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Ohio.org



**Department of
Education &
Workforce**



2025-2026 Community School Sponsor Evaluation: Quality Practices Component

OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

JULY 2025



Quality Component: Ohio Revised Code

ORC 3314.016 (B)(3)

“The department, in consultation with entities that sponsor community schools, shall prescribe quality practices for community school sponsors and develop an instrument to measure adherence to those quality practices. The quality practices shall be based on standards developed by the national association of charter school authorizers or any other nationally organized community school organization.”



Quality Practices Component: Six Critical Areas

A.

Commitment and
Capacity

B.

Application
Process and
Decision-Making

C.

Performance
Contracting

D.

Oversight and
Evaluation

E.

Termination and
Renewal Decision-
Making

F.

Technical
Assistance

A. Commitment and Capacity

Seven Standards:

- A.01 – Mission and Strategic Plan
- A.02 – Goals and Self-Evaluation
- A.03 – Roles and Responsibilities
- A.04 – Conflicts of Interest
- A.05 – Staff Expertise
- A.06 – Staff Development
- A.07 – Allocation of Resources



B. Application Process and Decision-making

Six Standards:

- B.01 - Application Process, Timeline and Directions
- B.02 - Rigorous Criteria for New Schools
- B.03 - Rigorous Criteria for Replicators and Schools Seeking a Change in Sponsor
- B.04 - Reviewer Expertise
- B.05 - Reviewer Protocols
- B.06 - Rigorous Decision-Making

C. Performance Contracting

Three Standards:

- C.01 – Contract Performance Measures
- C.02 – Contract Terms for Renewal and Non-Renewal
- C.03 – Contract Amendment and Updates



D. Oversight And Evaluation

Seven Standards:

- D.01 – Oversight Transparency
- D.02 – Enrollment and Financial Reviews
- D.03 – On-Site Visits
- D.04 – Site Visit Reports
- D.05 – Performance Monitoring
- D.06 – Intervention
- D.07 – Annual Performance Reports

E. Termination And Renewal Decision-making

Six Standards:

- E.01 – Renewal Application
- E.02 – Renewal and Non-Renewal Decisions
- E.03 – Non-Renewal Notification
- E.04 – Contract Termination
- E.05 – Closure Process
- E.06 – Renewal Reviewer Protocols



F. Technical Assistance

Four Standards:

- F.01 – Ongoing Technical Assistance
- F.02 – Legal and Policy Updates
- F.03 – Professional Development for Schools
- F.04 – Relationships with Schools' Governing Authorities

2025-2026 Quality Review Timeline

December 2025:
Epicenter Opens for
document submission

Summer 2026:
Optional
Interviews Occur

By 11/15/2026:
Final Ratings
Published

5/15/2026:
Deadline to submit
documents into Epicenter

- Sept/Oct 2026:**
- Preliminary Results
 - Sponsor Adjustment Requests
 - Adjustment Request Reviews



Quality Review Process

1. A subset of schools is randomly selected by the external vendor
2. Evidence collection for review and scoring is completed by sponsors/schools and Department staff
3. Sponsors have the option to participate in interviews
4. Review and scoring is completed by external vendors
5. QA checks on scoring are conducted by Department staff
6. Preliminary scores are shared with sponsors
7. Sponsors have the option to submit an Adjustment Request
8. Final results are shared with sponsors and posted for the public

1. Randomly Selected Subset of Schools

- A subset of schools is randomly selected by the external vendor. The sponsor/these schools are responsible for submitting documentation for all applicable quality standards.
- The number of schools selected represents a minimum of 10% of a sponsor's portfolio.
- The randomly selected schools includes at least one of each type of school in a sponsor's portfolio(e-schools, dropout prevention and recovery schools).
- The list of the selected schools is made publicly available on the Sponsor Evaluation website.



2. Evidence Collection

- Most quality standards require document submission from the sponsors/school as evidence to be reviewed and scored. Documents are submitted in an online platform called [Epicenter](#).
- Sponsors have the option to submit narratives to explain how their evidence meets the guidelines of a standard in the quality rubric.
- Some standards require only the review of a school's contract with a sponsor, which is provided to the external vendor by Department staff.



Document Submission

Documents must be uploaded into Epicenter

Required submission types will be listed in the sponsor's task queue

Sponsors must use the correct submission type

Sponsors can use the same document for multiple standards if needed



Document Submission

Sponsors can replace documents in Epicenter (if needed) until the document submission window closes.

Sponsors can reuse documents from a previous evaluation cycle if the same document is applicable for the current cycle.

Once the window closes, documents cannot be added, replaced or removed.



Document Submission



Document submission window

Quality Practices: December 2025 – May 15, 2026



Not Applicable Standards

Entire standard may be NA:

B.04, B.06, E.02, E.03

Portion of the standard may be NA:

B.05, E.04, E.05, E.06

Not Applicable Standards

- **Entire standard** is NA (sponsor is not scored on any part)
- **Only a portion** of the standard is NA (sponsor not scored on the part that is NA)
- Sponsor must upload a memo with a statement explaining why standard (or portion) is NA
- If no memo is uploaded, sponsor will be rated on the entire standard



Narratives

Optional for all 33 standards; sponsors are not required to submit narratives

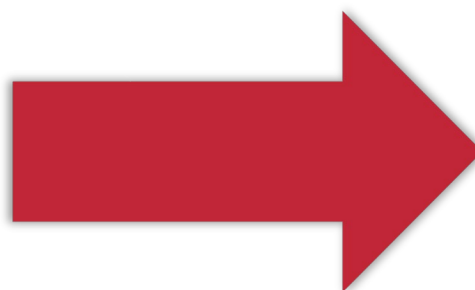
Sponsors may upload a narrative explanation for 31 of the 33 standards using the Department's narrative form

Sponsors may enter a narrative explanation for Standards C.01 and C.02 into the Narrative field in Epicenter



Narrative Form

Sponsors electing to submit a narrative for a standard should use the Department's Narrative Form.



OPTIONAL Narrative Evidence in Support of Submitted Documentation for the Quality Component of the Sponsor Evaluation


School Year: _____

The sponsor may submit a narrative explanation of how the submitted documents support the sponsor's practice as it pertains to this standard. Evaluators may use narrative explanations in the scoring process if they are substantiated by documentary evidence. Sponsors that choose to submit a narrative should use this form.

Standard Number _____ Standard Title _____

NOTE: A narrative can be no more than a two-page, single-sided document. Sponsors that choose to submit a narrative should use this form. Evaluators will only consider the first two pages of narrative explanations that go beyond the two-page limit. No changes to font or margin size are permitted.

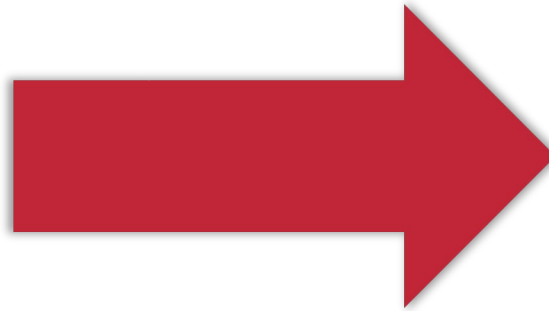
1 | Narrative Form for Quality Review

Department of Education & Workforce



Memo Template

Sponsors submitting documents that exceed 25 pages should use the Department's Memo Template.



Memo for Document Submission for the Quality Review

Date: _____

School Year: _____

Sponsor Name: _____


Sponsor IRN: _____

Quality Standard: _____

Document/File Name(s): _____

Page numbers in this document to be reviewed for this standard:

Quality Document Submission Memo

 Department of Education & Workforce



3. Interviews

- Optional; sponsors are not required to participate in an interview
- Opportunity to help explain documentation (similar to narrative option)
- No additional documents will be collected during or after the interview
- Sponsors should complete the *Interview Intent Form* and upload it into Epicenter by the specified deadline.
- Evaluators will contact sponsors to set up interview.

4. Review And Scoring

- After evidence for the quality standards is collected, an external vendor reviews the evidence for scoring.
- The external vendor reviews submitted documentation, contracts from the Department, narrative forms, memos, and information gathered from interviews.
- The external vendor's review process incorporates multiple tiers of review and builds in quality assurance checks.

5. QA Checks on Preliminary Scores

After the external vendor has completed its review and calculated preliminary scores, Department staff perform Quality Assurance checks on the scoring of each item.



6. Preliminary Results Shared

After the Department completes quality assurance (QA) checks on the external vendor's scoring, they share those preliminary results with sponsors.

Preliminary results are shared via a submission type in Epicenter:

- **Preliminary Quality Results**



7. Adjustment Requests

- [ORC 3314.016\(B\)\(6\)](#) allows sponsors the opportunity to submit an adjustment request regarding their preliminary scores. It states, *“...If the sponsor believes there is an error in the department’s evaluation, the sponsor may request adjustments to the rating of any of those components based on documentation previously submitted as part of an evaluation.”*
- Sponsors have an opportunity to submit an adjustment request within 10 business days of receiving the preliminary results. This requires completing a separate form.

8. Final Results Shared and Posted

- After any applicable adjustments are made, the Department calculates the final results and shares them directly with sponsors via email
- The Department also posts final results on the [Sponsor Evaluation website](#)
- Final results. must be shared and posted by November 15th each year



Calculation of Quality Score and Rating

For each quality standard, sponsors receive between 0 and 4 points (or “NA”).

The score and its rating is calculated using the formula of B/A:

- **A = the number of possible points for standards that are applicable to the sponsor being reviewed.**
- **B = the total points scored in the standards included in A.**



Example Calculation

- **Sponsor A** received 121 out of a possible 132 points on its quality review
- Score = B/A
 - $A = 132$
 - $B = 121$
- $121/132 = 91.7$ percent

Final Quality Rating And Score

Percentage	Rating	Points
90 – 100%	Exceeds Standards	4
75 – 89.9%	Meets Standards	3
55 – 74.9%	Progressing Toward Standards	2
35 – 54.9%	Below Standards	1
0 – 34.9%	Significantly Below Standards	0

2025-2026 Quality Practices Rubric

2025-2026 Sponsor Quality Practices Rubric

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (the Department) uses the Quality Practices Rubric to evaluate community school sponsors on their adherence to quality sponsoring practices for the 2025-2026 review year. The rubric is composed of 33 standards designed to evaluate sponsors on various sponsoring practices. The standards are informed by both the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) and Ohio laws and rules. To complete the rubric, sponsors must:

1. **Carefully read each standard.** Some standards have specific instructions on what sponsors need to do.
2. **Refer to the glossary below when directed.** Some standards have one or more words for which a definition is provided. If the standard directs the sponsor to refer to the glossary for the definition of a specific word, the sponsor should do so.
3. **Upload all documents that best demonstrate the standard in question.** Document files uploaded into Epicenter should be named to indicate exactly what information is included in the file.
4. **If necessary, upload the same documents for more than one standard.** Sponsors should upload all documents they believe are responsive for each standard. The same document can be uploaded for multiple standards.
5. **Include explanatory memos with larger documents.** All documents submitted for a quality standard that exceed 25 pages in length must be accompanied by a memo that references the specific page numbers to be reviewed for the standard in question. **Failure to include a memo with the page numbers listed with documents longer than 25 pages could result in a lower score on a particular standard.** Sponsors may highlight relevant text if they wish, but highlighting is not required.
6. **If a memo is required, sponsors should use the template provided by the Department.**
7. **If a narrative explanation is needed, sponsors must use the narrative form provided by the Department.** For the 2025-2026 quality review, sponsors have the option to upload a narrative explanation for 31 of the 33 standards. For Standards C.01 and C.02, which do not require document uploads, sponsors have the option to enter a brief narrative in the narrative field of these standards in Epicenter. Sponsors should use the Department's narrative template form when completing the narrative explanation for each standard. Narratives should be no longer than two, single-sided pages and should indicate the standard and number (for example, A.03) in question (as indicated on the template form). While narratives are not evidence, evaluators may use narrative explanations in the scoring process if they are substantiated by documentary evidence.
8. **Make sure documents and files are easy to open and easy to read.** It is the sponsor's responsibility to make sure all uploaded documents and files work properly. Documents and files that cannot be opened or are unreadable could result in a lower score on a particular standard.

NOTE: Text in red font on the rubric indicates where language has been changed or added from last year's rubric. Footnotes indicate areas where language has been removed from last year's rubric.

Glossary of Definitions

For the purposes of the 2025-2026 Quality Practices Rubric, the definitions for the words as used for the standards indicated (in parentheses) are listed below.

- **Budget narrative (A.07):** The budget narrative is referred to as the budget justification. The narrative serves two purposes: 1) It explains how the costs are estimated; and 2) It justifies the need for the cost as it relates to the sponsoring responsibilities and sponsoring revenues. The narrative may include tables for clarification purposes.



Resources

Guidance on Document Submission for the 2025-2026 Sponsor Quality Practices Review

Combines the Document Submission document and the Quality Document Upload Guidance document into one document

Provides information on identifying and uploading appropriate documents for the quality practices review

Provides examples of both relevant and unacceptable documents



Resources

Quality Practices Rubric Change Log

Shows changes made from the previous evaluation cycle to the current evaluation cycle

No changes were made to the Quality Practices Rubric for the 2025-2026 evaluation cycle

QUESTIONS?

Submit questions to the
Sponsor Evaluation inbox:

sponsor.evaluation@education.ohio.gov



QUESTIONS?

EDUCATION.OHIO.GOV



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