

## **Application Guidance**

### **Introduction**

Thank you for your interest in community school sponsorship with the Ohio Department of Education. This application guide is designed to provide applicants with information regarding the application process. Applications should demonstrate a commitment to establish and maintain the highest academic and fiscal qualities.

House Bill 153 enacted section 3314.029 of the Revised Code, which established the Ohio school sponsorship program. This section provides that, “any person, group of individuals, or entity may apply to the department for direct authorization to establish a community school.” Additionally, “the governing authority of an existing community school, upon the expiration or termination of its contract with the school’s sponsor entered into under section 3314.03 of the Revised Code, may apply to the department for direct authorization to continue operating the school and, upon approval of the application, may continue to operate the school.”

The statute imposes caps upon the number of schools the Department may sponsor. The department may authorize contracts for up to 5 new start-up community schools and up to 15 existing community schools in each school year beginning with the 2011-2012 school year.

### **Goals**

The goal of the Ohio school sponsorship program is to provide a program that adheres to the highest standards of sponsor oversight. Through its oversight, the program will set and maintain the highest academic standards, operational accountability and preservation of both student and public interests. Fiscal transparency with regard to the use of taxpayer funds by both the school and its operator will be required. If a school is unable to achieve those goals, the Department may either terminate or non-renew a contract.

## Submission

### Methods of Submission:

Applications can be submitted in any of the following ways:

1. Personal Delivery. An application may be personally delivered to the Department at: 25 S. Front St., Columbus, OH 43215. Personnel will be in the lobby to accept personal delivery from 8:00-9:30 a.m. on September 29, 2011. Please bring one (1) paper copy and one (1) copy on compact disc.
2. By mail. An application may be mailed to: The Ohio Dept. of Education, Office of School Sponsorship, 25 S. Front St., MS 614, Columbus, OH 43215. Please include one (1) paper copy and one (1) copy on compact disc.
3. By e-mail. An application may be emailed to the following email addresses:  
[schoolsponsorship@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:schoolsponsorship@ode.state.oh.us)  
[mark.michael@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:mark.michael@ode.state.oh.us)  
Please email to both addresses. Emails sent prior to 8:00 a.m. of September 29, 2011 will not be accepted.

The Department will begin accepting applications to count against the 2011-12 school-year cap on September 29, 2011 at 8:00 a.m. Applications received prior to that time will not be accepted. The applications will be time-stamped upon receipt. If sent via multiple methods, the earliest time stamp after 8:00 a.m. will determine the time it was received.

Since the number of community schools the Department can sponsor is limited, an application will be processed according to the time it was received. Upon completion of the review process, if the application is approved, the community school will be awarded a spot up to the applicable cap number.

## Review

Applications will be reviewed by designated reviewers that may either be Department employees or individuals in the field. Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to providing the highest quality education and the best business practices in every aspect of its operations.

## Application Approval/Disapproval

An applicant will be notified within 30 days of receipt whether the application has been approved or whether any insufficiencies have been found in the application. If the application is deemed sufficient, the applicant will be notified that the application has been approved. If any insufficiencies have been found, the applicant will have 30 days in which to submit corrections. If the Department determines that the insufficiencies have not been corrected, it will deny the application. An applicant may appeal a denial of its application to the State Board of Education pursuant to Chapter 119 of the Revised Code. An applicant may visit the Office of School Sponsorship's page on the Department's website to view the status of their application.

Application approvals do not substitute for the sponsor – governing authority contract. A contract is still required and will be negotiated with the community school after approval.