list of the new school’s governing authority members’ names and resumes.** | | **item provided**  **(YES / NO)** | |
| Things to look for:  No conflicts of interest (perceived or real) exist between the new school’s governing board members and the authorizer. | | | |
| Notes on the proposed school’s governing authority: | | | |
| **Purchased Services from the Authorizer** | | **item provided**  **(YES / NO)** | |
| If the authorizer intends to sell services to the new school, a description of those services. Things to look for:  No conflicts of interest (both in staffing and funding) exist between the sponsor and the community schools it sponsors.  The authorizer’s funding is structured in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, inducements, incentives, or disincentives that might compromise its judgment in charter approval and accountability decision making. | | | |
| Notes on serves purchased from the authorizer: | | | |

|  | Poor or Undeveloped | Ineffective | Effective | Exemplary |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A. Application Process, Timeline, & Clarity of Directions | * The authorizer has **no formal application process – no written application**. * The authorizer’s application **timeline is not defined**. * Application **guidance is absent or undocumented** **and varies** depending upon which staff member responds to questions by the public. * The application process **does not include interviewing applicants**. | * The authorizer **has an application process; however**, it is **undocumented and loosely defined**. * **Timelines** are **loosely defined**. * Applications are **accepted close to the statutory contract adoption date**, leaving **little time for contract negotiations**. * The **application is not readily available to the public**. * The **application provides limited directions on the content and format** expected of applicants. * The authorizer **does not document the criteria it uses to evaluate its applications**. * The application process **may include an** interview with applicants. | * The authorizer **follows and explains a systemic application process; however**, it is **not fully documented**. * The authorizer **typically follows a defined timeline** for reviewing charter applications. The **planning stage is at least six months** long. * The **application is readily available to the public**. * The application **provides general directions on content and format** expected of applicants. (e.g., does not include resources or references to assist the applicant.) * The authorizer **documents the general criteria it uses to evaluate its applications**. However, these criteria are **not publicized as part of the application process**. * The application process **includes interviewing final applicants**. | * The authorizer **follows a documented systematic application process**. * The authorizer’s **timeline allows for a pre-opening stage of least nine months** so that the application **process is carried out with quality and integrity**. It **aligns with the school year and provides ample time** to adequately complete the application, plan, and prepare for the school’s opening. * The authorizer’s application **guidance is documented, detailed and readily available to the public through the authorizer’s website.** (e.g., includes the procedure to submit (word length, font size, electronic/paper), includes references to assist the applicant, etc.). * The application provides **clear directions on required content and format**. * The authorizer **documents and clearly communicates** to applicants the **criteria it uses to evaluate its applications**. * Application **clearly states** the authorizer’s **chartering priorities**. * The process **includes interviewing final applicants before adopting a contract**. |
| B. Application Depth | * The authorizer **does not have a written application**. | * The application **includes few questions**. * The **questions are very broad** in nature and **do not provide** **enough data to thoroughly evaluate** the applicant’s **educational and business plans and capacities**. | * **General** application **questions, covering four main areas of school planning and operations** [education plan, governance, finance (including market research) and accountability] along with **suggested attachments**, **provide adequate data for analyzing** an applicant’s plans and capacities.   *For example:*  *Describe the demographics of the students that your school will serve and of the charter in which the school will be located.  Why are you proposing this school in this location?*  *Generally describe your school’s curriculum plan and provide an overview of the instructional design and program to be emphasized by the school.* | * **Comprehensive, detailed** application **questions cross-reference the four main areas** of school planning andoperations [education plan, governance, finance (including market research) and accountability]provide **extensive data for rigorous evaluation** of the applicant’s plans and capacities.   *For example:*  *Describe the needs assessment of the school’s target neighborhood and student population, including current student demographics and academic performance of other schools in the charter in which the school will be located.  Explain the academic impact of the proposed school model on the students and charter. Describe the process used to assess local need and provide evidence that the charter approves of the proposed school.*  *Explain the school’s curriculum, its alignment to the Ohio Standards and benchmarks, specific instructional materials to be used to implement the curriculum, and the process your school will follow to evaluate, review and revise its curriculum on an annual basis.* |
| C. Rigorous Criteria for New Applicants, including any affiliated with previously operating schools. | * The authorizer **may require** applicants to **outline** **some** of the following:   + an educational program;   + staffing plan;   + a business plan;   + governance; **and/or**   + management structure. * Application **criteria are minimal and focus** mainly **on meeting state and federal statutory requirements**. | * The authorizer requires all applicants to **describe in general terms some** of the following:   + **a mission and vision**;   + an educational program;   + staffing plan;   + a business plan;   + governance; **and/or**   + management structure. | * The authorizer requires all applicants to **present in detail all** of the following:   + a mission and vision;   + an educational program;   + staffing plan;   + a business plan **(including market research)**;   + governance and management structure; and   + **capacity to carry out its plan**. * The applicant **must explain any never-opened, terminated, or non-renewed schools**.   (**Market research includes** examining the types of schools and students in the area; it does not include an examination of the needs of the charter.) | * The authorizer requires all applicants to **provide strong evidence and great detail on all** of the following:   + **a clear and compelling** mission and vision;   + a **quality** educational program;   + a **solid** business plan (including market and **charter research**);   + an **effective** governance and management structure;   + **staffing** for people **with diverse knowledge in education, school finance, etc**.; and   + **clear evidence** of capacity **to successfully execute** its plan. * The applicant **must explain any never-opened, terminated, or non-renewed schools**.   (**Charter research includes** examining the proximately of choice options and niche schools, and examining unmet charter needs, such as lack of schools with specialized focus.) |
| D. Rigorous Criteria for Existing Charter School Operators / Replicators  *Which ever school is being replicated, it must have been in operation for two or more school years.* | * **No additional criteria** are required of existing school operators and/or replicators of existing schools. * Authorizer **does not look for any evidence of past success or the capacity for growth**. | * **While no additional criteria are required**, the authorizer completes a **cursory look of the current school’s academic success *or* a consideration for the school’s capacity to expand**. | * Authorizer **requires** the applicant to **meet the following criteria**:   + **Clear evidence of capacity** to **operate a new school successfully** while **maintaining quality in existing schools**;   + **Document educational, organizational, and financial performance records** based on **all existing schools**;   + Must **explain any never-opened, terminated, or non-renewed schools**;   + Must **present a growth plan, business plan, and most recent financial audits**; and   + **Meet at least one of the following indicators of effectiveness to earn approval** for replication: high academic, organization, and/or financial success to earn approval for replication. | * Authorizer **requires** the applicant to **meet the following criteria**:   + **Clear evidence of capacity** to **operate a new school successfully** while **maintaining quality in existing schools**;   + **Document educational, organizational, and financial performance records** based on **all existing schools**;   + Must **explain any never-opened, terminated, or non-renewed schools**;   + Must **present a growth plan, business plan, and most recent financial audits**; and   + **Meet multiple indicators of effectiveness in all of the following areas**: high academic, organization, and financial success to earn approval for replication.   *Examples of success include*: never had an un-auditable school; no general education or special education school rated below the top two LRC categories; no dropout prevention and recovery schools rated below “meets”, etc. |
| E. Rigorous Criteria for Charter Schools Changing Authorizer/ Assignment of Contract  (if applicable) | * **No additional criteria** are required of the existing school seeking to be switch authorizers. * Authorizer **does not look for any evidence of past success or the capacity to operate successfully.** | * While **no additional criteria** are required, the authorizer **completes a cursory look** of the current **school’s academic success** *or* considers the **school’s capacity to operate successfully.** | * While **no additional criteria** are required, the **authorizer reviews** the existing school’s **financial audits** (where available), **academic success and the school’s capacity to operate successfully, meeting and/or exceeding it performance targets.** * The application **process may include *either*** a face to face **interview with the applicant *or*** **contact with** the school’s **current authorizer.** * The authorizer **does not consider contracting with a charter school that is being non-renewed by its current authorizer.** | * Authorizer **requires the applicant to provide educational, organizational, and financial performance records to evaluate** the school’s capacity to operate successfully, meeting and/or exceeding its performance targets. * The application **process includes** a face to face **interview with the applicant** ***and* contact** with the school’s **current authorizer**. * The application **process may include visiting** the school and/or attending a board meeting. * The authorizer **does not consider contracting with a charter school that is being non-renewed by its current authorizer.** * The **authorizer’s process** to consider authorizing a currently operating school is **publicly available**. |
| F. Reviewer Expertise  *Deep under-standing of essential principles, gained through training and/or several years working in the field and mastering the principles.* | * **Review team members** have **little to no experience working in or authorizing charter schools**. At least one review team member is **trained in school finance, but has limited experience** applying the knowledge. * **No external sources are sought in education related areas for which the review team members lack expertise**. These areas include:   + Charter schools;   + Curriculum, instruction and assessment;   + Special education and ELL instruction;   + School accountability;   + School facilities;   + School law;   + School finance; and,   + School governance. | * The authorizer has **at least one dedicated reviewer with limited experience** (less than two years) working in or authorizing charter schools, and **at least one other reviewer who may have limited knowledge in one or more of the following areas**:   + Curriculum, instruction and assessment;   + Special education and ELL instruction;   + School accountability;   + School facilities;   + School law;   + School finance; and/or   + School governance. * When existing reviewers do not have the range of expertise needed, the authorizer **sometimes contracts with external sources** to complete particular aspects of the application review. | * The authorizer has **at least one dedicated reviewer with two or more years of experience** working in or authorizing charter schools. * **Other reviewers are certified** (where appropriate) **and have experience working in the following areas**:   + Curriculum, instruction and assessment;   + Special education and ELL instruction;   + School accountability;   + School facilities;   + School law;   + School finance; and,   + School governance. * When existing reviewers do not have the range of expertise needed, the **authorizer contracts with external sources** to complete particular aspects of the application review. | * **Many of the reviewers have practiced in charter schools or authorizing for several years**, and have **diverse expertise** (and **certification** where appropriate) **in the following areas**:   + Curriculum, instruction and assessment;   + Special education and ELL instruction;   + School accountability;   + School facilities;   + School law;   + School finance; and,   + School governance. * When existing staff do not have the range of expertise needed, the **authorizer contracts with external sources** to complete particular aspects of the application review. |
| H. Rigorous Decision Making  *Rigorous decisions are based upon a thorough analysis of a com-prehensive body of objective evidence.* | * **Almost all** applicants that apply **are approved**, **regardless of the strength** of the application. * **Preliminary agreements** are made **with schools** that had **previously closed** and/or were **non-renewed** by their previous authorizer. | * The **majority** of applications that **meet a general framework** of criteria **are approved**. * **Preliminary agreements are made with charter schools that** meet one or more of the following criteria:   + **Fail to clearly demonstrate the capacity to successfully operate** (e.g., lack of staffing, lack of resources, questionable governance, history of poor performance, etc.);   + **Little or no market research data to support** the school’s opening;   + **Little or no data to support a successful educational model**;   + **Questionable business plan and limited resources to** support the school’s **launch** (e.g., reliance on unsecured loans and/or management company financial support); or   + **Were previously closed and/or non-renewed by their previous authorizer.** | * Applicants that **meet the majority of the criteria are approved.** * **Enters into preliminary agreements with schools** that **meet most** of the following criteria:   + **Clear capacity to successfully operate** a new school (e.g., lack of staffing, lack of resources, questionable governance, history of poor performance, etc.);   + **Researched data shows strong market demand** for the proposed school (e.g., mission, location, grades served, proximity of high quality public & private school options)   + **Quality educational program**;   + **Solid business plan and a start-up budget** to support the school’s launch and sustained early operations; and,   + **The school has not been recycled: previously closed or non-renewed by its previous authorizer**. | * **Only applicants meeting all, or almost all, of the criteria are approved.** Any perceived minor deficiencies are addressed in the contract process. * ***Only* enters into preliminary agreements with schools** that **meet all** of the following criteria:   + **Clear capacity to successfully operate a new school** (e.g., lack of staffing, lack of resources, questionable governance, history of poor performance, etc.);   + **Researched data shows strong market demand for the proposed school** (e.g., mission, location, grades served, proximity of high quality public & private school options)   + **Quality educational program**;   + **Solid business plan and a start-up budget** to support the school’s launch and sustained early operations; and,   + **The school has not been recycled: previously closed or non-renewed by its previous authorizer**. |