

**Mississippi Charter School Application Evaluation  
Ratings and Sample Scoring Criteria**

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Ratings and Criteria

Evaluators will use the following criteria to rate applications. Within each section, specific criteria define the expectations for a well thought out response that “Meets the Standard.” Evaluators will rate the responses by applying the following guidance:

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
<b>Meets or Exceeds the Standard</b>	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It clearly aligns with the mission and goals of the school. The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation.
<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>	The response meets the criteria in some aspects, but lacks sufficient detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>	The response is significantly incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; is unsuited to the mission and vision of the school or otherwise raises significant concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant’s ability to carry it out.

An application that merits a recommendation for approval should present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; be detailed in how this school will raise student achievement; and inspire confidence in the applicant’s capacity to successfully implement the proposed academic and operational plans. In addition to meeting the criteria that are specific to that section, each part of the proposal should align with the overall mission, budget, and goals of the application.

Recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the written application (narrative and attachments) and applicant capacity interviews.

Applications that do not meet or exceed standard in every area will be deemed not ready for approval. Mississippi law states, “The authorizer must (a) Grant charters only to applicants that have provided evidence of competence in each element of the authorizer’s published approval criteria, and in the case of an applicant that currently operates one or more schools in any state or nation, clear evidence that the management or leadership team of the charter school or schools currently operated by the applicant has produced statistically significant gains in student achievement or consistently produced proficiency levels as measured on state achievement test; (b) base decisions on documented evidence collected through the application review process; and (c) follow charter-granting policies and practices that are transparent, based on merit and avoid conflicts of interest or any appearance thereof.” Thus, an initial or amended charter application, to be approved, must be ready to be incorporated into a charter agreement.

**Recommendation Summary**  
**Complete this page last**

**OVERALL RECOMMENDATION**

*Would you recommend that the MS Charter School Authorizer Board approve this application for a public charter school:*

*Explain your recommendation in the Summary Comments section below.*

Check one (required)

**Deny**

**Approve with Appropriate Amendments**

**Approve**

**SUMMARY COMMENTS (1,200 character maximum)**

*Summarize your assessment of the application focusing on key strengths and concerns, as applicable.*

Evaluator Signature:

Date:

Printed Name:

**Section I Culture**  
(12 page limit)

**Evaluation Detail**

## A. Mission, Vision and Educational Philosophy

Check one (required)

- Meets the Standard  
 \_\_\_ Partially Meets the Standard  
 \_\_\_ Does Not Meet the Standard

**For Evaluator's Reference**

Evaluation Criteria	Applicant Instructions
A response that meets the standard will:	
Present a compelling 1-2 sentence mission statement that defines the purpose of the school.	State the school's mission and briefly describe your vision for how the school will operate. Describe the school's educational foundation and culture (reflective of the school's discipline philosophy). Include an overview of how students will be recruited and plans for ensuring ongoing community engagement.
Present a coherent and concise vision of what the school will look like in 5-10 years if it is achieving its mission	Include evidence that the school will ensure a safe environment conducive to learning.
Present a coherent and concise summary of the evidence of community support and need for the school	
Present a coherent plan of student recruitment and enrollment, student and community engagement.	
Present the plan for establishing a positive culture that reflects the school's discipline philosophy.	

**Strengths****Concerns and Additional Questions**

**Section II Leadership**  
(10 page limit)

**Evaluation Detail**

A. Leadership

Check one (required)

- Meets the Standard
- \_\_\_ Partially Meets the Standard
- \_\_\_ Does Not Meet the Standard

**For Evaluator’s Reference**

Evaluation Criteria	Applicant Instructions
A response that meets the standard will:	
Demonstrate capacity to oversee the successful development and implementation of the education program presented in the application.	Describe the essential responsibilities of the school’s leader and leadership team.
Describe the school’s leadership and how the leaders and leadership team’s performance will be monitored and evaluated.	Describe how the Board will monitor the leader’s performance and plans for assistance if needed.
Demonstrate capacity to oversee the effective and responsible management of public funds and will be responsible for the school’s compliance with legal obligations.	Describe the leadership team structure of the school.
Generally have the capacity to lead and sustain a quality school.	

**Required Exhibits:**  
**Resumes of Selected Leadership Members and/or Job Descriptions**  
**Organizational Chart**  
**Staff Roster that details positions**  
**Proposed salary ranges (w/benefits and performance bonuses)**

***Strengths***

***Concerns and Additional Questions***

### Section III Education Program (30 page limit)

#### Evaluation Detail

- A. Education Program  
Check one (required)

- Meets the Standard  
 \_\_\_ Partially Meets the Standard  
 \_\_\_ Does Not Meet the Standard

#### For Evaluator's Reference

Evaluation Criteria	Applicant Instructions
A response that meets the standard will: Describe the framework for a rigorous, quality academic plan that reflects the needs of the targeted student population and will ensure all students meet or exceed the expectations of the Mississippi Curriculum Standards aligned with the Common Core State Standards.	State if the school intends to use a curriculum that has already been developed or if the school intends to develop core curriculum.
Demonstrate understanding of relevant instructional strategies by identifying sound research, experience or theoretical base and foundational materials that will guide curriculum development.	Describe the proposed curriculum and the evidence basis for the selection of this curriculum.
Present a coherent framework for professional development and instructional material selection.	Describe how the standards will be addressed by providing an overview of the course scope and sequence for every grade that the school would serve. Special attention should be given to secondary programs to ensure that comprehensive explanations of how courses will ensure students are career and college ready upon exiting the school.
Demonstrates that the school calendar/day aligns with the school's educational mission and goals.	Present the school calendar showing the number of days the school will be in session and sample daily class schedules showing hours of operation and allocation of time for core instruction, supplemental instruction, extra-curriculum and after-school activities, if applicable.
Demonstrates that the assessment plan aligns with the school's mission and overall educational priorities.	Describe the school's approach to assessment. Explain how the school will evaluate progress of individual students, cohorts over time, and the school as a whole toward meeting the statewide requirements. In particular, describe how the school will determine proficiency (by grade) for core subjects.
Present an assessment plan that shows a clear, credible and sound plan for measuring and reporting the educational performance and progress of individual students, cohorts and the	Describe the school's approach to educating students with varying needs- students with disabilities, ELL students, gifted and talented students and those with varying learning styles.

charter school as a whole including valid and reliable measures of student outcomes.	
Explain how the school will use assessment data to drive key decisions aimed at improving academic performance.	Describe how the school will offer unique supplementary programs and how community resources will be leveraged to accomplish this objective.
Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to comply with assessment requirements applicable to Mississippi schools consistent with state and federal law.	
Demonstrate an understanding of and capacity to meet state and federal requirements regarding the identification and education of students with disabilities.	
Demonstrate an understanding of and capacity to meet state and federal requirements regarding the identification and education of an ELL population.	
Design gifted education services to provide identified students with instructional objectives and strategies that are appropriate to their identified learning needs and are provided on a continuing basis. Specifically look for screening protocols and multi-disciplinary academic programming options.	
Provide description of any co-curricular/extracurricular programming options and how community resources will be leveraged to support this objective.	

**Required Exhibits:**  
**Sample daily schedule for each grade at which the school intends to operate**  
**Annual calendar for the first year of operation**

***Strengths***

***Concerns and Additional Questions***

## Section IV Teaching (10-page limit)

### Evaluation Detail

#### A. Teaching

Check one (required)

- Meets the Standard  
 \_\_\_ Partially Meets the Standard  
 \_\_\_ Does Not Meet the Standard

### For Evaluator's Reference

Evaluation Criteria	Applicant Instructions
A response that meets the standard will:	
Present strategies for recruiting and retaining effective teachers.	Discuss the staffing plan for the term of the charter including anticipated staffing needs and recruitment strategies. Discuss how the plan supports sound operation and successful implementation of the school's educational program.
Demonstrate a sound understanding of staffing needs that are aligned with the budget and with the school's anticipated enrollment.	Describe the instructional skills, experience and development that teachers will need in order for the school to be successful. How are those needs reflected in the plan for teacher recruitment?
Demonstrate a commitment to the effective evaluation of teachers and a feedback protocol that leads to increasing teacher capacity.	Describe the standards and tools that will be utilized to evaluate teachers.
Present a clear and coherent framework for teaching and learning-particularly in core academic areas- and will demonstrate alignment with the Common Core State Standards.	Describe how the school will approach professional development as an important element in the school's design.
Present a coherent framework for professional development that is likely to support effective implementation of the selected curriculum and how teachers and students are assessed.	Identify the research, experience or theoretical base and foundational materials that will guide curriculum development and implementation.

### ***Strengths***

### ***Concerns and Additional Questions***

**Section V Governance**  
(15 page limit)

**Evaluation Detail**

## A. Governance

Check one (required)

- Meets the Standard  
 \_\_\_ Partially Meets the Standard  
 \_\_\_ Does Not Meet the Standard

**For Evaluator's Reference**

Evaluation Criteria	Applicant Instructions
A response that meets the standard will:	
Present proper documentation of the Board's structure, capacity to oversee the successful development and implementation of the education program presented in the application.	Describe the entity that will hold the charter and be responsible for governing the school. Provide documentation of the entity's legal status including Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and documentation of legal not-for-profit status.
Demonstrate capacity to oversee the effective and responsible management of public funds; has the capacity to oversee the school's compliance with this legal obligations.	List the members of the proposed governing board including their names, current employment, and experience or qualifications for serving on the board including, but not limited to, their relationship to the community in which the school will be located.
Represent the community well.	Describe the organizational structure of the school and its day-to-day operations. Explain the management roles and responsibilities for key administrators with respect to instructional leadership, human resources, and budgeting and legal compliance.
Provide clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities for administering the day-to-day activities of the school.	
Present budget priorities that are consistent with and support key parts of the plan, including the school's mission, educational program, staffing and facility.	Structure a business plan that provides an understanding of how the applicant will develop and manage the school's infrastructure and finances. The budget should present a clear picture of the school's revenue projections; expenditure requirements; facilities needs; transportation and food service plans and pre-opening plan.
	Discuss the school's contingency plan for cash flow challenges, a budget shortfall, lower than expected student enrollment or other financial challenges in the early years of operation.
Demonstrate understanding of the school's financial management obligations.	Describe the systems and procedures for managing the school's finances and identify the staff positions that will be responsibilities for financial oversight and management.
Demonstrate preparation to meet its insurance, annual audit and other key financial management	



obligations	
Reflect a sound understanding of facilities needs.	Discuss the school's facility needs based on the educational program and anticipated enrollment. If the applications have identified a facility, indicate the location and provide at a minimum, the number and size of classrooms, common areas, administrative areas, any community facilities and an assurance that the facility will be accessible to students with disabilities.
<p>If the applicants have elected to provide transportation, a response that meets the standard will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present a through and cost effective transportation plan</li> <li>• Provide specific evidence of readiness consistent with the school's budget assumptions</li> </ul> <p>If the applicants have elected not to provide transportation, a response that meets the standard will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present a clear statement of the school's intent not to provide transportation services</li> <li>• Describe viable transportation options for students</li> <li>• Describe a contingency plan for transporting students with disabilities.</li> </ul>	State whether the school intends to provide transportation for students. If so, describe the transportation plan and explain budget revenue and expenditure assumptions including those related to student with disabilities.
Describe a sound understanding of the basic requirements for food service and legal child nutrition guideline compliance.	Describe the food services that the school will provide to students, including whether the school will provide breakfast and/on snacks in addition to lunch.
	Indicate whether the school will participate in the National School Lunch Program.

**Required Exhibits:  
Prospective Board Member Resumes  
Facility Floor Plans**

***Strengths***

***Concerns and Additional Questions***