

Technical Documentation for the 2025-2026 Community School Sponsor Evaluation

Overview

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce has developed and implemented an evaluation system per Ohio Revised Code 3314.016 that rates any entity that sponsors a community school based upon three components: Academic Performance, Adherence to Quality Practices and Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Rules. Each component is equally weighted. This document details the business rules for the 2025-2026 sponsor evaluation.

The categories for overall ratings are "Exemplary," "Effective," "Ineffective" or "Poor." The Department gives separate ratings for each evaluation system component. Those components are Academic Performance, Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Rules and Quality Practices.

Determination of Relationship Between Community School and Sponsor

For purposes of the 2025-2026 sponsor evaluations, the Department identifies schools associated with each sponsor as of July 1, 2025 (beginning portfolio), and as of July 1, 2026 (ending portfolio). Identifying these relationships at two points in time allows the Department to address year-to-year sponsor portfolio changes for the Academic Performance component (as described in more detail in the "Changes in Portfolio" section below).

Data Collection and Report Distribution

The Academic Performance component is based on Ohio School Report Card results. The report cards are based on data reported to the Department through the Education Management Information System (EMIS).

The Department uses Epicenter, a data collection system that is provided at no cost to sponsors, to collect sponsor certification and documentation for the Compliance Component and Quality Practices Component.

Frequency of the Sponsor Evaluation

The sponsor evaluation takes place on an annual basis. However, with recent statutory updates to ORC 3314.016(B)(7)(b), community school sponsors that have received Effective or Exemplary ratings for the three most recent consecutive review cycles in which they participated and received ratings will be evaluated once every three years. If sponsors receive an Ineffective rating, sponsors will return to the annual evaluation cycle until they earn three consecutive Effective or Exemplary ratings.

Although these sponsors will not have to participate in the sponsor evaluation process during the years they are exempt, they must maintain documentation required by law for audit purposes and to fulfill their legal responsibilities for their sponsored schools.

Senate Bill 168, which was passed by the 135th Ohio General Assembly in June 2024, included the following provision: "...the Department shall not evaluate community school sponsors for the 2024-2025 school year, unless a sponsor elects to be evaluated." Therefore, no sponsors were evaluated for the 2024-2025 school year unless they notified the Department that they want to be evaluated.

Academic Performance Component

The evaluation framework, recommended by an independent advisory panel and adopted by the Department, aligns the Academic Performance component to the Ohio School Report Cards. The advisory panel also recommended that the Department weight performance by the average daily membership of each school within a sponsor's statewide portfolio.

The Academic Performance Component score is based upon the overall rating on the traditional Ohio School Report Card or the overall rating on the Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report Card. For each school, the overall report card rating according to Ohio law and rule is used for the evaluation framework. The score is weighted by the number of students enrolled in each school in the sponsor's portfolio. The score also accounts for year-to-year changes in the sponsor's overall portfolio.

Statutory Exclusions

In accordance with ORC 3314.016(B)(2), the Academic Performance component score does not include community schools that have been in operation for not more than two full school years or community schools described in ORC 3314.35(A)(4)(b) ("any community school in which a majority of the enrolled students are children with disabilities receiving special education and related services in accordance with ORC Chapter 3323"). While the schools described in ORC 3314.35(A)(4)(b) are not included in the sponsor evaluation, the academic performance of these schools is reported. For these schools, a separate file will be provided that links to the individual school's report card.

Calculating Academic Performance Component Score for Schools

The Academic Performance component scores are calculated using the steps listed below. The calculation is based on the overall rating on the Ohio School Report Cards and the Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report Cards. Additional details on the Ohio School Report Card measures and calculations are available on the Department's [Report Card Resources webpage](#).

1. Converting Overall Ratings to a Common Scale

For each school, the overall rating assigned on the report card is converted to a 0 to 4 scale. The following table shows an example of the conversion from overall ratings to a common point scale:

Traditional Report Card Overall Rating	Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report Card Overall Rating	Equivalent Points on Common Scale
5 Stars	Exceeds Standards	4
4.5 Stars		3.5
4 Stars		3
3.5 Stars		2.5
3 Stars	Meets Standards	2
2.5 Stars		1.5
2 Stars		1
1.5 Stars		0.5
1 Stars	Does Not Meet Standards	0

A weight is determined for each school within each sponsor's beginning and ending portfolios by first converting the overall report card ratings to common scale points. In the example below, the sponsor being evaluated has five schools (three traditional community schools and two schools that receive a Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report Card). The table below shows the five schools' overall report card ratings being converted to common scale points.

School	Overall Report Card Rating	Common Scale Points
Community School #1	5 Stars →	4
Community School #2	2 Stars →	1
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #3	Meets Standards →	2
Community School #4	4.5 Stars →	3.5
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #5	Exceeds Standards →	4

2. Methodology for Weighting the Performance by Enrollment

The weighting process involves taking each school's enrollment (or adjusted full-time equivalent (FTE)) and adjusting it by rounding it to the nearest whole number.

School	Enrollment	Adjusted Enrollment (Rounded to the Nearest Whole Number)
Community School #1	249.8	250
Community School #2	500.2	500
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #3	199.6	200
Community School #4	150.0	150
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #5	100.3	100
Sponsor Adjusted Enrollment		1,200

To determine the weight, the school's adjusted enrollment is divided by the sponsor adjusted enrollment and then rounded to the nearest thousandth. Then the weight is multiplied by the common scale points to determine the school's weighted points. The weighted points are also rounded to the nearest thousandth. Since the sponsor used in the example has multiple schools, the weighted points for each school are then added together to determine the total weighted points for the sponsor.

School	Overall Report Card Rating	Common Scale Points	Adjusted Enrollment	Sponsor Adjusted Enrollment	Weight (Rounded to the Thousandth)	Weighted Points (Common Scale Points x Weight)
Community School #1	5 Stars →	4	250	1,200	$(250/1200) = .208$	$4 \times .208 = .832$
Community School #2	2 Stars →	1	500	1,200	$(500/1200) = .417$	$1 \times .417 = .417$
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #3	Meets Standards →	2	200	1,200	$(200/1200) = .167$	$2 \times .167 = .334$
Community School #4	4.5 Stars →	3.5	150	1,200	$(150/1200) = .125$	$3.5 \times .125 = .438$
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #5	Exceeds Standards →	4	100	1,200	$(100/1200) = .083$	$4 \times .083 = .332$
Total Weighted Points						2.353

3. Changes in Portfolio

Ohio Revised Code 3314.016(B)(1)(a) specifies that the academic performance component score shall include year-to-year changes in the overall sponsor portfolio. These changes are factored into the Academic Performance Component score by creating a weighted score for the sponsor's portfolio of schools sponsored at any time during the 2025-2026 school year, as well as a second weighted score for

the sponsor’s portfolio that reflects actions taken by the sponsor to remove schools from its portfolio prior to July 1, 2026. The calculation for both portfolios (often referred to as List A and List B) is based on the 2026 Ohio School Report Card results in line with the calculation detailed in this document. The two weighted scores are then averaged for a final Total Weighted Points. *If a sponsor had no portfolio changes between these two time periods, this use of two scores will not impact their weighted points.* **Note:** If one or more of a sponsor’s schools merge with another of the sponsor’s schools but remain with the sponsor, then those schools will be included on List B. However, if the newly merged school has a different sponsor, then the school will not be included on List B.

The following is an example of averaging the portfolios. As seen above, if the sponsor has a portfolio of five schools for the 2025-2026 school year, the calculation for the beginning portfolio (List A) would be as follows:

School	Overall Report Card Rating	Common Scale Points	Adjusted Enrollment	Sponsor Adjusted Enrollment	Weight (Rounded to the Thousandth)	Weighted Points (Common Scale Points x Weight)
Community School #1	5 Stars	4	250	1,200	$(250/1200) = .208$	$4 \times .208 = .832$
Community School #2	2 Stars	1	500	1,200	$(500/1200) = .417$	$1 \times .417 = .417$
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #3	Meets Standards	2	200	1,200	$(200/1200) = .167$	$2 \times .167 = .334$
Community School #4	4.5 Stars	3.5	150	1,200	$(150/1200) = .125$	$3.5 \times .125 = .438$
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #5	Exceeds Standards	4	100	1,200	$(100/1200) = .083$	$4 \times .083 = .332$
Total Weighted Points						2.353

In the adjusted enrollment chart in Section 2, the sponsor’s adjusted enrollment is the sum of all the adjusted enrollment for each of the sponsor’s schools included in the academic calculation, for a total of 1200.

If, as of July 1, 2026, the sponsor no longer sponsors Community School #2, the calculation for the ending portfolio (List B) would be as follows:

School	Overall Report Card Rating	Common Scale Points	Adjusted Enrollment	Sponsor Adjusted Enrollment	Weight (Rounded to the Thousandth)	Weighted Points (Common Scale Points x Weight)
Community School #1	5 Stars	4	250	700	$(250/700) = .357$	$4 \times .357 = 1.428$
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #3	Meets Standards	2	200	700	$(200/700) = .286$	$2 \times .286 = 0.572$
Community School #4	4.5 Stars	3.5	150	700	$(150/700) = .214$	$3.5 \times .214 = 0.749$
Dropout Prevention and Recovery School #5	Exceeds Standards	4	100	700	$(100/700) = .143$	$4 \times .143 = 0.572$
Total Weighted Points						3.321

The results of the two portfolios are then averaged, resulting in a score of $(2.353 + 3.321)/2 = 2.837$.

4. Finalizing the Academic Performance Component Score

The averaged portfolio points are then used to determine the final score on the Academic Performance Component using the following range:

Range of Averaged Weighted Portfolio Points	Final Score on the Academic Component of the Evaluation
3.5 – 4	4
2.5 – 3.49	3
1.5 – 2.49	2
.5 – 1.49	1
0 – .49	0

Using the preceding example, since the sponsor’s averaged portfolio points were 2.837, the sponsor would receive a final score of 3 points for the academic component since 2.837 falls within the range of 2.5 and 3.49.

5. *Evaluating Schools That Do Not Receive Report Cards*

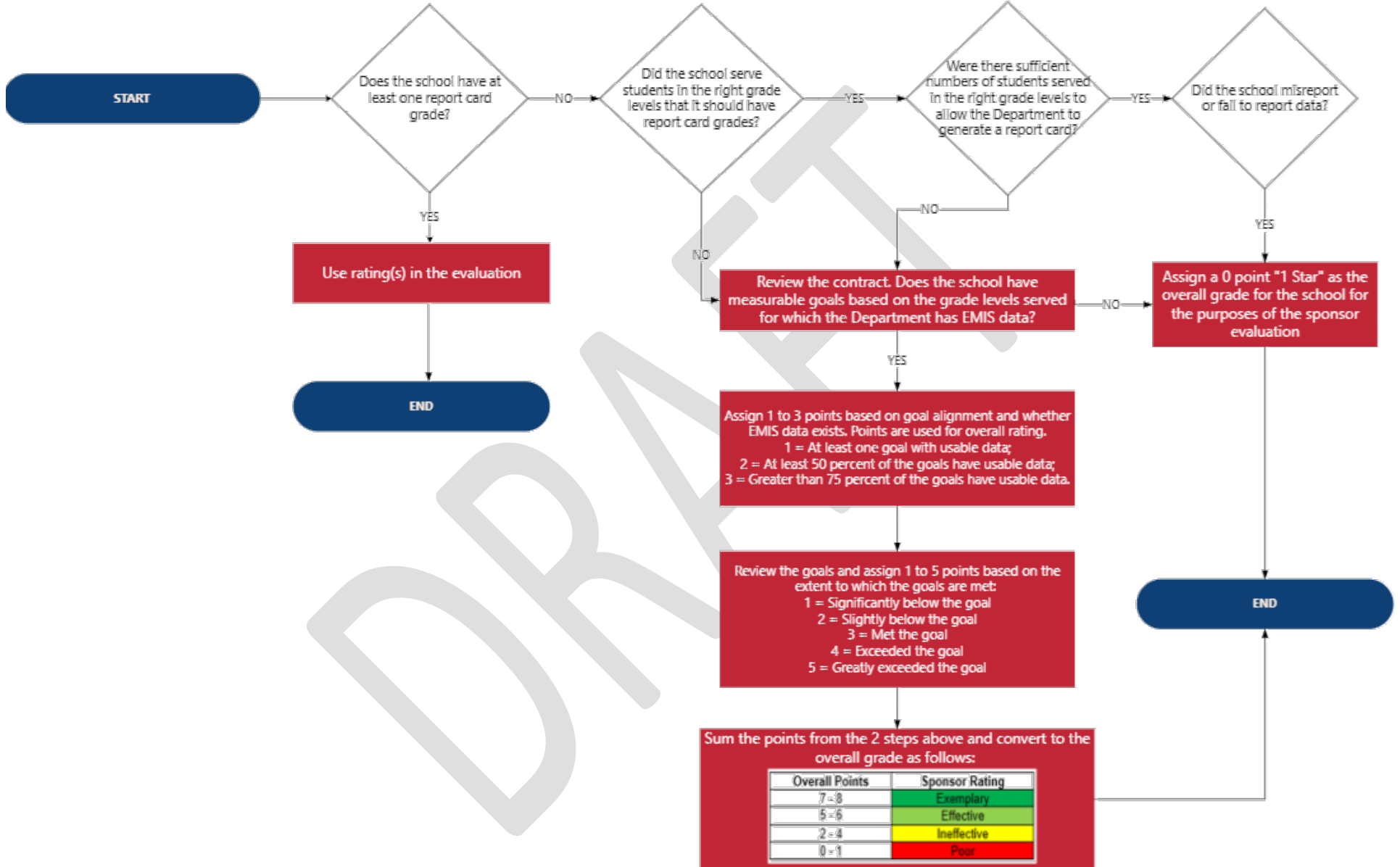
Some schools are not expected to receive any report card ratings because they do not serve enough students in the relevant grades to generate ratings. Since 2018, this applies to very few schools. With Ohio’s Every Student Succeeds Act state plan, all schools receive report cards based on any applicable report card component data including chronic absenteeism which applies to all grade levels.

However, when no rated performance measures are applicable, ORC 3314.016(B)(1)(a) requires the Department to use measures specified in the contract between the sponsor and the community school. For those schools, the contracts between the schools and sponsors will be reviewed by the Department’s Office of Accountability, with assistance from the Office of Community Schools and Office of Legal Counsel.

The evaluation of schools without rated components will be conducted using the process outlined in the flowchart below that identifies the objectives set forth in each related contract and the school’s performance on those objectives.

In cases where the school served a sufficient number of students in the grade levels required to take state tests, but the school failed to report required EMIS data to the Department, a 0 (“1 Star”) will be assigned to the school’s overall rating.

Academic Component Calculation Flowchart for Schools Not Receiving a Report Card



Compliance with Laws and Rules Component

For the 2025-2026 Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Rules calculation, the current OAC 3301-102-08 is applied and aligns with the requirements outlined in ORC 3314.016. Since statute requires this component to include compliance with **all** applicable laws and administrative rules, sponsors will be evaluated for compliance with all applicable laws and rules, including their obligation to monitor their schools' compliance with all laws and rules.

The Department compiled lists of all rules and laws that apply to community schools and/or their respective sponsors and posted them for public comment on Jan. 31, 2025. The posted lists identified all changes made from the lists used for the 2024-2025 evaluation. The Department requested comments no later than March 3, 2025. The finalized lists include items for both sponsor-level and school-level certification. The Department reviews the lists on an annual basis and publishes them on or before July 15.

The sponsor's score for this component is determined by equally weighting all sponsor-level items except Item S-615, which specifically addresses a sponsor's oversight of its schools' compliance. For Item S-615, the sponsor may receive between 0 and 4 points, depending on its percentage of substantiated items. This item incorporates the school-level compliance items for all sponsored schools to demonstrate sponsor oversight of schools. To assess this item (the sponsor's compliance with its oversight responsibilities), the vendor reviews sponsor certification responses for all schools in the sponsor's portfolio and any additional documentation gathered during the validation process.

The Department engages a third-party vendor to perform the compliance reviews and provides it with applicable view-only access to Epicenter.

The items being reviewed for this component are based on actions taken and documents submitted during the review period (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026), except for the expenditure report, which is due no later than Aug. 15, 2026.

Failure to submit the sponsor oversight compliance worksheet for all sponsored schools may result in the Department acting pursuant to ORC 3314.015 and OAC 3301-102-07.

Sponsor Submission: Each sponsor will be required to identify its compliance status for each item on the list for its organization and each school in its portfolio utilizing a series of certification worksheets that must be uploaded to Epicenter by the sponsor in the provided format. One worksheet is designated for compliance items related to the sponsor. Another worksheet is designated for items related to the sponsor's oversight of its schools' compliance and must be submitted for each school in its sponsoring portfolio.

In the worksheets, the sponsor responds to a series of Yes/No questions that result in the sponsor's certification of compliance: compliant, not compliant or not applicable. The sponsor is instructed to indicate if the school was placed on a corrective action plan for any school item that is determined to be not compliant.

In addition to the completed certification worksheets, the sponsor is required to upload a signed certification form. The sponsor can reuse any documentation from a previous submission if it still is applicable to this item.

For any school item with a determination of "not compliant" for which the sponsor indicated the school was placed on a corrective action plan, the sponsor is instructed to upload the corrective action plan under a separate submission type for all corrective action plans at the time it submits the completed worksheets.

If a sponsor fails to upload the signed certification by the deadline established by the Department, the Department will rely solely upon the information that has been submitted by the deadline.

Review and Validation Process: Ohio Administrative Code Section 3301-102-08 requires validation of a sponsor's certifications. To validate the certifications for the selected compliance items, the vendor uses information provided by the Department, documentation supplied by the sponsor or documentation supplied by the school during an on-site visit, and/or other materials that are publicly available.

To begin the validation process, the vendor randomly selects 10 items from the available pool of school-level items that can be validated through documentation submitted by the sponsors. Sponsors then submit the requested documentation for all schools in their portfolios. The vendor reviews the certification response submitted by the sponsor and information provided by the sponsor to make a preliminary compliance determination for the items.

The vendor randomly selects 10 additional items from the available pool of school-level items that can be validated through documentation and/or information provided by the Department. Sponsors do not need to submit any documentation for these 10 items. The vendor reviews the certification response submitted by the sponsor and information provided by the Department to make a preliminary compliance determination for the items.

As part of the validation review process and to remain consistent with the administrative rule, the vendor randomly selects a minimum 10 percent sample of each sponsor's schools, ensuring at least one of each type of school (site-based, e-school, and dropout prevention and recovery) is included in the sample for potential site visits. The vendor also randomly selects 10 items to be validated for the schools selected. The vendor reviews the certification response submitted by the sponsor and information gathered during the site visit to make a preliminary compliance determination for the items.

In addition, the vendor randomly selects five items from the available pool of sponsor-level items that can be validated through documentation submitted by the sponsors and/or information provided by the Department. The sponsors submit the requested documentation. The vendor reviews the certification response submitted by the sponsor and information provided by the sponsor and the Department to make a preliminary compliance determination for the items.

The preliminary compliance determination for each item is based on a combination of the sponsor's certification responses, as well as a review of the information for each item selected for validation.

Utilizing each submitted certification worksheet, the vendor will perform the review and validation and will enter the appropriate response in the two columns below for each compliance item for each sponsor and school:

- a. **Reviewer Rating:** The final compliant, not compliant and/or not applicable determination will be made by the vendor.
- b. **Justification:** Information will be included in the worksheet for each item to describe how the compliance status was determined based on a combination of sponsor responses, validation, a narrative and/or existence of a corrective action plan to address school deficiencies.

Following the vendor compliance review, sponsors will be provided an opportunity to review the vendor determinations as described in the Review Period section below.

Upon completion of all sponsor-requested reviews, the Department will calculate the score for the sponsor's rating on the identified Oversight item (S-615) based on the average percent of substantiated items for all schools in the sponsor's portfolio. The Department then will calculate the overall rating for the Compliance with All Laws and Rules component based upon the data provided by the vendor and any adjustments made following the Department review.

Score Calculation:

To calculate the sponsor oversight score that rolls into the sponsor worksheet, the following process applies:

- 1) Each school is evaluated separately on the percent of items considered substantiated.
- 2) For each sponsor, an average of the percentage of each school's overall substantiated items will be calculated.
- 3) That average will represent the sponsor's point determination for the "oversight of its schools' compliance" item based on the table below.

Points	Percentage of Substantiated School Items
4	98-100%
3	96-97.9%
2	94-95.9%
1	92-93.9%
0	Less than 92%

For each sponsor, the percentage of substantiated sponsor items is calculated, and the final Compliance with ALL Applicable Laws and Rules component score and rating is determined by the scale outlined below. All sponsor compliance items are weighted equally, except for Item S-615, which has four possible points.

Points	Percentage of Substantiated Sponsor Items	Rating
4	92-100%	Exceeds Expectations
3	87-91.9%	Meets Expectations
2	84-86.9%	Progressing Toward Expectations
1	80-83.9%	Below Expectations
0	0-79.9%	Significantly Below Expectations

In addition to a data file that includes the sponsor-level data on the Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Rules component, the Department will publish files that include detailed school-level compliance data.

Quality Practices Component

The Department is required to prescribe quality practices for community school sponsors and develop an instrument to measure adherence to those quality practices. The quality practices must be based on standards developed by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, or any other nationally organized community school organization, in consultation with entities that sponsor community schools.

The quality practices review consists of 33 individual standards, grouped into the following 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; and
- f. Technical Assistance.

The final rating on the Quality Practices component is based on the percentage of total points earned.

Sponsor Participation/Submission: Each sponsor will have the opportunity to upload documents to Epicenter to address the individual standards of the rubric. Sponsors also have the option to participate in interviews to further explain their supporting documentation.

Review Process: The Department engages a vendor to perform the quality review. Applicable vendor personnel will be provided with view-only access to Epicenter.

The reviewers will complete the rubric based on all available information and provide a score for each standard. Interview responses may not stand alone; they must be supported with documentation supplied by the sponsor.

Following the vendor completion of the Quality Practices Rubric, sponsors will be provided an opportunity to review the vendor ratings as described in the Review Period section below.

Upon completion of all sponsor-requested reviews, the Department will calculate the overall rating for quality practices based upon the data provided by the vendor and any adjustments made following the Department review.

Calculation Rules: The following business rules are used when calculating the sponsor's score on the quality practices component.

1. The rating is calculated using the following formula = **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.
2. The scores for each standard in the rubric are combined to determine the overall percentage and rating.
3. The final quality practices component rating and points are determined by the calculated overall percentage of standards met using the following:

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

Review Period

Sponsor Adjustment Request: Upon completion of the vendor review, the Department will make the completed compliance worksheets and quality rubric available to the sponsor. The sponsor will be provided with a period of at least 10 business days in which it may request an adjustment based on documentation previously submitted as part of the evaluation. The sponsor will provide the Department with any necessary evidence or information to support the requested adjustment. The Department will review the evidence and information, determine whether an adjustment is valid and notify the sponsor of its determination and reasons. A sponsor requesting adjustments must complete a request form and submit it to the Department using Epicenter. The request must identify the specific item(s) for which the sponsor is requesting adjustment.

Department Review: The Department will review the submitted request and the originally submitted documentation to make a determination of whether the item score should be changed prior to performing calculation of the final sponsor score.

Overall Rating

Calculation Rules: The following business rules are used when calculating the sponsor's overall score on the sponsor evaluation.

1. The overall rating is based on the ratings in the three components:
 - a. Academic Performance;
 - b. Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Rules; and
 - c. Quality Practices.
2. All three components are weighted equally. The points scored for each component are added together to provide a summative score. Before applying the two business rules, the initial overall rating is determined by the following summative score:

Overall Points	Sponsor Rating
10 - 12	Exemplary
7 - 9.5	Effective
3 - 6.5	Ineffective
0 - 2.5	Poor

3. In some limited cases, sponsors will not have any available academic data as mandated by ORC 3314.016 (B) (2). For example, if a sponsor only had one school, which is an excluded special needs school, it would not have ANY academic performance data. In these limited cases, the sponsor will be evaluated based on the two available components, which will follow the above rules, but the summative rating will be determined based on the following 8-point scale:

Overall Points	Sponsor Rating
7 - 8	Exemplary
5 - 6	Effective
2 - 4	Ineffective
0 - 1	Poor