Title 10: Education Institutions and Agencies

Part 420: Call for Quality Schools Guidance and Application Process for New Operators

Part 420: Chapter 1: Call for Quality Schools Guidance and Application Process for New Operators

Source: Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-28-9 and -15.

Call for Quality Schools Guidance and Application Process for New Operators

Introduction

The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board (MCSAB or the Board) is pleased to invite proposals for high-quality charter schools seeking to open in the upcoming school year or thereafter. The MCSAB is charged with approving quality charter proposals that meet identified educational needs and promote a diversity of educational choices, and declining weak or inadequate charter proposals.

Specifically, MCSAB seeks proposals for charter schools that will:

1. improve student learning;
2. close achievement gaps between high- and low-performing groups;
3. increase educational opportunities for all students, but especially for those with a likelihood of academic failure;
4. allow teachers and school administrators to have a direct voice in the operation of the school;
5. encourage the use of high-quality models of teaching, governing and scheduling;
6. provide for exceptional levels of results-driven accountability;
7. create expanded opportunities for involvement in the education system by students, parents and community members; and
8. encourage the replication of successful charter schools, if applicable.

All New Operators approved through this process will be public schools subject to the legal requirements set forth in Mississippi Code Annotated §37-28-3 et seq. and the state of Mississippi Ethics Laws and Open Meetings Act.

Statement of Preference

Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-15 permits the board to adopt an application preference for applications intended to help underserved students. This serves as notice that the board will grant such a preference for applications that demonstrate a commitment to and plan for recruiting, enrolling, and serving underserved students, and/or that demonstrate strong, credible evidence of a compelling community need for the proposed school. This preference will be considered when determining whether applicants proceed to the capacity interview stage of the application process.

Performance Framework

Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-15 requires that this RFP include information regarding the elements of the performance framework that MCSAB will use to annually evaluate charter school performance. Charter schools in Mississippi are evaluated annually using the Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework. The Performance Framework includes performance metrics and standards for academic, financial, and organizational performance that guide MCSAB's evaluation of each charter school. The Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework is the accountability mechanism for all charter schools authorized by MCSAB. The objective of the Performance Framework is to provide charter school operators and governing boards with clear expectations, fact-based oversight, and timely feedback while ensuring charter autonomy. The Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework assesses schools on their ability to operate as sound, independent entities that successfully serve all students. The Performance Framework features three key components: 1) routine ongoing oversight and submissions, 2) three performance frameworks and 3) annual performance reports. All Mississippi charter schools are issued an initial contract of five years. Over the course of this five-year contract term, charter schools are evaluated annually using the components of the Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework.

Eligibility

State law sets out specific requirements for all groups submitting charter proposals:
- Only non-profit organizations may hold charters in Mississippi
- Charter holders may only contract with non-profit Educational Service Providers (ESPs)
- Applicant teams must provide proof of US citizenship for all board members, school staff, and (if applicable) key staff of the ESP
- Any applicant proposing to open a charter school in a school district rated 'A', 'B', or 'C' [based on the most recent accountability ratings must also receive approval by the local school board, which must vote on the charter school proposal at a public meeting.
- Any applicant proposing conversion of an existing public school must demonstrate support for the conversion, specifically:
    - a petition signed by a majority of teachers in the existing non-charter public school; or
    - a petition signed by a majority of parents of students in the existing non-charter public school; or
    - evidence of a majority vote of the local school board; or
    - In the case of schools in districts under state conservatorship) evidence of a majority vote of the State Board of Education

Please see the table below to determine any additional steps that may be needed to submit a charter school proposal and to determine which students are eligible to attend the charter school.

Local School District Accountability Rating Where School is to Be Located	Additional Approval Requirements and Student Enrollment Eligibility
A & B	• Applicant must **receive local school board approval before submitting a complete proposal** to MCSAB. • Students residing in 'A' & 'B' rated school districts **shall not cross** local school district boundaries to attend a charter school.
C	• Applicant **must receive local school board approval before submitting a complete proposal** to MCSAB. • Students residing in a 'C' rated school district may cross local school district boundaries to attend a charter school.
D & F	• Applicant submits complete proposal directly to MCSAB. • Students residing in 'D' & 'F' rated school districts may cross local school district boundaries to attend a charter school.

A complete list of school districts accountability ratings are available on the Mississippi Department of Education website.

Applicant Groups

In this RFP cycle, applicants will be considered in three groups, each of which has specific requirements.

<u>**New Operators**</u> are nonprofit organizations which:
   Have never operated a charter school OR currently operate a charter school that has been open for less than one school year (regardless of location)
   Do not intend to employ an educational service provider OR intend to employ an educational service provider that has not operated a school for more than one year (regardless of location)

<u>**Existing Operators**</u> are nonprofit organizations which currently:
   Have one or more schools in operation nationwide which have been in operation for more than one full school year
   Intend to employ an educational service provider with one or more schools in operation for more than one full school year.

<u>**Conversion Applicants**</u> are nonprofit organizations, either new operators or existing operators, which propose to convert an existing traditional public school to charter status.

Evaluation Process

The MCSAB charter school proposal evaluation process includes a **letter of intent and eligibility check** and **three stages of review**, summarized below. Additional information regarding Stages 2 and 3 may be found in the **published Evaluation Criteria for each Stage, which are incorporated in this RFP.**

Initial Stage: Letter of Intent and Eligibility

To be eligible to submit a full proposal, all interested parties must submit the mandatory Letter of Intent and accompanying eligibility documentation. Conversion schools must also submit their proof of support at this time. Eligibility packets must be prepared using the template documents provided and submitted via the online portal. Only eligible applicants will be able to submit a full proposal.

Stage 1: Completeness Check

All eligible proposals will be reviewed for completeness before they are distributed to evaluators. If a proposal is **incomplete or incorrectly** formatted, the applicant will have 48 hours to remedy issues and resubmit their proposal. Proposals deemed incomplete will not be eligible to proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Threshold Quality Review

Independent evaluators will assess critical elements of each proposal against the published Stage 2 evaluation criteria. At the conclusion of Stage 2, Applicants who fail to meet the threshold will not be eligible to proceed to Stage 3 Evaluation.

Stage 3: Independent Evaluation Team Review

Teams of independent evaluators will evaluate each proposal and discuss their findings based on the written materials. Applicants that meet the criteria will be invited to an in-person capacity interview. During an in-person capacity interview, applicants will have the opportunity to further demonstrate their capacity to open and maintain a high-quality charter school as well as to answer specific questions about their proposal. Applicants will receive a copy of the independent evaluation team's recommendation and will have the opportunity to provide a final (3) page written response to MCSAB before the Board votes to approve or deny applications.

Instructions for Developing a Proposal

The MCSAB is pleased to invite proposals for new quality charter schools seeking to open in the upcoming school year or thereafter. Prior to developing your proposal please be sure to read this entire RFP.

Components of the Proposal

Proposal Cover Sheet: The cover sheet includes basic information about the applicant team and the proposed school.

Narrative Proposal: The proposal is the formal application to MCSAB, and is a comprehensive description of the school's educational, operational, and financial plans.

Attachments: Throughout the proposal, specific documents are requested in addition to narrative answers. Attachments may not contain additional narrative unless specified. A comprehensive list of the attachments is provided in these instructions.

Capacity Interview: Invited applicants will have the opportunity to further demonstrate the team's capacity to open and maintain a high-quality charter school and answer specific questions evaluators may have about their proposal.

Application Document Specifications

Applicants MUST submit proposals through the electronic platform and must use the following templates:

Letter of Intent and Eligibility Packet Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Proposal Cover Sheet and Enrollment Projection Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
School-Wide Curriculum Description - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Proposal Narrative Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Statement of Assurances Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Staffing Chart Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Charter School Board Member Information Sheet Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Excel)
Financial Plan Workbook - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Excel)

All templates are available via the online portal.

All elements of the proposal **must be typed with 1-inch page margins and 12-point font, single-spaced.**

Each major section of the proposal (School Summary, Educational Program, etc.) and each addendum must begin on a separate page, as indicated in the template document. Adhere to all page limits as indicated.

If you believe a particular question does not apply to your team or proposal, respond "Not Applicable," AND state the reason this question is not applicable to your team or proposal.

All required documents should be uploaded in the file format specified.

Late or incorrectly formatted submissions will not be accepted.

When submitting resumes and biographies, **label each document with the individual's role with the proposed school (board member, principal, teacher, etc**.).

Review all elements of the proposal for completeness before submitting.

All proposals will be reviewed for completeness before they are accepted and distributed to evaluation teams. If a proposal is found to be incomplete or incorrectly formatted, **the applicant will have 48 hours** to satisfactorily rectify the identified issues and resubmit their proposal.
Applicants failing to rectify identified issues within the allotted time will not be evaluated in this cycle.

Required Attachments

The following is a list of attachments to accompany the proposal.
Note that not all attachments will be applicable for all applicants. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they submit all attachments required for their proposal. Do not upload documents for any attachment that is not applicable. Additional attachments are required for various addenda.

Complete List of Attachments	
New Operators	**Existing Operators**
1. School-wide curriculum description table 2. Summary scope and sequence 3. Curriculum map 4. Learning standards 5. Calendar and schedules 6. Enrollment policy 7. Discipline policy 8. Evidence of community support/demand 9. Leadership team qualifications 10. School leader qualifications 11. Organizational charts 12. Board documents 13. Board member information 14. Staffing chart 15. Personnel policies 16. Supplemental teacher evaluation tools 17. Supplemental leadership evaluation tools 18. Facility commitment and description 19. Start-up plan 20. Financial plan workbook 21. Budget narrative	1. School-wide curriculum description table 2. Exit standards 3. Calendar and schedules 4. Enrollment policy 5. Discipline policy 6. Evidence of community support/demand 7. Leadership team qualifications 8. School leader qualifications 9. Organization annual reports 10. Portfolio summary 11. Previous legal records 12. Organizational charts 13. Board documents 14. Board member information 15. Staffing chart 16. Personnel policies 17. Supplemental teacher evaluation tools 18. Supplemental leadership evaluation tools 19. Facility commitment and description 20. Start-up plan 21. Audited financial statements 22. Financial plan workbook 23. Network level budget 24. Budget narrative

Applicant Code of Conduct

Members of the Board are obligated to make decisions in the best interests of children, free from personal or political influences. Similarly, charter school applicants have the responsibility of respecting and upholding the integrity of the charter school proposal process.

Specifically, charter school applicants shall not:
Initiate, or attempt to initiate, any activity with a MCSAB member with the exception of a public hearing;
Initiate, or attempt to initiate, any activity with a member of the independent evaluation team; or
Direct any communications, including proposal documents, to a MCSAB member or to a member of the independent evaluation team.

**Charter school applicants found to be in violation of these requirements may be deemed ineligible
for consideration in future proposal processes.**

Public Disclosure

All charter school proposal materials submitted to MCSAB become public records.

Directions

Please submit an application that addresses the following questions / issues. The total narrative response **may not exceed 75 pages** (not including the requested attachments and addenda). There are no page limits for individual sections **except** for the School Summary, Attachments, and Addenda.

Please keep in mind that your application is a professional document. The quality of the document that you submit should reflect the quality of the school that you propose to open. Evaluation teams will be able to navigate well-organized, effectively edited documents easily, thereby focusing their energy on reviewing the content of each application. Grammar, spelling, and formatting all make an impression on an evaluator.

Plagiarism

The University of Southern Mississippi defines plagiarism as "copying words, concepts, or ideas from any source and submitting the material as one's own without acknowledging the source by the use of footnotes, quotation marks, or both" (University of Southern Mississippi, Academic Integrity Policy). Individuals and groups seeking the right and responsibility to educate public school children at public expense should be accountable to the highest standards of academic integrity. **The MCSAB adopts this definition and considers plagiarism, including the copying of language from any other charter application without proper attribution, as grounds for immediate denial.**

MCSAB understands that in order to implement an existing curriculum, instructional framework, or educational model (e.g. Montessori, arts integration, project-based learning, blended learning, etc.) with fidelity, key concepts must be discussed. However, it is not acceptable to copy and paste this discussion or description from another source. **A high-quality applicant team with the capacity to operate a high-quality school must be able to thoughtfully explain in their own words how they intend to educate children.** MCSAB also understands that existing operators proposing to replicate a model may use their own intellectual property, which is appropriate and acceptable.

School Overview (New and Existing Operators)
Executive Summary Narrative (Limit 2 Pages)

The Executive Summary should provide a concise overview of: the proposed plan for the school; the outcomes you expect to achieve; the geographic and population considerations of the school environment; the challenges particular to those considerations; and the applicant team's capacity to successfully open and operate a high-quality school given the above considerations.

Mission and Vision. State the mission and vision of the proposed school. The mission is a statement of the fundamental purpose of the school, describing why it exists. The vision statement describes how the school will operate and what success looks like for students. The mission and vision statement provide the foundation for the entire proposal, and taken together, should identify the students and community to be served and illustrate what success for students will look like.

Educational Need and Anticipated Student Population. Describe the anticipated student population, students anticipated educational needs and non-academic challenges the school is likely to encounter. Describe the rationale for selecting the location and targeting this student population.

Education Plan/School Design. Provide an overview of the education program of the proposed school, including major instructional methods, assessment strategies and non-negotiables of the school model. Describe the evidence that demonstrates the school model will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.

Community Engagement. Describe the relationships that you have established to generate community engagement in and support for the proposed school and how you have assessed demand and/or solicited support for the school. Briefly describe activities to date and summarize their results.

Leadership and Governance. List the current members of the school's proposed leadership team and governing board, including their roles with the school and their current professional affiliation. *Add lines to the table as needed. **Do not list members of the applicant team who will not have an official leadership role with the school going forward, such as consultants**.*

Name	Current Job Title & Employer	Position with Proposed School
EX. John Doe	Bank President, ABC Bank, Location	Governing Board Treasurer
EX. Jane Doe (no relation to John)	Principal, Best Charter School Ever, Location	School Principal

Enrollment Summary (Limit 2 Pages)

Complete the table below, illustrating the growth plan for the school. Indicate the school year for each column. This enrollment table will be used to complete the school's enrollment table in its charter school contract.

Describe the rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in year one and the basis for the growth plan illustrated above. Do Not propose grades served outside the original contract term of five years.

Grade Level	Number of Students					
	Year 1 20 - 20	Year 2 20 - 20	Year 3 20 - 20	Year 4 20 - 20	Year 5 20 - 20	Full Enrollment 20 - 20
Pre - K						
K						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
TOTAL						

New Operator Proposal

Section 1: Educational Program Design & Capacity

Program Overview

Summarize the education program and any non-negotiable elements of the school model. Briefly describe the evidence that promises success for this program with the anticipated student population.

Curriculum and Instructional Design

Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure. Give an overview of the planned curriculum, addressing alignment with Mississippi's state standards as required by Mississippi Code Annotated 37-28-15.

If the curriculum is fully developed, summarize curricular choices (e.g., textbook or computer-based curricula selection) **by subject, and the rationale for each**. **Describe the evidence** that these curricula will be appropriate and effective for the targeted students. Provide, in **Attachment 1** a school-wide curriculum description table.

See Exhibit A for an exemplar. Your curriculum summary table may be no longer than one page per grade level and must be prepared in 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

-OR-

If the curriculum **is not** already developed, explain the plan for how the curriculum will be developed between approval of the proposal and the opening of the school, and instead provide in **Attachment 1**, a curriculum development timeline, identifying milestones, individuals responsible for included tasks, and when key stages will be completed.

Provide, as **Attachment 2**, a summary of the **scope and sequence** of the curriculum for all grades you propose to serve, including core academic as well as non-academic classes.

See Exhibit B for an exemplar. Regardless of the number of grades served, your summary scope and sequence may not be longer than two pages per grade and must be prepared in 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

Provide, as **Attachment 3** a **curriculum map** for one core academic subject for one grade the school will serve in year one. The curriculum map should identify course outcomes and demonstrate a clear alignment with appropriate state standards.

See Exhibit C for an exemplar.

Describe the primary instructional strategies that the school will expect teachers to use **and** why they are well suited for the anticipated student population.

Pupil Performance Standards

1. Describe the pupil performance standards for the school as a whole.
2. Provide, in **Attachment 4**, a complete set of the school's proposed learning standards for one grade for each division the school will serve. Address the skills and knowledge each student will be expected to attain by the end of that grade. *If the school will serve only one division, the exit standards provided in response to question 5 in this section will suffice.*
3. If the school has, or will adopt or develop, additional academic standards beyond those mandated by the state, explain the types of standards (content areas, grade levels). Describe the adoption or development process. Select one grade level and subject area as an example and explain how these additional standards exceed requirements.
4. Explain the policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next.
5. Discuss how and when **promotion and graduation criteria** will be communicated to parents and students.
6. Provide, also in **Attachment 4**, the school's exit standards for graduating students. These should clearly set forth what students in the **last grade served** will know and be able to do.

High School Graduation Requirements (for schools serving grades 9-12)

1. Describe how the school will meet the graduation (exit) requirements described in **Attachment 4**. Explain how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements will exceed state and district standards, explain the additional requirements.
2. Explain how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (e.g. trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).
3. Discuss the systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting these requirements.

School Calendar and Schedule

1. Discuss the annual academic schedule for the school, including total number of days/hours of instruction. Explain how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program.
    a. Provide, as **Attachment 5,** the school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation.
2. Describe the structure of the school day and week. Include the number of instructional hours/ minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Note the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times. **Explain why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning.** Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade.
    a. Provide, also in **Attachment 5**, a sample daily and weekly schedule for each division of the school.

School Culture

1. Describe the culture or ethos of the proposed school. Explain how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.
2. Explain the plan to create and implement this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents, starting from the first day of school.
3. Describe a typical school day from the perspective of a student in a grade that will be served in the first year of operation.
4. Describe a typical day for a teacher of a grade that will be served in the first year of operation.
5. Explain how the school culture will support students with special needs, English Language Learners, and students at-risk of academic failure.

Supplemental Programming

1. If summer school will be offered, describe the program(s). Explain the schedule and length of the program including the number of hours and weeks. Discuss the anticipated participants including number of students and the methods used to identify them. Describe the anticipated resource and staffing needs for these programs and how they will be funded.

2. Describe the extra- or co-curricular activities or programming the school will offer, how often they will occur, and how they will be funded.

3. Describe the programs or strategies the school will employ to address student mental, emotional, and social development and health.

4. If applicable, describe any other student-focused activities and programs that are integral to the educational and student-development plan.

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Special Populations and At-Risk Students

1.   Describe the overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to: students with Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 plans, English Learners (ELs), students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. Identify the special populations that the school expects to serve, and the basis for these assumptions, whether through data related to a specific school district, or a more generalized analysis of the population to be served. Discuss how the course scope and sequence, daily schedule, staffing plans, and support strategies and resources will meet or be adjusted for the diverse needs of students.

2.   Complete this table to demonstrate calculation of at-risk students the school anticipates serving. Please use the demographic information provided by MCSAB via the online portal for the local school district where the charter school will be located to complete the first row of the table.

Current School District Demographics		
80% Charter School Requirement		
Anticipated Charter School Demographics		

3. Specifically describe the plan to identify and meet the learning needs of students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports you will provide, including the following:

   a. Methods for identifying students with special education needs (and avoiding misidentification);
   b. Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, ensure access to the general education curriculum, and ensure academic success for students with special education needs.
   c. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of special education students with mild, moderate, and severe needs to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in the IEP;
   d. Plans for promoting graduation for students with special education needs *(high schools only)*; and
   e. Plans to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs population.

4. Explain how the school will meet the needs of EL students, including the following:
   a. Methods for identifying EL students (and avoiding misidentification);
   b. Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students.
   c. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of EL students, including exiting students from EL services.
   d. Means for providing qualified staffing for EL students.

5. Explain how the school will identify and meet the learning needs of students who are performing below grade level and monitor their progress. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports that will be provided for these students.
6. Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of intellectually gifted students, including the following:
   a. Specific instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their experience;
   b. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of these students; and
   c. Means for providing qualified staffing for intellectually gifted students.

Student Recruitment and Enrollment

1. Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing that will provide equal access to interested students and families. Specifically, describe the plans for outreach to families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure.
2. Describe the timeline and individuals responsible for student recruitment/engagement and enrollment.
3. Provide, as **Attachment 6**, the school's **Enrollment Policy**, which should include the following:
   a. Tentative dates for application period, and enrollment deadlines and procedures, including explanation of how the school will receive and process applications.
   b. Description of any enrollment preferences or priorities.
   c. **Describe the school's lottery procedures and how they will comply with the statutory requirement in Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-15 that lotteries be "equitable, randomized, transparent, and impartial";**
   d. Policies and procedures for student waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers; and
   e. Explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities for students or parents.

Student Discipline

1. Describe in detail the school's approach to student discipline. Taken together, the narrative description and discipline policy should:
   a. Explain the practices the school will use to promote discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior;
   b. List and define the offenses for which students must (where non-discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled;
   c. Explain how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities, including students with Behavior Support Plans in disciplinary actions and proceedings; and
   d. Explain procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion and a plan for providing services to students who are expelled or out of school for more than ten days.
2. If already developed, provide the proposed discipline policy as **Attachment 7.**
3. Discuss how students and parents will be informed of the school's discipline policy.

Parent and Community Involvement

1. Describe the role of any parents and community members involved in developing the proposed school.
2. Discuss specifically what has been done to assess and build parent and community demand for the school. Explain the plan to continue to engage parents and community members from the present time, to approval, and through opening.
3. Explain the plan to engage parents in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles described below). Describe any opportunities and/or expectations for ongoing parent, student, and community involvement. Any parent volunteer requirements must also include a waiver process that considers individual family circumstances.
4. Discuss the community resources that will be available to students and parents. Describe any partnerships the school will have with community organizations, businesses, or other educational institutions. Specify the nature,

   purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships including any fee-based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student learning.
5. Provide, as **Attachment 8, existing evidence of demand for the school** (e.g. letters of support or intent to apply forms from families and students) and/or support from intended community partners (e.g. letters of intent/commitment, memoranda of understanding, and/or contracts). *DO NOT ATTACH CONVERSION SCHOOL PETITIONS HERE.*

Educational Program Capacity

1. Identify the key members of the school's leadership team. Identify only individuals who will play a substantial and ongoing role in school development, governance and/or management, and will thus share responsibility for the school's educational success. These may include current or proposed governing board members, school leadership/management, and any essential partners who will play an important ongoing role in the school's development and operation.

2. Describe the team's **individual and collective qualifications** for implementing the school design successfully, including capacity in areas such as: administration, and governance; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; performance management; and parent and community engagement.

3. If known, identify the individuals who will fill these positions, explain why each is well qualified for a specific role, and summarize their relevant track record of success. Provide, as **Attachment 9**, the qualifications, resumes, professional biographies, and proof of US citizenship for each identified individual.

-AND/OR-

If any of these positions are not yet filled, discuss the process and timeline for recruiting, selecting, and hiring these team members. Describe the criteria to be used in selecting each, and instead provide in **Attachment 9** a complete job description and required qualifications for each unfilled role.

4. Identify the principal/head of school candidate and explain why this individual is well qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission. Summarize the proposed leader's academic and organizational leadership record. Provide specific evidence that demonstrates capacity to design, launch, and manage a high- performing charter school. Discuss the evidence of the leader's ability to effectively serve the anticipated population. This evidence may include annual student achievement data, disaggregated by subgroup, for every school under the current or prior management of the leader or other administrator. If the proposed leader has never run a school, describe any leadership training programs that have been completed. Also provide, as **Attachment 10**, the qualifications, resume, professional biography, and proof of US Citizenship for this individual.

-OR-

If no candidate has been identified, discuss the process and timeline for recruiting, selecting, and hiring the school leader. Describe the criteria to be used in selecting this leader, and instead provide as **Attachment 10** a complete job description and required qualifications.

5. Describe the team's ties to and/or knowledge of the target community.
6. Identify any organizations, agencies, or consultants that are partners in planning and establishing the school, along with a brief description of their current and planned role, and any resources they have contributed or plan to contribute to the school's development.
7. Explain who is currently leading the school development process, and who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis following approval of the charter to lead development of the school.

Section 2: Operations Plan & Capacity

Organization Charts

Submit, as Attachment 11, organization charts that show the school governance, management, and staffing structure in the first year of school operations, at the end of the charter term; and when the school reaches full capacity, if in a year beyond the first charter term. Each organization chart should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of, and lines of authority and reporting among, the governing board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. The organization charts should also specifically document lines of authority and reporting within the school.

Legal Status and Governing Documents

1. Describe the proposed school's legal status, including non-profit status and federal tax-exempt status.
2. Provide, as **Attachment 12:**
   a. The bylaws of the board, including any amendments;
   b. The code of ethics and conflict of interest policies for the board;
   c. Any additional governing documents already adopted, including other board policies; and
   d. The completed and signed statement of assurances (prepared using the template provided by MCSAB).

Governing Board

1. Explain the governance philosophy that will guide the board, including the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups.
2. Describe the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles, powers, and duties of the governing board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies.
3. Describe the current and desired size and composition of the governing board. Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that are and/or will be represented on the governing board.
4. Explain how this governance structure and composition will: a) help ensure that the school will be an educational and operational success; b) evaluate the success of the school and school leader including what the board will evaluate and when it will evaluate the school and school leader; and c) include active and effective representation of key stakeholders, including parents.
5. List all current and prospective board members and their intended roles. For each individual identified, summarize interest in and qualifications to serve on the board. Explain the procedure by which board members have been and will be selected. How often will the board meet? Discuss the plans for any committee structure. Provide, as **Attachment 13,** the following documents for each individual identified here: a completed and signed Board Member Information Sheet, resume, professional biography, and proof of US citizenship(if aboard member's documentation is attached elsewhere in this proposal or was submitted with the Letter of Intent, state so on the Information Sheet).
6. If the current applicant team does not include the initial board, explain how and when the transition to the formal governing board will take place.
7. Describe plans for increasing the capacity of the governing board. How will the board expand and develop over time? How and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added, and how will vacancies be filled?

8. What are the priorities for recruitment of additional board members? What kinds of orientation or training will new board members receive, and what kinds of ongoing development will existing board members receive? The plan for training and development should include a timetable, specific topics to be addressed, and any requirement to participate.
9. If this proposal is being submitted by a pre-existing non-profit organization respond to the following:
    a. Was the pre-existing non-profit formed for a purpose other than operating schools? If so, please provide the mission of the organization and explain how operating charter schools serves that mission.
    b. Will the pre-existing non-profit board govern the new school, or will a new non-profit corporation governed by a separate board hold the charter?
    c. If the non-profit's current board will govern the charter school, what steps have been taken to transform its board membership, mission, and bylaws to assume its new duties? Describe the plan and timeline for completing the transition and orienting the board to its new duties.
    d. If a new board has been or will be formed, describe what, if anything, its ongoing relationship to the existing non-profit's board will be.
10. Describe the board's ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest. Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the proposal is approved; discuss specific steps that the board will take to avoid any actual conflicts and to mitigate perceived conflicts.

Advisory Bodies

1. Describe any advisory bodies or councils that are in place or will be formed, including the roles and duties of each. For each identified group describe:
    a. Its current and/or planned composition and the strategy for achieving that composition;
    b. The role of parents, students, and teachers, as applicable; and
    c. The reporting structure relative to the school's governing board and leadership.

Grievance Process

1. Explain the process that the school will follow should a parent or student have an objection to a governing board policy or decision, administrative procedure, or practice at the school.

Staff Structure

1. Summarize the staffing structure and growth plan for the school, describing:
    a. Year 1 positions, as well as positions to be added in future years;
    b. Administrative, instructional, and operational and support staff; and
    c. The teacher-student ratio, as well as the ratio of total adults to students for the school.
2. Provide, as **Attachment 14**, a complete staffing chart for the school (prepared using the template provided by MCSAB).
3. Explain how the relationship between the school's senior administrative team and the rest of the staff will be managed.

Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

1. Explain the relationship that will exist between the school and its employees, including whether the employees will be at-will and whether the school will use employment contracts. If the school will use contracts, explain the nature and purpose of the contracts. If developed, provide, as **Attachment 15**, any personnel policies or employee manual.

2. Outline compensation structure for all employees, including salary ranges and employment benefits, as well as any incentives or reward structures, if applicable.

Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation continued

3. Describe the strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring teaching staff, including the school's plan for hiring highly qualified staff in accordance with the ESSA. Explain required qualifications for instructional staff, key selection criteria, and any special considerations relevant to your school design.

4. Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.

5. Explain how teachers will be supported, developed, and evaluated; outline the tools and key inputs. If using the Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System, please indicate, but do NOT include samples of the assessment tools. Details regarding the Professional Growth System may be found here. If using a system already developed, provide, in **Attachment 16,** the teacher evaluation tool(s).

6. Explain how the school leader will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Will the school use the Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System If you intend to supplement or use an alternative to the Professional Growth System, outline the tools and key inputs. Provide, in **Attachment 17,** any supplemental leadership evaluation tool(s) that you have developed already. *If you intend to use only the* Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System, *do NOT include the mandated assessment tools.* Details regarding the Professional Growth System may be found here.

7. Explain how the school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes and turnover. Note the reporting requirements by MCSAB for all schools to adhere to the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics. Details may be found here.

Professional Development

1. Identify the person(s) or position(s) responsible for overseeing professional development (PD).

2. Discuss the core components of the school's PD plan and how they will support effective implementation of the educational program. Discuss the extent to which professional development will be individualized or uniform. Who will be responsive for administering PD programs (e.g. a staff member, consultant, etc.)?

3. Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.

4. Describe the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year, and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure accommodate this plan. Include time scheduled for common planning or collaboration and discuss how such time will typically be used

Performance Management

Explain the plan for using internal and external assessments to measure and report progress against the **Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework**. Specifically, how will this plan address the following key areas on which charter schools will be evaluated:

     a. student academic proficiency and growth;
     b. achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between major student subgroups;
     c. attendance;
     d. recurrent enrollment from year to year;
     e. in-school and out-of-school suspension rates and expulsion rates;
     f. graduation and dropout rates for appropriate multiple-year cohorts;
     g. *(for high schools only)* student postsecondary readiness, including the percentage of graduates submitting applications to postsecondary institutions, high school completion, postsecondary admission and postsecondary enrollment or employment.
     h. financial performance and sustainability; and
     i. governing board performance and stewardship, including compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and terms of the charter contract.

2. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole – throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract. Explain how the school will collect and analyze student academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community. Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible and involved in the collection and analysis of assessment data.
3. Who will be responsible for managing the data, interpreting it for classroom teachers, and leading or coordinating professional development to improve student achievement?
4. Explain the training and support that school leadership and teachers will receive in analyzing, interpreting, and using performance data to improve student learning.
5. Describe the corrective actions the school will take if it falls short of student academic achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide, classroom, or individual student level. Explain what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.

Facilities

1. Describe the basic facilities requirements for accommodating your school plan, including number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities.
2. Identify any other significant facilities needs not already specified, including: playground, large common space for assemblies and other large group meetings, athletic facilities, and other special considerations (identify and explain).
3. Describe the process for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or consultants you are employing to navigate the real estate market, plans for renovations, timelines, financing, etc. Include in this discussion the plan for ensuring that identified facilities will comply with applicable state and local health and safety requirements and applicable planning review procedures.
4. If you currently hold a facility or have an MOU or other proof of intent to secure a specific facility, please provide proof of the commitment as **Attachment 18**. Briefly describe the facility including location, size, and amenities. You may provide, also in **Attachment 18**, up to 10 pages of supporting documents providing details about the facility.

Start-Up & Ongoing Operations

1. Provide, as **Attachment 19**, a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.

2. Describe the transportation plan that details how reliable and safe transportation will be provided for all students. In addition to daily transportation needs, describe how the school plans to meet transportation needs for field trips and athletic events, if applicable.

3. Provide the school plan for safety and security for students, the facility, and property. Explain the types of security personnel, technology, equipment, and policies that the school will employ.

4. List the types of insurance coverage the school will secure, including a description of the levels of coverage and estimated costs. Explain the basis for these assumptions.

Operations Capacity

1. Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following: staffing; professional development; performance management; general operations; and facilities management.

2. Describe the organization's capacity and experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations, as applicable.

Section 3: Financial Plan & Capacity

Financial Plan

1. Describe the systems, policies and processes the school will use for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls and ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements.

2. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the school's administration and governing board for school finance and distinguish between each.

3. Describe the school's plans and procedures for conducting an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the school.

4. Describe how the school will ensure financial transparency to the authorizer and the public, including its plans for public adoption of its budget and public dissemination of its annual audit and an annual financial report.

5. Describe any services to be contracted, such as transportation, business services, payroll, and auditing services, including the anticipated costs and criteria for selecting such services.

6. Describe the school's plans for liability insurance to indemnify the school, its board, staff and teachers against tort claims.

Financial Plan continued

7. Submit the completed Financial Plan Workbook as **Attachment 20**. In developing your budget, use the information provided to calculate your per-pupil revenue projection. Prepare your submission using the template provided by MCSAB. Complete ALL sheets in the workbook. ***NOTE: Applicants for multiple schools should complete all sheets in the workbook for all schools opening in year one.***

8. Budget Narrative: As **Attachment 21**, present a detailed description of assumptions, calculations, and revenue estimates. The narrative should include, at minimum, the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs. Provide specific evidence supporting assumptions and/or describe the source of estimated amounts wherever possible.
    a. Describe all anticipated funding sources. Clearly address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising). Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property, or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include in **Attachment 21** evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school's core operation depends.
    b. Discuss the school's contingency approach and plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.
    c. Explain in detail the year one cash flow contingency plan, in the event that revenue projections are not met (or not met on time).

Financial Management Capacity

1. Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Financial Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following: Financial management; Fundraising and development; and Accounting and internal controls.

List of Addenda

The following addenda should be completed as applicable by **new and existing** operators. Note that some addenda require additional attachments.

1. For applicants requesting WAIVERS from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47
2. For CONVERSION SCHOOL proposals
3. For proposals from operators using EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDERS
   - Attachment ESP-1: ESP audited financial statements and annual report
   - Attachment ESP-2: ESP contract

Addendum 1. Request for Waivers from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47

6 Page Limit - ONLY applicants requesting a waiver from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47, relating to employment of a nonimmigrant foreign worker, should complete this section.

- Identify all positions for which you are requesting a waiver. Provide a summary of the job descriptions and required qualifications for each.
- Explain the rationale for this waiver request. Include in your explanation a summary of your efforts to date to recruit lawful permanent residents of the United States for the relevant position(s).
- Describe how this waiver will positively impact student achievement.

Addendum 2. For Conversion School Proposals

6 Page Limit - ONLY applicants proposing to convert an existing
(non-charter) public school should complete this section.
Conversion school applicants may propose to provide a high quality option for students in schools where:

- a majority of parents and/or teachers and/or school board members of the existing school wish to convert the existing non-charter public school; or
- the existing school is undergoing State or District turnaround efforts.

Conversion charter schools must have a clear plan for dramatically improving persistently underperforming school cultures, significantly raising student achievement, and effectively meeting the needs of at-risk populations, especially students with disabilities.

Community Need and Support

Explain the rationale for converting the existing public school to charter status.

Describe the efforts to date to garner parent and community support and involve individuals and organizations in the conversion. Include a discussion of the process by which the applicant team gathered the evidence of eligibility for conversion (previously presented with the LOI), namely:

    a. a petition signed by a majority of teachers in the existing non-charter public school; or
    b. a petition signed by a majority of parents of students in the existing non-charter public school; or
    c. evidence of a majority vote of the local school board; or (in the case of schools in districts under state conservatorship) evidence of a majority vote of the State Board of Education. Provide specific plans for ongoing family and community engagement, including timing and responsible individuals.

Enrollment and Recruitment Supplement

1. Explain the plan to cultivate student and parent investment in the conversion, especially how the school plans to limit attrition from the existing student body. Describe how this plan will successfully transition students who currently attend or are zoned to attend the school being converted.
2. *If applicable,* summarize the school's policy regarding enrollment preferences for students who reside within the former attendance area of the proposed charter school.
       a. The policies provided above as **Attachment 6** must specifically address differences between policy and procedure for students outside of the former attendance zone vs. students currently attending or zoned to attend the existing school.

Turnaround Planning

1. Describe your organization's prior experience in taking over or turning around an underperforming school.
2. Discuss specific ways that you will engage and transform the existing school culture during the pre-launch period and the first year of operation.
3. Present a phase-in plan that details how the proposed school would take responsibility for all grades and all existing programs of the school, including (but not limited to) programs for students with severe disabilities, ELL programs, and any early childhood education programs.
4. Describe the plan to work with the existing school during the conversion/transition process.

Addendum 3. Education Service Providers

ESP Selection
1. Explain why the applicant is seeking to contract with an ESP rather than operate the school(s) directly.
2. Explain how and why the ESP was selected, including when and how the applicant learned of the ESP, which other ESPs were considered, why the ESP was selected over other ESPs, and what due diligence was conducted.

ESP Track Record
1. Explain the ESP's success in serving student populations similar to the target population of the school. Describe the ESP's demonstrated academic track record as well as successful management of non-academic school functions (e.g., back-office services, school operations, extracurricular programs). Provide summary information from reference checks conducted by the applicant (regarding the third-party ESP), identifying each reference.
2. List all schools operated by the ESP. Identify those schools that serve the same grade levels *and* student populations demographically similar to the anticipated population of the proposed school. Include name, year opened, contact information, location, number of students, and contact information for the authorizer for each currently operating school.
3. Provide evidence of the financial health of the ESP. Attach as **Attachment ESP-1** the most recent independent financial audit report of the ESP and its most recent annual report.
4. List and explain any management contract terminations as well as any charter revocations, non-renewals or withdrawals/non-openings that the proposed ESP has experienced in the past five (5) years.

Legal Relationship with ESP
1. Provide evidence that the board is independent from the ESP and self-governing, including evidence of independent legal representation and arm's-length negotiating.
2. Describe any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the school's governing board, proposed school employees, proposed ESP, and any affiliated business entities.
3. List all subsidiaries or related entities that are affiliated or owned in whole or in part by the ESP and identify the nature of those entities' business activities.
4. Explain whether the school has or will have any relationship with or receive any services from any of the entities listed in the previous question.

5. Explain the supervisory responsibilities of the ESP (if any), including which school employees the ESP will supervise, how the ESP will supervise these employees, and how the charter school board will oversee the ESP's supervisory responsibilities.
6. If the school's governing board intends to execute promissory notes or other negotiable instruments, or enter into a lease, lease-purchase agreement or any other facility or financing relationships with the ESP, provide evidence that such agreements are separately documented and not part of or incorporated in the school management contract. Any facility or financing agreements must be consistent with the school governing board's authority and practical ability to terminate the management agreement and continue operation of the school.
7. Describe and provide documentation of any loans, grants, or investments made between the ESP and the school, including an explanation of how any such loans, grants, or investments may be initiated, repaid, and refused by the school.

ESP Management Plan

1. Provide a detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the ESP.
2. Describe the scope of services and costs of all resources to be provided by the ESP.
3. Describe the oversight and evaluation methods that the Board will use to oversee the ESP. What are the school-wide and student achievement results that the management organization is responsible for achieving? How often, and in what ways, will the board review and evaluate the ESP's progress toward achieving agreed- upon goals? Will there be an external evaluator to assess the ESP's performance? What are the conditions, standards, and procedures for board intervention, if the management organization's performance is deemed unsatisfactory?
4. Describe the compensation structure and payment schedule, including clear identification of all fees, bonuses, and any other compensation to be paid to the ESP.
5. Describe the respective financial responsibilities of the school governing board and the ESP. Who will own property purchased with public funds? Which operating and capital expenditures will each party be responsible for? What types of spending decisions can the management organization make without obtaining board approval? What reports must the ESP submit to the board on financial performance, and on what schedule? How will the school governing board provide financial oversight?
6. What is the term (duration) of the management agreement? Explain the conditions and procedures (including time frames, notice, and decision-making procedures) for renewal and termination of the contract. How often will the management agreement be renewed? Describe the conditions that both the ESP and the school must satisfy for the management agreement to be renewed. On what grounds may the ESP or the school terminate the management agreement for cause, and without cause? List any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.
7. Describe the plan for the operation of the school in the event of termination of the management agreement.
8. Provide as **Attachment ESP-2** a draft of the proposed management agreement with the ESP.

List of Exhibits

A. Sample School-Wide Curriculum Description Table
B. Sample Scope and Sequence Document
C. Sample Curriculum Map
D. RFP Description of Stage 2 Evaluation Criteria
E. RFP Description of Stage 3 Evaluation Criteria

Exhibit A: Sample School-Wide Curriculum Description Table

Content Area	Publisher/Product	Rationale for Selection
Grade Level:		
ELA		
Math	Connected Mathematics	*Connected Mathematics* is a constructivist, problem-centered middle school math curriculum that asks students to spend significant portions of time solving problems in contexts that require thinking, planning, reasoning, computing, and evaluating. Problem-centered math helps students make sense of and retrieve math concepts more readily. *Connected Math* focuses on depth of understanding, as well as on developing the necessary habits of mind that are conducive to the long-term study of mathematics. An independent study conducted by Claremont Graduate University's Institute of Organizational and Program Evaluation Research, reported that Connected Mathematics students demonstrated significantly greater gains in problem-solving, math communication, and math reasoning strategies than their peers using other math programs as evidenced by performance on the Balanced Assessment of Mathematics (BAM.)
	ST Math	Created by the MIND Research Institute, ST Math provides game-based, visual math instruction. This interactive program adapts to students' mastery as they progress through various skills and concepts targeted to their needs. ST Math focuses on improving conceptual learning and problem solving by visually representing concepts students learn during traditional instruction. Schools that use ST Math achieve at least double the growth in math proficiency than comparable schools.
Science		
Social Studies		
Other (specify)		
Grade Level:		
ELA		
Math		
Science		
Social Studies		
Other (specify)		

Exhibit B: Sample Scope and Sequence Summary

	Core Academic Program Scope and Sequence				
	ELA	**MATH**	**SCIENCE**	**SOCIAL STUDIES**	**SPANISH**
9	**English Language Arts I: Classics across genres** Higher level of analysis of the novel, drama (Shakespeare), poetry, memoir, literary elements, speeches, short stories, non-fiction, crafting an argument	**Geometry** Graphing and the relations between equations and graphs, including points, lines, polynomials, circles, and other curves, graphing inequalities, slope, properties and relations of plane figures, circles, triangles and other polygons, transformations and proofs **--OR--** **Algebra I**	**Biology I** Matter, chemical building block of life, cell structure and life processes, genetics, DNA, classification of life, evolution, human body systems, biodiversity	**Contemporary US History and Civics** WWII and the Holocaust, the Cold War, the 1950s, cultural revolutions, Civil Rights, social policy, the 80s, 9/11 and post 9/11 US, Civics	**Spanish I**
10					
11					
12					

	Non- Core Academic Program Scope and Sequence		
	PHYSICAL EDUCATION	**ACADEMIC ELECTIVES**	**FINE ARTS ELECTIVES**
9	**Health and Fitness I** Cardio, muscular development, team sports, yoga, dance, separate and co-gender sex-ed	Creative Writing Architecture	Visual Art, Choir or Band, Theatre
10			
11			
12			

Exhibit C: Sample Curriculum Map

9th Grade English Language Arts Curriculum Map			
Unit 1: Literary Elements and the Short Story (6 weeks – Aug- Sept.)			
Standards	**Objectives**	**Key Concepts/Vocabulary**	**Suggested Resources**
RL.9-10.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. **RL.9-10.5:** Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.**W.9-10.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. **SL.9-10.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. **L.9-10.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. **L.9-10.5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.	• Identify and explain plot structure (i.e., exposition, rising action, crisis/climax, falling action, resolution/denouement) in short stories. • Understand and explain why plots in short stories usually focus on a single event. • Analyze how authors create the setting in a short story. • Define the concept of theme and identify the theme(s) in stories read. • Identify and explain characterization techniques in short stories. • Identify and explain the use of figurative language in short stories. • Analyze how authors create tone in short stories. • Identify the point of view in a short story and analyze how point of view affects the reader's interpretation of the story. • Write a coherent essay of literary analysis with a clear thesis statement, at least three pieces of evidence from texts, and a strong introduction and conclusion. • Define and refine research questions; cite sources accurately, distinguishing between paraphrasing and quoting.	Reading: ☐ Character, characterization ☐ Figurative language ☐ Irony (e.g., dramatic, situational, verbal) ☐ Narrator (reliable and unreliable) ☐ Parable ☐ Plot (i.e., exposition, rising action, crisis/climax, falling action, resolution/ denouement) ☐ Point of view ☐ Sensory language ☐ Setting ☐ Style ☐ Symbol, symbolism ☐ Theme ☐ Tone Writing: ☐ Review parts of speech (Verbs: principal parts of verbs, especially irregular past and past participles; simple, perfect, and progressive tenses; agreement of subject and verb, especially with collective nouns Nouns: common, proper, concrete, abstract, countable, collective, compound, possessive, gerunds) ☐Review capitalization of common and proper nouns	"The Tell Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe "The Gift of the Magi" by O Henry "New African" from *Sarah Phillips* by Andrea Lee "Between the Pool and the Gardenias" from *Krik Krak* by Edwidge Danticat
Assessments/Activities *Literary Analysis Essay* – Select a short story and write an essay that analyzes how a particular literary element plays a part in the essence and workings of one of the chosen stories.			

Exhibit D

MISSISSIPPI CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER BOARD CHARTER SCHOOL PROPOSAL STAGE TWO EVALUATION CRITERIA
NEW AND EXISTING OPERATORS

The Stage 2 Evaluation Process

The Stage 2 Evaluation Criteria are the essential tools used by evaluators to determine whether a proposal meets the **minimum quality threshold** required to merit a full evaluation. A response is **Inadequate** if it significantly fails to address the RFP requirements or criteria for approval, or wholly lacks merit. During Stage 2, evaluators **only provide a rating to indicate that a proposal has not met the threshold and is thus deemed inadequate.** At the conclusion of Stage 2, if a proposal has no inadequate ratings the proposal proceeds to a full review to assess the extent to which it meets the Stage 3 criteria for approval.

THRESHOLD 1: PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL OBLIGATIONS
Documents considered include (but may not be limited to): • Proposal Narrative ○ Executive Summary ○ Section 1. Educational Program Design & Capacity: Student Recruitment & Enrollment ○ (*if applicable*): Addendum 1. Request for Waivers from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47 ○ (*if applicable*): Addendum 2. For Conversion School Applications: Enrollment &Recruitment Supplement, Turnaround Planning • Attachment: Enrollment Policy

A response is inadequate if:
It raises significant concerns about the applicant's understanding of, preparation for, and/or commitment to non- sectarian operation.
It is lacking in or raises significant concerns about the applicant's understanding of, preparation to, and/or commitment to operating free of any prohibited application, admissions, or enrollment policies/practices.

THRESHOLD 2: STUDENT POPULATIONS
Documents considered include (but may not be limited to): • Proposal Narrative ○ Executive Summary ○ Section 1. Educational Program Design &Capacity: Special Student Populations and At-Risk Students, Student Recruitment & Enrollment, Student Discipline ○ Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Facilities ○ (if applicable): Addendum 2. For Conversion School Applications: Enrollment &Recruitment Supplement, Turnaround Planning • Attachment: Enrollment Policy • Attachment: Discipline Policy • Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook

A response is inadequate if:

It is lacking in merit or raises significant concerns about the applicant's understanding of, preparation and/or commitment to meeting the needs of all special populations, including students with disabilities, ELLs, students requiring remediation or gifted and talented students.

The funds allocated to serving special populations are inadequate or are contradicted by the assumptions in other parts of the plan.

Demographic projections fail to meet the statutory "80% rule" (i.e., the proposed school's underserved student population is equivalent to at least 80% of the underserved student percentage of the school District in which the school will be located).

THRESHOLD 3: STARTUP PLAN

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal Narrative
  - Executive Summary
  - Section 1. Educational Program Design &Capacity: Student Recruitment & Enrollment, Education Program Capacity
  - Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, & Evaluation; Professional Development, Facilities, Start-up & Ongoing Operations
  - (if applicable): Addendum 1. Request for Waivers from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47
  - (if applicable): Addendum 2. For Conversion School Applications: Enrollment & Recruitment Supplement, Turnaround Planning
- Attachment: Enrollment Policy
- Attachment: Facility commitment and description
- Attachment: Start-up plan
- Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook

A response is inadequate if:

The start-up plan insufficiently identifies critical work streams required before school opening.

The start-up plan fails to identify a specific and reasonable completion date for each milestone, and/or the time allocated to complete work streams within the start-up plan is inadequate.

The start-up plan indicates that the applicants are unprepared to meet compliance requirements or to understand what will be required to open on time and be ready to serve students effectively.

The plan for securing a viable facility in time for school opening is either non-existent or implausible.

THRESHOLD 4: PERSONNEL

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal Narrative
  - Executive Summary
  - Section 1. Educational Program Design & Capacity: Educational Program Capacity
  - Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Organization Charts, Governing Board, Advisory Bodies, Staff Structure, Professional Development
- Attachment: School leader qualifications
- Attachment: Leadership team qualifications
- Attachment: Organizational charts
- Attachment: Board documents
- Attachment: Board member information
- Attachment: Staffing chart
- Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook
- Attachment: Budget Narrative

A response is inadequate if:

The applicants provided insufficient evidence that the proposed school leader has satisfactory experience in serving the proposed student population.

The proposed staffing structure is not viable or is materially inconsistent with other parts of the plan.

The proposed organization chart and board information raise significant concerns about the understanding of, preparation for, and/or commitment to principles of sound board governance, including avoiding conflicts of interest.

THRESHOLD 5: FINANCIAL PLAN

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal Narrative
  - Executive Summary
  - Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Staff Structure, Facilities, Start-up & Ongoing Operations
  - Section 3. Financial Plan & Capacity
- Attachment: Staffing chart
- Attachment: Start-up plan
- Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook
- Attachment: Budget narrative

A response is inadequate if:

The revenue assumptions are lacking in merit or raise significant concerns about the applicant's understanding of, preparation to, or ability to account for state and federal per pupil funding streams.

Budget worksheets as presented are mathematically inaccurate, and/or revenue and expense lines are accounted for incorrectly.

Budget projections for any year(s) result in a cash-negative position.

Private funds are included in financial projections (loans, grants, lines of credit, etc.), but are wholly unsubstantiated by evidence of commitment in Attachment: Budget Narrative.

Expenditure assumptions are not provided, lack merit or are unsustainably high or low on their face. Any assumption detail fails to provide a credible rationale for accepting the facially invalid assumptions.

Employees and consultants/contractors working prior to school opening are not accounted for in the start-up budget, and/or the revenue allocated to cover those expenditures is wholly inadequate in relation to the work assumptions.

THRESHOLD 6: PERFORMANCE HISTORY (For Existing Operators, including applicants proposing to partner with an ESP)

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal Narrative:
  - Executive Summary
  - Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Staff Structure, Facilities, Start-up & Ongoing Operations
  - Addendum 3. Education Service Providers
- Attachment: Annual report and/or business plan
- Attachment: Portfolio summary
- Attachment: Litigation documents
- Attachment: ESP audited financial statements and annual report
- Attachment: ESP contract
- Attachment: Organization audited financial statements
- Attachment: Organization-level budget

A response is inadequate if:

Evidence demonstrating the operator's track record of academic performance **is not provided or fails to meet the statutory requirement to demonstrate gains in student achievement.**

Evidence of successful management of nonacademic school functions (e.g., back-office services, school operations, extracurricular programs) is not provided or is plainly inadequate.

THRESHOLD 7: ESP RELATIONSHIP (For applicants proposing to contract with an ESP)

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal narrative
  - Executive Summary
  - Addendum 3. Education Service Providers
- ☐ Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook
- ☐ Attachment: Budget Narrative
- ☐ Attachment: Annual report and/or business plan
- ☐ Attachment: Portfolio summary
- ☐ Attachment: Litigation documents
- ☐ Attachment: ESP audited financial statements and annual report
- ☐ Attachment: ESP contract
- ☐ Attachment: Organization audited financial statements
- ☐ Attachment: Organization-level budget

THRESHOLD 7: ESP RELATIONSHIP (For applicants proposing to contract with an ESP)
A response is inadequate if:
The contract is not in the form of a fee-for-service agreement, and/or any financial transactions, facility transactions, etc., are included in the contract.
The term sheet and/or contract indicate contract duration longer than the first term of the charter.
The term sheet and/or contract wholly fail to articulate roles of and differentiate responsibilities between the governing board, school staff, and the ESP (e.g., the board cedes independent oversight/authority over budget, performance).
The term sheet and/or contract do not assign ownership rights (e.g., curricular materials, FFE, facility/land) or employment authority (for members of school-level staff).

Exhibit E
MISSISSIPPI CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER BOARD
STAGE THREE EVALUATION CRITERIA
NEW AND EXISTING OPERATORS

The Stage 3 Evaluation Process

Independent evaluators utilize the Stage 3 criteria in their individual and team assessments of each proposal. There are additional evaluation criteria for existing operator applicants. Based on evaluation criteria evaluators present a rating and a narrative analysis of each section of the proposal.

Within each section, specific criteria define the expectations for a response that "Meets the Standard."

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 other sections of the proposal.

In general, the following definitions guide evaluator ratings:

Rating	Characteristics
Meets the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with **specific and accurate information** that shows **thorough preparation**; presents a **clear, realistic picture** of how the school expects to operate; and **inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.**
Partially Meets the Standard	The response meets the criteria in **many** respects but **lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.**
Does Not Meet the Standard	The response meets the criteria in **some** respects but has **substantial gaps** in a number of areas.
Falls Far Below the Standard	The response is **wholly undeveloped or significantly incomplete**; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

A proposal 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.

Evidence of Capacity

Throughout the proposal, evaluators will assess the evidence that the applicant team has the capacity to execute the plan as presented.

In total, a high-quality proposal will demonstrate evidence that the team has the capacity needed in all key areas to open and operate a charter school that improves academic outcomes for students.

- ☐ **Individual and collective qualifications** (documented, for example, by resumes and biographies for all members) **to implement the Education Plan** successfully, including capacities in areas such as school leadership, administration, and governance; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; performance management; and parent and community engagement.

- ☐ **Individual and collective qualifications** for implementing the **Organizational Plan** successfully, including capacity in areas such as staffing, professional development, performance management, school start-up, general operations, and facilities management.

- ☐ **Individual and collective qualifications** for implementing the **Financial Plan** successfully, including capacity in areas such as financial management, fundraising and development, accounting, and internal controls.

Stage Three Evaluation Criteria: New Operator Proposal School Overview

Section 1: Educational Program Design & Capacity

A strong Educational Program Design is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Operations Plan, and Financial Plan.

A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Curriculum and Instructional Design

- Framework for a rigorous, quality instructional design that reflects the needs of the school's target population and will ensure all students meet or exceed the expectations of the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks
    - ☐ Comprehensive, quality curriculum overview that includes a sample course scope and sequence for one subject for one grade for each division (elementary, middle, high school) the school would serve, and demonstrated alignment of course outcomes with applicable standards. Sound curricular choices, by subject, including reasonable evidence the curriculum will be appropriate and effective for the targeted students.
    - ☐ Sound instructional strategies and explanation of why they are well suited for the targeted student population, including effective methods and systems for providing differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.
    - ☐ Evidence that the proposed educational program has a sound base in research, theory, and/or experience, and has been or is likely to be rigorous, engaging, and effective for the anticipated student population.

Pupil Performance Standards

- ☐ Clear, rigorous learning standards (provided for one grade for each division the school would serve) and exit standards aligned with applicable standards.
- ☐ Thoughtful identification of and plan for development and adoption of any additional academic standards beyond state and authorizer that the school would adopt or develop, including explanation and evidence of how those standards would exceed the state standards.
- ☐ Clear, rigorous promotion and exit policies and standards.

High School Graduation Requirements

- ☐ Clear, persuasive explanation of how the school's graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other post-secondary opportunities (trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).

School Calendar and Schedule

- ☐ School calendar and daily and weekly schedules meet or exceed minimum state requirements regarding annual instructional time.
- ☐ Schedules and calendar align with the educational program; demonstrate that they are conducive to improving student learning.

School Culture

◻ Vision for school culture or ethos that will promote high expectations, a positive academic environment and intellectual and social development for all students, including those with special needs, English Language Learners, and students at risk of academic failure.

◻ Coherent plan for establishing and maintaining the intended culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents from the first day of school and throughout the school year.

◻ Articulate, compelling descriptions of the typical daily experiences of a student and a teacher in grades served in year one. Descriptions demonstrate a well-thought-out school design that reflects the vision and will support student intellectual and social development.

Supplemental Programming *(If applicable)*

◻ Sound plan, design, schedule, and funding for summer school that will meet anticipated student needs.

◻ Well-designed plans and funding for extracurricular and co-curricular activities, programs, and services that will meet anticipated student needs and provide enrichment experiences.

◻ Thoughtful, well-supported description of programs or strategies to address student mental, emotional, and social development and health, and any other student-focused activities and programs that are integral to the school's educational and student-development plans.

Special Populations and At-Risk Students

◻ Demonstrated understanding of – and capacity to fulfill – state and federal obligations and requirements pertaining to students with disabilities, students identified as intellectually gifted, and English Learners (ELs) including appropriate discipline procedures for students with disabilities.

◻ Sound explanation of evidence from which the projection of anticipated special populations was derived.

◻ Comprehensive and compelling plan for appropriate identification of students who are performing below grade level or at risk of academic failure or dropping out and a detailed plan for providing services to such students.

◻ Comprehensive and compelling plan for appropriate identification of students with special needs and to ensure they are served in the least restrictive environment possible, have appropriate access to the general education curriculum and school-wide educational, extra-curricular, and culture-building activities in ways that support their development, receive required and appropriate support services as outlined in their Individual Education Plans and 504 plans, and participate in standardized testing.

◻ Comprehensive and compelling plan for providing services to ELs, including methods for appropriate identification of ELs, specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the general education curriculum and core academic program for these students, plans for monitoring and evaluating student progress and success of ELs and for exiting them from services, and plan for including ELs in standardized testing and school-wide educational, extra-curricular, and culture-building activities.

◻ Plans describe evidence-based instructional programs and practices; effective design or adaptation of the educational program; qualified staffing; and support strategies and resources.

Student Recruitment and Enrollment

◻ Enrollment Policy complies with state law and ensures the school will be open to all eligible students.

◻ Sound and thoughtful student recruitment and marketing plan, timeline, and Enrollment Policy that will provide equal access to all interested students and families, including those in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure.

Student Discipline

☐ Student discipline policy that provides for appropriate and effective strategies to support a safe, orderly school climate and fulfillment of educational goals, promoting a strong school culture while respecting student rights. Legally sound policies for student discipline, suspension and expulsion that do not indicate students will be removed in an inappropriate manner, as well as appeals, including proper processes for students with disabilities.

☐ Appropriate plan for disseminating the discipline policy to teachers, parents, and students.

Parent and Community Involvement

- *Effective strategies for informing parents and the community about the school's development.*
  ☐ Sound pre- and post- opening parent engagement plan, including family-school partnerships, that is welcoming and accessible to all parents.
  ☐ Community resources and partnerships that will benefit students and parents and that include a) description of the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships; and b) evidence of commitment from identified community partners.

Educational Program Capacity

☐ Evidence that the school leadership and management team have the collective qualifications (documented by resumes and bios for all members) to implement the school design successfully, including capacities in areas such as school leadership, administration, and governance; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; performance management; and parent and community engagement.

☐ Sound plans for sourcing and training potential leaders for future campuses and for developing pipeline of potential leaders for the network. *(If applicable)* Existing leadership pipeline is adequate to meet growth projections and includes strong candidates for future schools.

☐ Evidence that organizations, agencies, or consultants that are essential to successful implementation of the plan are committed to having an ongoing role with the school.

☐ *(If School Leader candidate(s) is identified)* Evidence of the leader's experience in/ability to design, launch, and lead a school that effectively serves the target population, as well as evidence that the proposed leader is well qualified to implement the specific educational program being proposed. Any identified leadership training is appropriate for and aligned with the educational program.

☐ *(If School Leader candidate(s) is not yet identified)* Evidence of the Board and/or network's preparation and plan to recruit and retain a leader with the ability to lead a school that effectively serves the target population.

☐ Appropriate responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership/management team (beyond the school leader).

☐ *(If members of the leadership team are identified)* Individuals who demonstrate the qualifications, capacities, and commitment to carry out the designated leadership roles to ensure the success of the proposed school.

☐ *(If leadership team is not yet identified)* Sound timeline, criteria, and process for recruiting and hiring the leadership team.

☐ Sound plan for leading the development of the school from post-approval to opening, including identification of a capable individual or team to lead the planning and start-up, as well as a viable plan for compensating this individual or team that is aligned with the budget.

Section 2: Operations Plan & Capacity

A strong Operations Plan is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, and Financial Plan. A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Organization Charts

☐ Clearly indicate all positions in all years, including any changes in reporting/authority over time.
☐ Delineates appropriate board and management roles and lines of authority.

Legal Status and Governing Documents

☐ Proposed school's legal status and structure are in compliance with state law.
☐ Governing bylaws, policies, and procedures are comprehensive and sound.

Governing Board

☐ Effective governance structure for network and school governance, whether each school will have an independent board or there will be one or more boards overseeing multiple schools. Well-planned board(s) size, powers, duties, and current and desired composition (including diverse expertise and effective representation) that will foster school(s)/network success.
☐ Clear division of duties if there will be multiple boards serving multiple schools. *(If applicable)*
☐ Clear, appropriate plans for the board(s) to evaluate the success of the school(s) and school leader(s).
☐ Proposed board members who demonstrate *(as documented by resumes, bios, and Board Information sheets for all currently identified proposed members):* (a) will, capacity and commitment to govern the school(s)/network effectively; and (b) shared vision, purposes, and expectations for the school(s)/network.
☐ Evidence that the proposed governing board members will contribute the wide range of knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to oversee a successful charter school including educational, financial, legal, and community experience and expertise.
☐ Other effective governance procedures, including planned frequency of meetings and standing committees, duties, and current and desired composition (including diverse expertise and effective representation) that will foster school(s)/network success
☐ Appropriate proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy/procedures **that will minimize real or perceived conflicts.**
☐ Clear, appropriate plans for the board(s) to evaluate the success of the school(s) and school leader(s).
☐ Proposed board members who demonstrate *(as documented by resumes, bios, and Board Information sheets for all currently identified proposed members):* (a) will, capacity and commitment to govern the school(s)/network effectively; and (b) shared vision, purposes and expectations for the school(s)/network.
☐ Evidence that the proposed governing board members will contribute the wide range of knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to oversee a successful charter school including educational, financial, legal, and community experience and expertise.
☐ Sound plan and timeline for board recruitment, expansion, orientation of new members, and ongoing training for members. Plan should include a thoughtful identification of desired experience and capacities.
☐ *If there will be a network-level board,* plan for clear identification and plan for addressing board development needs relative to growth. *(If applicable)*
☐ ***If applicant is an existing not-for-it organization** other than **a charter school governing board*** ~ Sound plan for transforming existing board to assume its new duties or forming a new board.
☐ Sound, timely plan for creating or transitioning to the school governing board. *(If applicable)*

Section 2: Operations Plan & Capacity Continued

A strong Operations Plan is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, and Financial Plan. A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Advisory Bodies

☐ Clear roles, duties, and composition of any advisory bodies/councils, and effective relationship to the school governing board and leadership.

Grievance Process

☐ Fair, accessible grievance process for parents and students.

Staff Structure

☐ Sensible staffing rollout plan for the school model(s) aligned with the educational program and conducive to school success.

☐ Effective structure and strategies for managing the administration-staff relationship.

Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

☐ Compensation packages, system, and strategy that are likely to attract and retain strong staff.

☐ Recruitment and hiring strategy, criteria, timeline, and procedures that are likely to result in a strong staff that meet ESEA requirements for being "Highly Qualified" and are well suited to the school.

☐ Plan for supporting, developing, and annually evaluating school leadership and teachers that is likely to produce and retain a successful staff.

☐ Sensible allocation of school vs. network responsibilities for staffing.

☐ Leadership and teacher evaluation tools that are likely to be effective.

☐ Effective planning for unsatisfactory leadership/teacher performance and turnover.

Professional Development

☐ Sensible allocation of school vs. Network responsibilities for professional development, including demonstrated understanding of and preparation for professional development needs that are common to all schools in the network.

☐ Professional development standards, opportunities, leadership, and calendar/scheduling that effectively support the education program and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement, including an induction program that will prepare teachers to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the educational program.

Section 2: Operations Plan & Capacity Continued

A strong Operations Plan is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, and Financial Plan. A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Performance Management

- ☐ *(Optional; maybe network-level or school-level)* Meaningful mission-specific educational and/or organizational goals and targets, which are measurable or demonstrable by externally credible measures or assessments.
- ☐ Quality interim assessments that are aligned with (each) school's curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.
- ☐ Effective plan (including qualified personnel) and system for measuring and evaluating academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, each school, and the network as a whole – throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the charter term.
- ☐ Comprehensive, effective plan (including qualified personnel) and system for collecting and analyzing student academic achievement data, using the data to refine and improve instruction – including providing training and support to school leadership and teachers – and reporting the data to the school community. This should include identification of the student data system to be used, as well as qualified personnel who will be responsible for managing and interpreting the data for teachers and leading or coordinating data-driven professional development.
- ☐ Thoughtful, appropriate corrective actions the school and network will take if either falls short of the MCSAB's (or the operator's) goals at any level, including explanation of what would trigger such actions and who would implement them.
- ☐ Sound plan for monitoring performance of the portfolio as a whole and thoughtfully considering portfolio performance in decisions regarding continued growth and replication.

Facilities

- ☐ Sound plan and timeline for identifying, financing, renovating, and ensuring code compliance for a facility that will meet the requirements of the educational program and anticipated student population.

Start-Up & Ongoing Operations

- ☐ Detailed start-up plan specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals, which is aligned with sound Start-Up Budget.
- ☐ Sound plan for student transportation, including both daily and special-event transportation.
- ☐ Sound plans for school and student safety and security, including security personnel, technology, equipment, and policies.
- ☐ Plan to secure comprehensive and adequate insurance coverage, including workers' compensation, liability, property, indemnity, directors and officers, automobile, and other.

Operations Capacity

- ☐ Individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as staffing, professional development, performance management, school start-up, general operations, and facilities management.
- ☐ *(If proposing an independent facility)* Demonstrated experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations.

Section 3: Financial Plan & Capacity

A strong Financial Plan is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, and Organization Plan. A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Financial Plan

- ☐ Draft financial procedures policy or other reasonable assurance that the operator will have sound systems, policies and processes for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of

  how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls, ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements, and conduct independent annual financial and administrative audits.
- ☐ Evidence that the school's leadership has a strong understanding of the appropriate delineation of roles and responsibilities among the administration and governing board regarding school finance.
- ☐ Evidence that the school will ensure financial transparency, including plans for **public adoption of the school's budget and public dissemination of its annual audit and an annual report.**
- ☐ Sound criteria and procedures for selecting contractors for any administrative services and the acquisition of liability insurance.
- ☐ **Complete, realistic, and viable start-up and five-year operating budgets.**
- ☐ Detailed budget narrative that clearly explains reasonable, well-supported revenue and cost assumptions, including grant/fundraising assumptions, including identifying the amount and sources of all anticipated funds, property, or other resources (**noting which are secured vs. anticipated, and including evidence of firm commitments where applicable**).
- ☐ **Sound contingency plan** to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.

Financial Management Capacity

- ☐ Individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Financial Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as financial management, fundraising and development, accounting, and internal controls.

Addendum 1. Request for Waivers from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47

A strong Request for Waivers is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, Organization Plan, and Financial Plan as well as any other applicable Addenda.
A solid case for a hiring waiver will have the following characteristics:

- ☐ Clearly identifies specific positions for which the applicant seeks hiring waivers. Job descriptions and required qualifications are detailed and understandable.
- ☐ Solid rationale for requesting the waiver, including reasonable efforts to date to fill the named positions with US residents.
- ☐ Demonstrates that a waiver of residency requirement in hiring will positively impact student achievement.

Addendum 2. For Conversion School Applications

A strong Conversion Application is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, Organization Plan, and Financial Plan as well as any other applicable Addenda. A solid case for conversion will have the following characteristics:

Community Need and Support

☐ Presents a compelling case for converting the school.

☐ Demonstrates, beyond delivering the required petitions, clear support from one or more key stakeholder groups (staff, families, LEA, etc.)

☐ Includes a thoughtful plan for community engagement during the conversion process, including information on timing and specific individuals who will execute the plan.

Enrollment and Recruitment Supplement

☐ Specific plans for engagement of students, families and the community that are realistic and likely to foster student retention and community support.

☐ *If applicable,* clear description of any enrollment preferences/priorities designed to support the enrollment of students who would be zoned to attend the school.

Turnaround Planning

☐ Effective strategies, programming, and support services – and demonstrated capacity (preferably including prior takeover/turnaround experience) – to transform an underperforming school culture into a positive, inclusive, high- performing culture and to significantly raise student achievement among at-risk populations currently attending a low-performing school.

☐ Strong partnerships with the targeted community, including a robust community engagement plan for the pre - opening year.

Addendum 3. Education Service Providers

A strong proposal using an Education Service Provider, regardless of the composition of the applicant team/organizations is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, Organization Plan, Financial Plan, and any other applicable Addenda.

A strong plan will have the following characteristics.

Details on following page

Addendum 3. Education Service Providers

A strong proposal using an Education Service Provider, regardless of the composition of the applicant team/organizations is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, Organization Plan, Financial Plan, and any other applicable Addenda.

A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

ESP Selection

- □ Compelling justification for the applicant organization's decision to contract with an ESP rather than operate the school(s) directly.
- □ Compelling explanation of how and why this specific ESP was selected including when and how the applicant learned of the ESP, which other ESPs were considered, why the ESP was selected over other ESPs, and what due diligence was conducted.

ESP Track Record

- □ Evidence that the applicant conducted reference checks on the ESP.
- □ Evidence of the financial health of the ESP as demonstrated through an independent financial audit report and its most recent annual report.
- □ No evidence of any management contract terminations or charter revocations, non-renewals, withdrawals, or failures to open.
- □ Evidence of the ESP's success in serving populations similar to the population that the applicant intends to serve, including evidence of academic success and successful management of non-academic school functions (e.g., back- office services, school operations, extracurricular programs).

Legal Relationship with ESP

- □ Evidence that the board is independent from the ESP and self-governing, including separate legal representation of each and arms-length negotiating.
- □ No existing or potential conflicts of interest between the school's governing board and proposed ESP or any affiliated business entities.
- □ No unexplained or unjustified relationships between the school and any subsidiary or related entities of the ESP.
- □ Clear and detailed explanation of the supervisory responsibilities of the ESP (if any), including which school employees the ESP will supervise, how the ESP will supervise these employees, and how the charter school board will oversee the ESP supervisory responsibilities.
- □ Detailed explanation and compelling justification of any lease, promissory notes or other negotiable instruments, any lease-purchase agreements or other financing relationships with the ESP, including evidence that such agreements are separately documented and not part of or incorporated in the ESP agreement. Such agreements must be consistent with the school's authority to terminate the ESP agreement and continue operation of the school.
- □ Detailed explanation and compelling justification of any loans, grants, or investments made between the ESP and the school, including an explanation and justification of how any such loans, grants, or investments may be initiated, repaid, and refused by the school.

ESP Management Plan

- □ Detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the ESP.
- □ Detailed explanation the scope of services and costs of all resources to be provided by the ESP.
- □ Detailed description of the oversight and evaluation methods that the board will use to oversee the ESP, including school-wide and student achievement results which the management organization is responsible for achieving, and a description of how often, and in what ways, the board will review and evaluate the ESP's progress toward achieving agreed-upon goals?
- □ Detailed explanation of the conditions, standards, and procedures for board intervention, if the management organization's performance is deemed unsatisfactory.
- □ Detailed explanation of the compensation structure, including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the ESP and the schedule on which the ESP will receive compensation.
- □ Detailed explanation of the financial responsibilities of the ESP, including the ownership of items purchased with public funds, including which operating and capital expenditures each party will be responsible for assuming, what types of spending decisions the ESP can make without obtaining board approval, and what reports ESP submit to the board on financial performance, and on what schedule.
- □ Detailed description of the duration, renewal and termination of the management agreement, including how often the management agreement may be renewed, the conditions that both the ESP and the school must satisfy for the management agreement to be renewed and the procedures for determining whether the management agreement will be renewed.
- □ Detailed description of the grounds for which the ESP or the school can terminate the management agreement for cause (including provisions for notice to the other party, and any conditions under which either party may terminate the management agreement without cause.
- □ Explanation and justification of any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.
- □ A compelling plan for the operation of the school in the case that the management agreement is terminated.

In reviewing the draft management agreement presented as an attachment to the application, evaluators will look for provisions that align with the descriptions and explanations evaluated under the Legal Relationships and Organizational Structure sections above. A sound management agreement also will have the following characteristics:
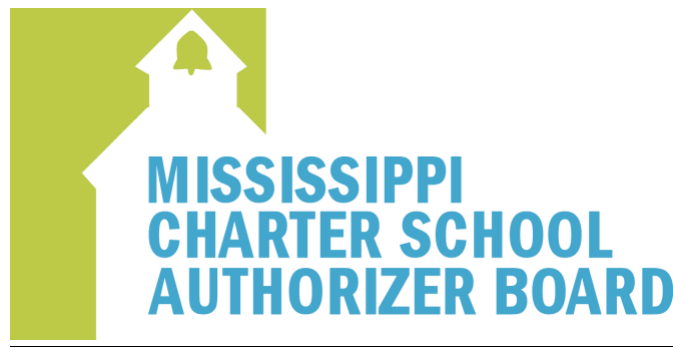
- □ Clearly defined terms.
- □ Fairly and reasonably distributed rights and responsibilities.
- □ Evidence of equitable bargaining power and balanced contractual authority.
- □ Does not include financial transactions (loans/grants/leases).
- □ Includes the following key areas: Roles and Responsibilities; Contract Duration, Renewal and Termination; Performance Oversight and Evaluation; Compensation and Finances; Intellectual and Physical Property; Contingency Planning for Terminated Contracts.

Title 10: Education Institutions and Agencies

Part 420: Call for Quality Schools Guidance and Application Process for New Operators

Part 420: Chapter 1: Call for Quality Schools Guidance and Application Process for New Operators

Source: Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-28-9 and -15.

Call for Quality Schools Guidance and Application Process for New Operators

Introduction

The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board (MCSAB or the Board) is pleased to invite proposals for high-quality charter schools seeking to open in the upcoming school year or thereafter. The MCSAB is charged with approving quality charter proposals that meet identified educational needs and promote a diversity of educational choices, and declining weak or inadequate charter proposals.

Specifically, MCSAB seeks proposals for charter schools that will:

1. improve student learning;
2. close achievement gaps between high- and low-performing groups;
3. increase educational opportunities for all students, but especially for those with a likelihood of academic failure;
4. allow teachers and school administrators to have a direct voice in the operation of the school;
5. encourage the use of high-quality models of teaching, governing and scheduling;
6. provide for exceptional levels of results-driven accountability;
7. create expanded opportunities for involvement in the education system by students, parents and community members; and
8. encourage the replication of successful charter schools, if applicable.

All New Operators approved through this process will be public schools subject to the legal requirements set forth in Mississippi Code Annotated §37-28-3 et seq. and the state of Mississippi Ethics Laws and Open Meetings Act.

Statement of Preference

Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-15 permits the board to adopt an application preference for applications intended to help underserved students. This serves as notice that the board will grant such a preference for applications that demonstrate a commitment to and plan for recruiting, enrolling, and serving underserved students, and/or that demonstrate strong, credible evidence of a compelling community need for the proposed school. This preference will be considered when determining whether applicants proceed to the capacity interview stage of the application process.

Performance Framework

Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-15 requires that this RFP include information regarding the elements of the performance framework that MCSAB will use to annually evaluate charter school performance. Charter schools in Mississippi are evaluated annually using the Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework. The Performance Framework includes performance metrics and standards for academic, financial, and organizational performance that guide MCSAB's evaluation of each charter school. The Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework is the accountability mechanism for all charter schools authorized by MCSAB. The objective of the Performance Framework is to provide charter school operators and governing boards with clear expectations, fact-based oversight, and timely feedback while ensuring charter autonomy. The Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework assesses schools on their ability to operate as sound, independent entities that successfully serve all students. The Performance Framework features three key components: 1) routine ongoing oversight and submissions, 2) three performance frameworks and 3) annual performance reports. All Mississippi charter schools are issued an initial contract of five years. Over the course of this five-year contract term, charter schools are evaluated annually using the components of the Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework.

Eligibility

State law sets out specific requirements for all groups submitting charter proposals:

- Only non-profit organizations may hold charters in Mississippi
- Charter holders may only contract with non-profit Educational Service Providers (ESPs)
- Applicant teams must provide proof of US citizenship for all board members, school staff, and (if applicable) key staff of the ESP
- Any applicant proposing to open a charter school in a school district rated 'A', 'B', or 'C' [based on the most recent accountability ratings must also receive approval by the local school board, which must vote on the charter school proposal at a public meeting.
- Any applicant proposing conversion of an existing public school must demonstrate support for the conversion, specifically:
  - a petition signed by a majority of teachers in the existing non-charter public school; or
  - a petition signed by a majority of parents of students in the existing non-charter public school; or
  - evidence of a majority vote of the local school board; or
  - In the case of schools in districts under state conservatorship) evidence of a majority vote of the State Board of Education

Please see the table below to determine any additional steps that may be needed to submit a charter school proposal and to determine which students are eligible to attend the charter school.

Local School District Accountability Rating Where School is to Be Located	Additional Approval Requirements and Student Enrollment Eligibility
A & B	- Applicant must **receive local school board approval before submitting a complete proposal** to MCSAB. - Students residing in 'A' & 'B' rated school districts **shall not cross** local school district boundaries to attend a charter school.
C	- Applicant **must receive local school board approval before submitting a complete proposal** to MCSAB. - Students residing in a 'C' rated school district may cross local school district boundaries to attend a charter school.
D & F	- Applicant submits complete proposal directly to MCSAB. - Students residing in 'D' & 'F' rated school districts may cross local school district boundaries to attend a charter school.

A complete list of school districts accountability ratings are available on the Mississippi Department of Education website.

Applicant Groups

In this RFP cycle, applicants will be considered in three groups, each of which has specific requirements.

New Operators are nonprofit organizations which:
Have never operated a charter school OR currently operate a charter school that has been open for less than one school year (regardless of location)
Do not intend to employ an educational service provider OR intend to employ an educational service provider that has not operated a school for more than one year (regardless of location)

Existing Operators are nonprofit organizations which currently:
Have one or more schools in operation nationwide which have been in operation for more than one full school year
Intend to employ an educational service provider with one or more schools in operation for more than one full school year.

Conversion Applicants are nonprofit organizations, either new operators or existing operators, which propose to convert an existing traditional public school to charter status.

Evaluation Process

The MCSAB charter school proposal evaluation process includes a **letter of intent and eligibility check** and **three stages of review**, summarized below. Additional information regarding Stages 2 and 3 may be found in the **published Evaluation Criteria for each Stage, which are incorporated in this RFP.**

Initial Stage: Letter of Intent and Eligibility

To be eligible to submit a full proposal, all interested parties must submit the mandatory Letter of Intent and accompanying eligibility documentation. Conversion schools must also submit their proof of support at this time. Eligibility packets must be prepared using the template documents provided and submitted via the online portal. Only eligible applicants will be able to submit a full proposal.

Stage 1: Completeness Check

All eligible proposals will be reviewed for completeness before they are distributed to evaluators. If a proposal is **incomplete or incorrectly** formatted, the applicant will have 48 hours to remedy issues and resubmit their proposal. Proposals deemed incomplete will not be eligible to proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Threshold Quality Review

Independent evaluators will assess critical elements of each proposal against the published Stage 2 evaluation criteria. At the conclusion of Stage 2, Applicants who fail to meet the threshold will not be eligible to proceed to Stage 3 Evaluation.

Stage 3: Independent Evaluation Team Review

Teams of independent evaluators will evaluate each proposal and discuss their findings based on the written materials. Applicants that meet the criteria will be invited to an in-person capacity interview. During an in-person capacity interview, applicants will have the opportunity to further demonstrate their capacity to open and maintain a high-quality charter school as well as to answer specific questions about their proposal. Applicants will receive a copy of the independent evaluation team's recommendation and will have the opportunity to provide a final (3) page written response to MCSAB before the Board votes to approve or deny applications.

Instructions for Developing a Proposal

The MCSAB is pleased to invite proposals for new quality charter schools seeking to open in the upcoming school year or thereafter. Prior to developing your proposal please be sure to read this entire RFP.

Components of the Proposal

Proposal Cover Sheet: The cover sheet includes basic information about the applicant team and the proposed school.

Narrative Proposal: The proposal is the formal application to MCSAB, and is a comprehensive description of the school's educational, operational, and financial plans.

Attachments: Throughout the proposal, specific documents are requested in addition to narrative answers. Attachments may not contain additional narrative unless specified. A comprehensive list of the attachments is provided in these instructions.

Capacity Interview: Invited applicants will have the opportunity to further demonstrate the team's capacity to open and maintain a high-quality charter school and answer specific questions evaluators may have about their proposal.

Application Document Specifications

Applicants MUST submit proposals through the electronic platform and must use the following templates:

Letter of Intent and Eligibility Packet Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Proposal Cover Sheet and Enrollment Projection Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
School-Wide Curriculum Description - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Proposal Narrative Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Statement of Assurances Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Staffing Chart Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Word)
Charter School Board Member Information Sheet Template - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Excel)
Financial Plan Workbook - ALL APPLICANTS (MS Excel)

All templates are available via the online portal.

All elements of the proposal **must be typed with 1-inch page margins and 12-point font, single-spaced.**

Each major section of the proposal (School Summary, Educational Program, etc.) and each addendum must begin on a separate page, as indicated in the template document. Adhere to all page limits as indicated.

If you believe a particular question does not apply to your team or proposal, respond "Not Applicable," AND state the reason this question is not applicable to your team or proposal.

All required documents should be uploaded in the file format specified.

Late or incorrectly formatted submissions will not be accepted.

When submitting resumes and biographies, **label each document with the individual's role with the proposed school (board member, principal, teacher, etc**.).

Review all elements of the proposal for completeness before submitting.

All proposals will be reviewed for completeness before they are accepted and distributed to evaluation teams. If a proposal is found to be incomplete or incorrectly formatted, **the applicant will have 48 hours** to satisfactorily rectify the identified issues and resubmit their proposal.
Applicants failing to rectify identified issues within the allotted time will not be evaluated in this cycle.

Required Attachments

The following is a list of attachments to accompany the proposal.
Note that not all attachments will be applicable for all applicants. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they submit all attachments required for their proposal. Do not upload documents for any attachment that is not applicable. Additional attachments are required for various addenda.

Complete List of Attachments	
New Operators	**Existing Operators**
1. School-wide curriculum description table	1. School-wide curriculum description table
2. Summary scope and sequence	2. Exit standards
3. Curriculum map	3. Calendar and schedules
4. Learning standards	4. Enrollment policy
5. Calendar and schedules	5. Discipline policy
6. Enrollment policy	6. Evidence of community support/demand
7. Discipline policy	7. Leadership team qualifications
8. Evidence of community support/demand	8. School leader qualifications
9. Leadership team qualifications	9. Organization annual reports
10. School leader qualifications	10. Portfolio summary
11. Organizational charts	11. Previous legal records
12. Board documents	12. Organizational charts
13. Board member information	13. Board documents
14. Staffing chart	14. Board member information
15. Personnel policies	15. Staffing chart
16. Supplemental teacher evaluation tools	16. Personnel policies
17. Supplemental leadership evaluation tools	17. Supplemental teacher evaluation tools
18. Facility commitment and description	18. Supplemental leadership evaluation tools
19. Start-up plan	19. Facility commitment and description
20. Financial plan workbook	20. Start-up plan
21. Budget narrative	21. Audited financial statements
	22. Financial plan workbook
	23. Network level budget
	24. Budget narrative

Applicant Code of Conduct

Members of the Board are obligated to make decisions in the best interests of children, free from personal or political influences. Similarly, charter school applicants have the responsibility of respecting and upholding the integrity of the charter school proposal process.

Specifically, charter school applicants shall not:
Initiate, or attempt to initiate, any activity with a MCSAB member with the exception of a public hearing;
Initiate, or attempt to initiate, any activity with a member of the independent evaluation team; or
Direct any communications, including proposal documents, to a MCSAB member or to a member of the independent evaluation team.

Charter school applicants found to be in violation of these requirements may be deemed ineligible for consideration in future proposal processes.

Public Disclosure

All charter school proposal materials submitted to MCSAB become public records.

Directions

Please submit an application that addresses the following questions / issues. The total narrative response **may not exceed 75 pages** (not including the requested attachments and addenda). There are no page limits for individual sections **except** for the School Summary, Attachments, and Addenda.

Please keep in mind that your application is a professional document. The quality of the document that you submit should reflect the quality of the school that you propose to open. Evaluation teams will be able to navigate well-organized, effectively edited documents easily, thereby focusing their energy on reviewing the content of each application. Grammar, spelling, and formatting all make an impression on an evaluator.

Plagiarism

The University of Southern Mississippi defines plagiarism as "copying words, concepts, or ideas from any source and submitting the material as one's own without acknowledging the source by the use of footnotes, quotation marks, or both" (University of Southern Mississippi, Academic Integrity Policy). Individuals and groups seeking the right and responsibility to educate public school children at public expense should be accountable to the highest standards of academic integrity. **The MCSAB adopts this definition and considers plagiarism, including the copying of language from any other charter application without proper attribution, as grounds for immediate denial.**

MCSAB understands that in order to implement an existing curriculum, instructional framework, or educational model (e.g. Montessori, arts integration, project-based learning, blended learning, etc.) with fidelity, key concepts must be discussed. However, it is not acceptable to copy and paste this discussion or description from another source. **A high-quality applicant team with the capacity to operate a high-quality school must be able to thoughtfully explain in their own words how they intend to educate children.** MCSAB also understands that existing operators proposing to replicate a model may use their own intellectual property, which is appropriate and acceptable.

School Overview (New and Existing Operators)
Executive Summary Narrative (Limit 2 Pages)

The Executive Summary should provide a concise overview of: the proposed plan for the school; the outcomes you expect to achieve; the geographic and population considerations of the school environment; the challenges particular to those considerations; and the applicant team's capacity to successfully open and operate a high-quality school given the above considerations.

Mission and Vision. State the mission and vision of the proposed school. The mission is a statement of the fundamental purpose of the school, describing why it exists. The vision statement describes how the school will operate and what success looks like for students. The mission and vision statement provide the foundation for the entire proposal, and taken together, should identify the students and community to be served and illustrate what success for students will look like.

Educational Need and Anticipated Student Population. Describe the anticipated student population, students anticipated educational needs and non-academic challenges the school is likely to encounter. Describe the rationale for selecting the location and targeting this student population.

Education Plan/School Design. Provide an overview of the education program of the proposed school, including major instructional methods, assessment strategies and non-negotiables of the school model. Describe the evidence that demonstrates the school model will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.

Community Engagement. Describe the relationships that you have established to generate community engagement in and support for the proposed school and how you have assessed demand and/or solicited support for the school. Briefly describe activities to date and summarize their results.

Leadership and Governance. List the current members of the school's proposed leadership team and governing board, including their roles with the school and their current professional affiliation. *Add lines to the table as needed.* ***Do not list members of the applicant team who will not have an official leadership role with the school going forward, such as consultants.***

Name	Current Job Title & Employer	Position with Proposed School
EX. John Doe	Bank President, ABC Bank, Location	Governing Board Treasurer
EX. Jane Doe (no relation to John)	Principal, Best Charter School Ever, Location	School Principal

Enrollment Summary (Limit 2 Pages)

Complete the table below, illustrating the growth plan for the school. Indicate the school year for each column. This enrollment table will be used to complete the school's enrollment table in its charter school contract.

Describe the rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in year one and the basis for the growth plan illustrated above. Do Not propose grades served outside the original contract term of five years.

Grade Level	Number of Students					
	Year 1 20 - 20	Year 2 20 - 20	Year 3 20 - 20	Year 4 20 - 20	Year 5 20 - 20	Full Enrollment 20 - 20
Pre - K						
K						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
TOTAL						

New Operator Proposal

Section 1: Educational Program Design & Capacity

Program Overview
Summarize the education program and any non-negotiable elements of the school model. Briefly describe the evidence that promises success for this program with the anticipated student population.

Curriculum and Instructional Design
Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure. Give an overview of the planned curriculum, addressing alignment with Mississippi's state standards as required by Mississippi Code Annotated 37-28-15.

If the curriculum is fully developed, summarize curricular choices (e.g., textbook or computer-based curricula selection) **by subject, and the rationale for each**. **Describe the evidence** that these curricula will be appropriate and effective for the targeted students. Provide, in **Attachment 1** a school-wide curriculum description table.

See Exhibit A for an exemplar. Your curriculum summary table may be no longer than one page per grade level and must be prepared in 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

-OR-

If the curriculum **is not** already developed, explain the plan for how the curriculum will be developed between approval of the proposal and the opening of the school, and instead provide in **Attachment 1**, a curriculum development timeline, identifying milestones, individuals responsible for included tasks, and when key stages will be completed.

Provide, as **Attachment 2**, a summary of the **scope and sequence** of the curriculum for all grades you propose to serve, including core academic as well as non-academic classes.

See Exhibit B for an exemplar. Regardless of the number of grades served, your summary scope and sequence may not be longer than two pages per grade and must be prepared in 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

Provide, as **Attachment 3** a **curriculum map** for one core academic subject for one grade the school will serve in year one. The curriculum map should identify course outcomes and demonstrate a clear alignment with appropriate state standards.

See Exhibit C for an exemplar.

Describe the primary instructional strategies that the school will expect teachers to use **and** why they are well suited for the anticipated student population.

Pupil Performance Standards

1. Describe the pupil performance standards for the school as a whole.
2. Provide, in **Attachment 4**, a complete set of the school's proposed learning standards for one grade for each division the school will serve. Address the skills and knowledge each student will be expected to attain by the end of that grade. *If the school will serve only one division, the exit standards provided in response to question 5 in this section will suffice.*
3. If the school has, or will adopt or develop, additional academic standards beyond those mandated by the state, explain the types of standards (content areas, grade levels). Describe the adoption or development process. Select one grade level and subject area as an example and explain how these additional standards exceed requirements.
4. Explain the policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next.
5. Discuss how and when **promotion and graduation criteria** will be communicated to parents and students.
6. Provide, also in **Attachment 4**, the school's exit standards for graduating students. These should clearly set forth what students in the **last grade served** will know and be able to do.

High School Graduation Requirements (for schools serving grades 9-12)

1. Describe how the school will meet the graduation (exit) requirements described in **Attachment 4**. Explain how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements will exceed state and district standards, explain the additional requirements.
2. Explain how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (e.g. trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).
3. Discuss the systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting these requirements.

School Calendar and Schedule

1. Discuss the annual academic schedule for the school, including total number of days/hours of instruction. Explain how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program.
    a. Provide, as **Attachment 5,** the school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation.
2. Describe the structure of the school day and week. Include the number of instructional hours/ minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Note the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times. **Explain why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning.** Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade.
    a. Provide, also in **Attachment 5**, a sample daily and weekly schedule for each division of the school.

School Culture

1. Describe the culture or ethos of the proposed school. Explain how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.
2. Explain the plan to create and implement this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents, starting from the first day of school.
3. Describe a typical school day from the perspective of a student in a grade that will be served in the first year of operation.
4. Describe a typical day for a teacher of a grade that will be served in the first year of operation.
5. Explain how the school culture will support students with special needs, English Language Learners, and students at-risk of academic failure.

Supplemental Programming

1.   If summer school will be offered, describe the program(s). Explain the schedule and length of the program including the number of hours and weeks. Discuss the anticipated participants including number of students and the methods used to identify them. Describe the anticipated resource and staffing needs for these programs and how they will be funded.
2.   Describe the extra- or co-curricular activities or programming the school will offer, how often they will occur, and how they will be funded.
3.   Describe the programs or strategies the school will employ to address student mental, emotional, and social development and health.
4.   If applicable, describe any other student-focused activities and programs that are integral to the educational and student-development plan.

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Special Populations and At-Risk Students

1.   Describe the overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to: students with Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 plans, English Learners (ELs), students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. Identify the special populations that the school expects to serve, and the basis for these assumptions, whether through data related to a specific school district, or a more generalized analysis of the population to be served. Discuss how the course scope and sequence, daily schedule, staffing plans, and support strategies and resources will meet or be adjusted for the diverse needs of students.

2.   Complete this table to demonstrate calculation of at-risk students the school anticipates serving. Please use the demographic information provided by MCSAB via the online portal for the local school district where the charter school will be located to complete the first row of the table.

Current School District Demographics		
80% Charter School Requirement		
Anticipated Charter School Demographics		

3. Specifically describe the plan to identify and meet the learning needs of students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports you will provide, including the following:

   a. Methods for identifying students with special education needs (and avoiding misidentification);
   b. Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, ensure access to the general education curriculum, and ensure academic success for students with special education needs.
   c. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of special education students with mild, moderate, and severe needs to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in the IEP;
   d. Plans for promoting graduation for students with special education needs *(high schools only)*; and
   e. Plans to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs population.

4. Explain how the school will meet the needs of EL students, including the following:
   a. Methods for identifying EL students (and avoiding misidentification);
   b. Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students.
   c. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of EL students, including exiting students from EL services.
   d. Means for providing qualified staffing for EL students.

5. Explain how the school will identify and meet the learning needs of students who are performing below grade level and monitor their progress. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports that will be provided for these students.
6. Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of intellectually gifted students, including the following:
   a. Specific instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their experience;
   b. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of these students; and
   c. Means for providing qualified staffing for intellectually gifted students.

Student Recruitment and Enrollment

1. Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing that will provide equal access to interested students and families. Specifically, describe the plans for outreach to families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure.
2. Describe the timeline and individuals responsible for student recruitment/engagement and enrollment.
3. Provide, as **Attachment 6**, the school's **Enrollment Policy**, which should include the following:
   a. Tentative dates for application period, and enrollment deadlines and procedures, including explanation of how the school will receive and process applications.
   b. Description of any enrollment preferences or priorities.
   c. **Describe the school's lottery procedures and how they will comply with the statutory requirement in Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-15 that lotteries be "equitable, randomized, transparent, and impartial";**
   d. Policies and procedures for student waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers; and
   e. Explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities for students or parents.

Student Discipline

1. Describe in detail the school's approach to student discipline. Taken together, the narrative description and discipline policy should:
   a. Explain the practices the school will use to promote discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior;
   b. List and define the offenses for which students must (where non-discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled;
   c. Explain how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities, including students with Behavior Support Plans in disciplinary actions and proceedings; and
   d. Explain procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion and a plan for providing services to students who are expelled or out of school for more than ten days.
2. If already developed, provide the proposed discipline policy as **Attachment 7.**
3. Discuss how students and parents will be informed of the school's discipline policy.

Parent and Community Involvement

1. Describe the role of any parents and community members involved in developing the proposed school.
2. Discuss specifically what has been done to assess and build parent and community demand for the school. Explain the plan to continue to engage parents and community members from the present time, to approval, and through opening.
3. Explain the plan to engage parents in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles described below). Describe any opportunities and/or expectations for ongoing parent, student, and community involvement. Any parent volunteer requirements must also include a waiver process that considers individual family circumstances.
4. Discuss the community resources that will be available to students and parents. Describe any partnerships the school will have with community organizations, businesses, or other educational institutions. Specify the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships including any fee-based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student learning.
5. Provide, as **Attachment 8, existing evidence of demand for the school** (e.g. letters of support or intent to apply forms from families and students) and/or support from intended community partners (e.g. letters of intent/commitment, memoranda of understanding, and/or contracts). *DO NOT ATTACH CONVERSION SCHOOL PETITIONS HERE.*

Educational Program Capacity

1. Identify the key members of the school's leadership team. Identify only individuals who will play a substantial and ongoing role in school development, governance and/or management, and will thus share responsibility for the school's educational success. These may include current or proposed governing board members, school leadership/management, and any essential partners who will play an important ongoing role in the school's development and operation.
2. Describe the team's **individual and collective qualifications** for implementing the school design successfully, including capacity in areas such as: administration, and governance; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; performance management; and parent and community engagement.
3. If known, identify the individuals who will fill these positions, explain why each is well qualified for a specific role, and summarize their relevant track record of success. Provide, as **Attachment 9**, the qualifications, resumes, professional biographies, and proof of US citizenship for each identified individual.

-AND/OR-

If any of these positions are not yet filled, discuss the process and timeline for recruiting, selecting, and hiring these team members. Describe the criteria to be used in selecting each, and instead provide in **Attachment 9** a complete job description and required qualifications for each unfilled role.

4. Identify the principal/head of school candidate and explain why this individual is well qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission. Summarize the proposed leader's academic and organizational leadership record. Provide specific evidence that demonstrates capacity to design, launch, and manage a high-performing charter school. Discuss the evidence of the leader's ability to effectively serve the anticipated population. This evidence may include annual student achievement data, disaggregated by subgroup, for every school under the current or prior management of the leader or other administrator. If the proposed leader has never run a school, describe any leadership training programs that have been completed. Also provide, as **Attachment 10**, the qualifications, resume, professional biography, and proof of US Citizenship for this individual.

-OR-

If no candidate has been identified, discuss the process and timeline for recruiting, selecting, and hiring the school leader. Describe the criteria to be used in selecting this leader, and instead provide as **Attachment 10** a complete job description and required qualifications.

5. Describe the team's ties to and/or knowledge of the target community.
6. Identify any organizations, agencies, or consultants that are partners in planning and establishing the school, along with a brief description of their current and planned role, and any resources they have contributed or plan to contribute to the school's development.
7. Explain who is currently leading the school development process, and who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis following approval of the charter to lead development of the school.

Section 2: Operations Plan & Capacity

Organization Charts

Submit, as Attachment 11, organization charts that show the school governance, management, and staffing structure in the first year of school operations, at the end of the charter term; and when the school reaches full capacity, if in a year beyond the first charter term. Each organization chart should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of, and lines of authority and reporting among, the governing board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. The organization charts should also specifically document lines of authority and reporting within the school.

Legal Status and Governing Documents

1. Describe the proposed school's legal status, including non-profit status and federal tax-exempt status.
2. Provide, as **Attachment 12:**
   a. The bylaws of the board, including any amendments;
   b. The code of ethics and conflict of interest policies for the board;
   c. Any additional governing documents already adopted, including other board policies; and
   d. The completed and signed statement of assurances (prepared using the template provided by MCSAB).

Governing Board

1. Explain the governance philosophy that will guide the board, including the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups.
2. Describe the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles, powers, and duties of the governing board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies.
3. Describe the current and desired size and composition of the governing board. Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that are and/or will be represented on the governing board.
4. Explain how this governance structure and composition will: a) help ensure that the school will be an educational and operational success; b) evaluate the success of the school and school leader including what the board will evaluate and when it will evaluate the school and school leader; and c) include active and effective representation of key stakeholders, including parents.
5. List all current and prospective board members and their intended roles. For each individual identified, summarize interest in and qualifications to serve on the board. Explain the procedure by which board members have been and will be selected. How often will the board meet? Discuss the plans for any committee structure. Provide, as **Attachment 13,** the following documents for each individual identified here: a completed and signed Board Member Information Sheet, resume, professional biography, and proof of US citizenship(if aboard member's documentation is attached elsewhere in this proposal or was submitted with the Letter of Intent, state so on the Information Sheet).
6. If the current applicant team does not include the initial board, explain how and when the transition to the formal governing board will take place.
7. Describe plans for increasing the capacity of the governing board. How will the board expand and develop over time? How and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added, and how will vacancies be filled?

8. What are the priorities for recruitment of additional board members? What kinds of orientation or training will new board members receive, and what kinds of ongoing development will existing board members receive? The plan for training and development should include a timetable, specific topics to be addressed, and any requirement to participate.

9. If this proposal is being submitted by a pre-existing non-profit organization respond to the following:
    a. Was the pre-existing non-profit formed for a purpose other than operating schools? If so, please provide the mission of the organization and explain how operating charter schools serves that mission.
    b. Will the pre-existing non-profit board govern the new school, or will a new non-profit corporation governed by a separate board hold the charter?
    c. If the non-profit's current board will govern the charter school, what steps have been taken to transform its board membership, mission, and bylaws to assume its new duties? Describe the plan and timeline for completing the transition and orienting the board to its new duties.
    d. If a new board has been or will be formed, describe what, if anything, its ongoing relationship to the existing non-profit's board will be.

10. Describe the board's ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest. Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the proposal is approved; discuss specific steps that the board will take to avoid any actual conflicts and to mitigate perceived conflicts.

Advisory Bodies

1. Describe any advisory bodies or councils that are in place or will be formed, including the roles and duties of each. For each identified group describe:
    a. Its current and/or planned composition and the strategy for achieving that composition;
    b. The role of parents, students, and teachers, as applicable; and
    c. The reporting structure relative to the school's governing board and leadership.

Grievance Process

1. Explain the process that the school will follow should a parent or student have an objection to a governing board policy or decision, administrative procedure, or practice at the school.

Staff Structure

1. Summarize the staffing structure and growth plan for the school, describing:
    a. Year 1 positions, as well as positions to be added in future years;
    b. Administrative, instructional, and operational and support staff; and
    c. The teacher-student ratio, as well as the ratio of total adults to students for the school.
2. Provide, as **Attachment 14**, a complete staffing chart for the school (prepared using the template provided by MCSAB).
3. Explain how the relationship between the school's senior administrative team and the rest of the staff will be managed.

Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

1. Explain the relationship that will exist between the school and its employees, including whether the employees will be at-will and whether the school will use employment contracts. If the school will use contracts, explain the nature and purpose of the contracts. If developed, provide, as **Attachment 15**, any personnel policies or employee manual.

2. Outline compensation structure for all employees, including salary ranges and employment benefits, as well as any incentives or reward structures, if applicable.

Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation continued

3. Describe the strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring teaching staff, including the school's plan for hiring highly qualified staff in accordance with the ESSA. Explain required qualifications for instructional staff, key selection criteria, and any special considerations relevant to your school design.

4. Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.

5. Explain how teachers will be supported, developed, and evaluated; outline the tools and key inputs. If using the Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System, please indicate, but do NOT include samples of the assessment tools. Details regarding the Professional Growth System may be found here. If using a system already developed, provide, in **Attachment 16,** the teacher evaluation tool(s).

6. Explain how the school leader will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Will the school use the Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System If you intend to supplement or use an alternative to the Professional Growth System, outline the tools and key inputs. Provide, in **Attachment 17,** any supplemental leadership evaluation tool(s) that you have developed already. *If you intend to use only the* Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System, *do NOT include the mandated assessment tools.* Details regarding the Professional Growth System may be found here.

7. Explain how the school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes and turnover. Note the reporting requirements by MCSAB for all schools to adhere to the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics. Details may be found here.

Professional Development

1. Identify the person(s) or position(s) responsible for overseeing professional development (PD).

2. Discuss the core components of the school's PD plan and how they will support effective implementation of the educational program. Discuss the extent to which professional development will be individualized or uniform. Who will be responsive for administering PD programs (e.g. a staff member, consultant, etc.)?

3. Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.

4. Describe the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year, and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure accommodate this plan. Include time scheduled for common planning or collaboration and discuss how such time will typically be used

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Performance Management

Explain the plan for using internal and external assessments to measure and report progress against the **Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework**. Specifically, how will this plan address the following key areas on which charter schools will be evaluated:

   a. student academic proficiency and growth;
   b. achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth between major student subgroups;
   c. attendance;
   d. recurrent enrollment from year to year;
   e. in-school and out-of-school suspension rates and expulsion rates;
   f. graduation and dropout rates for appropriate multiple-year cohorts;
   g. *(for high schools only)* student postsecondary readiness, including the percentage of graduates submitting applications to postsecondary institutions, high school completion, postsecondary admission and postsecondary enrollment or employment.
   h. financial performance and sustainability; and
   i. governing board performance and stewardship, including compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and terms of the charter contract.

2. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole –throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract. Explain how the school will collect and analyze student academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community. Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible and involved in the collection and analysis of assessment data.
3. Who will be responsible for managing the data, interpreting it for classroom teachers, and leading or coordinating professional development to improve student achievement?
4. Explain the training and support that school leadership and teachers will receive in analyzing, interpreting, and using performance data to improve student learning.
5. Describe the corrective actions the school will take if it falls short of student academic achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide, classroom, or individual student level. Explain what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.

Facilities
1. Describe the basic facilities requirements for accommodating your school plan, including number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities.
2. Identify any other significant facilities needs not already specified, including: playground, large common space for assemblies and other large group meetings, athletic facilities, and other special considerations (identify and explain).
3. Describe the process for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or consultants you are employing to navigate the real estate market, plans for renovations, timelines, financing, etc. Include in this discussion the plan for ensuring that identified facilities will comply with applicable state and local health and safety requirements and applicable planning review procedures.
4. If you currently hold a facility or have an MOU or other proof of intent to secure a specific facility, please provide proof of the commitment as **Attachment 18**. Briefly describe the facility including location, size, and amenities. You may provide, also in **Attachment 18**, up to 10 pages of supporting documents providing details about the facility.

Start-Up & Ongoing Operations

1. Provide, as **Attachment 19**, a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.

2. Describe the transportation plan that details how reliable and safe transportation will be provided for all students. In addition to daily transportation needs, describe how the school plans to meet transportation needs for field trips and athletic events, if applicable.

3. Provide the school plan for safety and security for students, the facility, and property. Explain the types of security personnel, technology, equipment, and policies that the school will employ.

4. List the types of insurance coverage the school will secure, including a description of the levels of coverage and estimated costs. Explain the basis for these assumptions.

Operations Capacity

1. Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following: staffing; professional development; performance management; general operations; and facilities management.

2. Describe the organization's capacity and experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations, as applicable.

Section 3: Financial Plan & Capacity

Financial Plan

1. Describe the systems, policies and processes the school will use for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls and ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements.

2. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the school's administration and governing board for school finance and distinguish between each.

3. Describe the school's plans and procedures for conducting an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the school.

4. Describe how the school will ensure financial transparency to the authorizer and the public, including its plans for public adoption of its budget and public dissemination of its annual audit and an annual financial report.

5. Describe any services to be contracted, such as transportation, business services, payroll, and auditing services, including the anticipated costs and criteria for selecting such services.

6. Describe the school's plans for liability insurance to indemnify the school, its board, staff and teachers against tort claims.

Financial Plan continued

7.   Submit the completed Financial Plan Workbook as **Attachment 20**. In developing your budget, use the information provided to calculate your per-pupil revenue projection. Prepare your submission using the template provided by MCSAB. Complete ALL sheets in the workbook. ***NOTE: Applicants for multiple schools should complete all sheets in the workbook for all schools opening in year one.***

8.   Budget Narrative: As **Attachment 21**, present a detailed description of assumptions, calculations, and revenue estimates. The narrative should include, at minimum, the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs. Provide specific evidence supporting assumptions and/or describe the source of estimated amounts wherever possible.
    a.   Describe all anticipated funding sources. Clearly address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising). Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property, or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include in **Attachment 21** evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school's core operation depends.
    b.   Discuss the school's contingency approach and plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.
    c.   Explain in detail the year one cash flow contingency plan, in the event that revenue projections are not met (or not met on time).

Financial Management Capacity

1.   Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Financial Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following: Financial management; Fundraising and development; and Accounting and internal controls.

List of Addenda

The following addenda should be completed as applicable by **new and existing** operators. Note that some addenda require additional attachments.

1. For applicants requesting WAIVERS from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47
2. For CONVERSION SCHOOL proposals
3. For proposals from operators using EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDERS
   - Attachment ESP-1: ESP audited financial statements and annual report
   - Attachment ESP-2: ESP contract

Addendum 1. Request for Waivers from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47

6 Page Limit - ONLY applicants requesting a waiver from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47, relating to employment of a nonimmigrant foreign worker, should complete this section.

- Identify all positions for which you are requesting a waiver. Provide a summary of the job descriptions and required qualifications for each.
- Explain the rationale for this waiver request. Include in your explanation a summary of your efforts to date to recruit lawful permanent residents of the United States for the relevant position(s).
- Describe how this waiver will positively impact student achievement.

Addendum 2. For Conversion School Proposals

6 Page Limit - ONLY applicants proposing to convert an existing
(non-charter) public school should complete this section.
Conversion school applicants may propose to provide a high quality option for students in schools where:

- a majority of parents and/or teachers and/or school board members of the existing school wish to convert the existing non-charter public school; or
- the existing school is undergoing State or District turnaround efforts.

Conversion charter schools must have a clear plan for dramatically improving persistently underperforming school cultures, significantly raising student achievement, and effectively meeting the needs of at-risk populations, especially students with disabilities.

Community Need and Support

Explain the rationale for converting the existing public school to charter status.

Describe the efforts to date to garner parent and community support and involve individuals and organizations in the conversion. Include a discussion of the process by which the applicant team gathered the evidence of eligibility for conversion (previously presented with the LOI), namely:

    a. a petition signed by a majority of teachers in the existing non-charter public school; or
    b. a petition signed by a majority of parents of students in the existing non-charter public school; or
    c. evidence of a majority vote of the local school board; or (in the case of schools in districts under state conservatorship) evidence of a majority vote of the State Board of Education. Provide specific plans for ongoing family and community engagement, including timing and responsible individuals.

Enrollment and Recruitment Supplement

1. Explain the plan to cultivate student and parent investment in the conversion, especially how the school plans to limit attrition from the existing student body. Describe how this plan will successfully transition students who currently attend or are zoned to attend the school being converted.
2. *If applicable,* summarize the school's policy regarding enrollment preferences for students who reside within the former attendance area of the proposed charter school.
       a. The policies provided above as **Attachment 6** must specifically address differences between policy and procedure for students outside of the former attendance zone vs. students currently attending or zoned to attend the existing school.

Turnaround Planning

1. Describe your organization's prior experience in taking over or turning around an underperforming school.
2. Discuss specific ways that you will engage and transform the existing school culture during the pre-launch period and the first year of operation.
3. Present a phase-in plan that details how the proposed school would take responsibility for all grades and all existing programs of the school, including (but not limited to) programs for students with severe disabilities, ELL programs, and any early childhood education programs.
4. Describe the plan to work with the existing school during the conversion/transition process.

Addendum 3. Education Service Providers

ESP Selection
1. Explain why the applicant is seeking to contract with an ESP rather than operate the school(s) directly.
2. Explain how and why the ESP was selected, including when and how the applicant learned of the ESP, which other ESPs were considered, why the ESP was selected over other ESPs, and what due diligence was conducted.

ESP Track Record
1. Explain the ESP's success in serving student populations similar to the target population of the school. Describe the ESP's demonstrated academic track record as well as successful management of non-academic school functions (e.g., back-office services, school operations, extracurricular programs). Provide summary information from reference checks conducted by the applicant (regarding the third-party ESP), identifying each reference.
2. List all schools operated by the ESP. Identify those schools that serve the same grade levels *and* student populations demographically similar to the anticipated population of the proposed school. Include name, year opened, contact information, location, number of students, and contact information for the authorizer foreach currently operating school.
3. Provide evidence of the financial health of the ESP. Attach as **Attachment ESP-1** the most recent independent financial audit report of the ESP and its most recent annual report.
4. List and explain any management contract terminations as well as any charter revocations, non-renewals or withdrawals/non-openings that the proposed ESP has experienced in the past five (5) years.

Legal Relationship with ESP
1. Provide evidence that the board is independent from the ESP and self-governing, including evidence of independent legal representation and arm's-length negotiating.
2. Describe any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the school's governing board, proposed school employees, proposed ESP, and any affiliated business entities.
3. List all subsidiaries or related entities that are affiliated or owned in whole or in part by the ESP and identify the nature of those entities' business activities.
4. Explain whether the school has or will have any relationship with or receive any services from any of the entities listed in the previous question.

5. Explain the supervisory responsibilities of the ESP (if any), including which school employees the ESP will supervise, how the ESP will supervise these employees, and how the charter school board will oversee the ESP's supervisory responsibilities.
6. If the school's governing board intends to execute promissory notes or other negotiable instruments, or enter into a lease, lease-purchase agreement or any other facility or financing relationships with the ESP, provide evidence that such agreements are separately documented and not part of or incorporated in the school management contract. Any facility or financing agreements must be consistent with the school governing board's authority and practical ability to terminate the management agreement and continue operation of the school.
7. Describe and provide documentation of any loans, grants, or investments made between the ESP and the school, including an explanation of how any such loans, grants, or investments may be initiated, repaid, and refused by the school.

ESP Management Plan

1. Provide a detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the ESP.
2. Describe the scope of services and costs of all resources to be provided by the ESP.
3. Describe the oversight and evaluation methods that the Board will use to oversee the ESP. What are the school-wide and student achievement results that the management organization is responsible for achieving? How often, and in what ways, will the board review and evaluate the ESP's progress toward achieving agreed- upon goals? Will there be an external evaluator to assess the ESP's performance? What are the conditions, standards, and procedures for board intervention, if the management organization's performance is deemed unsatisfactory?
4. Describe the compensation structure and payment schedule, including clear identification of all fees, bonuses, and any other compensation to be paid to the ESP.
5. Describe the respective financial responsibilities of the school governing board and the ESP. Who will own property purchased with public funds? Which operating and capital expenditures will each party be responsible for? What types of spending decisions can the management organization make without obtaining board approval? What reports must the ESP submit to the board on financial performance, and on what schedule? How will the school governing board provide financial oversight?
6. What is the term (duration) of the management agreement? Explain the conditions and procedures (including time frames, notice, and decision-making procedures) for renewal and termination of the contract. How often will the management agreement be renewed? Describe the conditions that both the ESP and the school must satisfy for the management agreement to be renewed. On what grounds may the ESP or the school terminate the management agreement for cause, and without cause? List any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.
7. Describe the plan for the operation of the school in the event of termination of the management agreement.
8. Provide as **Attachment ESP-2** a draft of the proposed management agreement with the ESP.

List of Exhibits

A. Sample School-Wide Curriculum Description Table
B. Sample Scope and Sequence Document
C. Sample Curriculum Map
D. RFP Description of Stage 2 Evaluation Criteria
E. RFP Description of Stage 3 Evaluation Criteria

Exhibit A: Sample School-Wide Curriculum Description Table

Content Area	Publisher/Product	Rationale for Selection
Grade Level:		
ELA		
Math	Connected Mathematics	*Connected Mathematics* is a constructivist, problem-centered middle school math curriculum that asks students to spend significant portions of time solving problems in contexts that require thinking, planning, reasoning, computing, and evaluating. Problem-centered math helps students make sense of and retrieve math concepts more readily. *Connected Math* focuses on depth of understanding, as well as on developing the necessary habits of mind that are conducive to the long-term study of mathematics. An independent study conducted by Claremont Graduate University's Institute of Organizational and Program Evaluation Research, reported that Connected Mathematics students demonstrated significantly greater gains in problem-solving, math communication, and math reasoning strategies than their peers using other math programs as evidenced by performance on the Balanced Assessment of Mathematics (BAM.)
	ST Math	Created by the MIND Research Institute, ST Math provides game- based, visual math instruction. This interactive program adapts to students' mastery as they progress through various skills and concepts targeted to their needs. ST Math focuses on improving conceptual learning and problem solving by visually representing concepts students learn during traditional instruction. Schools that use ST Math achieve at least double the growth in math proficiency than comparable schools.
Science		
Social Studies		
Other (specify)		
Grade Level:		
ELA		
Math		
Science		
Social Studies		
Other (specify)		

Exhibit B: Sample Scope and Sequence Summary

Core Academic Program Scope and Sequence					
	ELA	**MATH**	**SCIENCE**	**SOCIAL STUDIES**	**SPANISH**
9	**English Language Arts I: Classics across genres** Higher level of analysis of the novel, drama (Shakespeare), poetry, memoir, literary elements, speeches, short stories, non-fiction, crafting an argument	**Geometry** Graphing and the relations between equations and graphs, including points, lines, polynomials, circles, and other curves, graphing inequalities, slope, properties and relations of plane figures, circles, triangles and other polygons, transformations and proofs **--OR--** **Algebra I**	**Biology I** Matter, chemical building block of life, cell structure and life processes, genetics, DNA, classification of life, evolution, human body systems, biodiversity	**Contemporary US History and Civics** WWII and the Holocaust, the Cold War, the 1950s, cultural revolutions, Civil Rights, social policy, the 80s, 9/11 and post 9/11 US, Civics	**Spanish I**
10					
11					
12					

Non- Core Academic Program Scope and Sequence		
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	**ACADEMIC ELECTIVES**	**FINE ARTS ELECTIVES**
9 **Health and Fitness I** Cardio, muscular development, team sports, yoga, dance, separate and co-gender sex-ed	Creative Writing Architecture	Visual Art, Choir or Band, Theatre
10		
11		
12		

Exhibit C: Sample Curriculum Map

9th Grade English Language Arts Curriculum Map			
Unit 1: Literary Elements and the Short Story (6 weeks – Aug- Sept.)			
Standards	**Objectives**	**Key Concepts/Vocabulary**	**Suggested Resources**
RL.9-10.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. **RL.9-10.5:** Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.**W.9-10.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. **SL.9-10.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. **L.9-10.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. **L.9-10.5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.	• Identify and explain plot structure (i.e., exposition, rising action, crisis/climax, falling action, resolution/denouement) in short stories. • Understand and explain why plots in short stories usually focus on a single event. • Analyze how authors create the setting in a short story. • Define the concept of theme and identify the theme(s) in stories read. • Identify and explain characterization techniques in short stories. • Identify and explain the use of figurative language in short stories. • Analyze how authors create tone in short stories. • Identify the point of view in a short story and analyze how point of view affects the reader's interpretation of the story. • Write a coherent essay of literary analysis with a clear thesis statement, at least three pieces of evidence from texts, and a strong introduction and conclusion. • Define and refine research questions; cite sources accurately, distinguishing between paraphrasing and quoting.	Reading: ☐ Character, characterization ☐ Figurative language ☐ Irony (e.g., dramatic, situational, verbal) ☐ Narrator (reliable and unreliable) ☐ Parable ☐ Plot (i.e., exposition, rising action, crisis/climax, falling action, resolution/ denouement) ☐ Point of view ☐ Sensory language ☐ Setting ☐ Style ☐ Symbol, symbolism ☐ Theme ☐ Tone Writing: ☐ Review parts of speech (Verbs: principal parts of verbs, especially irregular past and past participles; simple, perfect, and progressive tenses; agreement of subject and verb, especially with collective nouns Nouns: common, proper, concrete, abstract, countable, collective, compound, possessive, gerunds) ☐ Review capitalization of common and proper nouns	"The Tell Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe "The Gift of the Magi" by O Henry "New African" from *Sarah Phillips* by Andrea Lee "Between the Pool and the Gardenias" from *Krik Krak* by Edwidge Danticat
Assessments/Activities *Literary Analysis Essay* – Select a short story and write an essay that analyzes how a particular literary element plays a part in the essence and workings of one of the chosen stories.			

<p style="text-align:center"><u>**Exhibit D**</u></p>

<p style="text-align:center"><u>**MISSISSIPPI CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER BOARD CHARTER SCHOOL PROPOSAL STAGE TWO EVALUATION CRITERIA NEW AND EXISTING OPERATORS**</u></p>

The Stage 2 Evaluation Process

The Stage 2 Evaluation Criteria are the essential tools used by evaluators to determine whether a proposal meets the **minimum quality threshold** required to merit a full evaluation. A response is **Inadequate** if it significantly fails to address the RFP requirements or criteria for approval, or wholly lacks merit. During Stage 2, evaluators **only provide a rating to indicate that a proposal has not met the threshold and is thus deemed inadequate.** At the conclusion of Stage 2, if a proposal has no inadequate ratings the proposal proceeds to a full review to assess the extent to which it meets the Stage 3 criteria for approval.

THRESHOLD 1: PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL OBLIGATIONS

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
• <u>Proposal Narrative</u>
   ◦ <u>Executive Summary</u>
   ◦ <u>Section 1. Educational Program Design & Capacity: Student Recruitment & Enrollment</u>
   ◦ (*if applicable*): <u>Addendum 1. Request for Waivers from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47</u>
   ◦ (*if applicable*): <u>Addendum 2.For Conversion School Applications: Enrollment &Recruitment Supplement, Turnaround Planning</u>
• <u>Attachment: Enrollment Policy</u>

A response is inadequate if:
It raises significant concerns about the applicant's understanding of, preparation for, and/or commitment to non- sectarian operation.
It is lacking in or raises significant concerns about the applicant's understanding of, preparation to, and/or commitment to operating free of any prohibited application, admissions, or enrollment policies/practices.
THRESHOLD 2: STUDENT POPULATIONS

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
• <u>Proposal Narrative</u>
   ◦ <u>Executive Summary</u>
   ◦ <u>Section 1. Educational Program Design &Capacity: Special Student Populations and At-Risk Students, Student Recruitment & Enrollment, Student Discipline</u>
   ◦ <u>Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Facilities</u>
   ◦ <u>(if applicable): Addendum 2.For Conversion School Applications: Enrollment &Recruitment Supplement, Turnaround Planning</u>
• <u>Attachment: Enrollment Policy</u>
• <u>Attachment: Discipline Policy</u>
• <u>Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook</u>

THRESHOLD 2: STUDENT POPULATIONS Continued

A response is inadequate if:

It is lacking in merit or raises significant concerns about the applicant's understanding of, preparation and/or commitment to meeting the needs of all special populations, including students with disabilities, ELLs, students requiring remediation or gifted and talented students.

The funds allocated to serving special populations are inadequate or are contradicted by the assumptions in other parts of the plan.

Demographic projections fail to meet the statutory "80% rule" (i.e., the proposed school's underserved student population is equivalent to at least 80% of the underserved student percentage of the school District in which the school will be located).

THRESHOLD 3: STARTUP PLAN

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal Narrative
  - Executive Summary
  - Section 1. Educational Program Design &Capacity: Student Recruitment & Enrollment, Education Program Capacity
  - Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, & Evaluation; Professional Development, Facilities, Start-up & Ongoing Operations
  - (if applicable): Addendum 1. Request for Waivers from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47
  - (if applicable): Addendum 2. For Conversion School Applications: Enrollment & Recruitment Supplement, Turnaround Planning
- Attachment: Enrollment Policy
- Attachment: Facility commitment and description
- Attachment: Start-up plan
- Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook

A response is inadequate if:

The start-up plan insufficiently identifies critical work streams required before school opening.

The start-up plan fails to identify a specific and reasonable completion date for each milestone, and/or the time allocated to complete work streams within the start-up plan is inadequate.

The start-up plan indicates that the applicants are unprepared to meet compliance requirements or to understand what will be required to open on time and be ready to serve students effectively.

The plan for securing a viable facility in time for school opening is either non-existent or implausible.

THRESHOLD 4: PERSONNEL

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal Narrative
  - Executive Summary
  - Section 1. Educational Program Design & Capacity: Educational Program Capacity
  - Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Organization Charts, Governing Board, Advisory Bodies, Staff Structure, Professional Development
- Attachment: School leader qualifications
- Attachment: Leadership team qualifications
- Attachment: Organizational charts
- Attachment: Board documents
- Attachment: Board member information
- Attachment: Staffing chart
- Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook
- Attachment: Budget Narrative

A response is inadequate if:

The applicants provided insufficient evidence that the proposed school leader has satisfactory experience in serving the proposed student population.

The proposed staffing structure is not viable or is materially inconsistent with other parts of the plan.

The proposed organization chart and board information raise significant concerns about the understanding of, preparation for, and/or commitment to principles of sound board governance, including avoiding conflicts of interest.

THRESHOLD 5: FINANCIAL PLAN

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal Narrative
  - Executive Summary
  - Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Staff Structure, Facilities, Start-up & Ongoing Operations
  - Section 3. Financial Plan &Capacity
- Attachment: Staffing chart
- Attachment: Start-up plan
- Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook
- Attachment: Budget narrative

A response is inadequate if:

The revenue assumptions are lacking in merit or raise significant concerns about the applicant's understanding of, preparation to, or ability to account for state and federal per pupil funding streams.

Budget worksheets as presented are mathematically inaccurate, and/or revenue and expense lines are accounted for incorrectly.

Budget projections for any year(s) result in a cash-negative position.

Private funds are included in financial projections (loans, grants, lines of credit, etc.), but are wholly unsubstantiated by evidence of commitment in Attachment: Budget Narrative.

Expenditure assumptions are not provided, lack merit or are unsustainably high or low on their face. Any assumption detail fails to provide a credible rationale for accepting the facially invalid assumptions.

Employees and consultants/contractors working prior to school opening are not accounted for in the start-up budget, and/or the revenue allocated to cover those expenditures is wholly inadequate in relation to the work assumptions.

THRESHOLD 6: PERFORMANCE HISTORY (For Existing Operators, including applicants proposing to partner with an ESP)

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal Narrative:
  - Executive Summary
  - Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity: Staff Structure, Facilities, Start-up & Ongoing Operations
  - Addendum 3. Education Service Providers
- Attachment: Annual report and/or business plan
- Attachment: Portfolio summary
- Attachment: Litigation documents
- Attachment: ESP audited financial statements and annual report
- Attachment: ESP contract
- Attachment: Organization audited financial statements
- Attachment: Organization-level budget

A response is inadequate if:

Evidence demonstrating the operator's track record of academic performance **is not provided or fails to meet the statutory requirement to demonstrate gains in student achievement.**

Evidence of successful management of nonacademic school functions (e.g., back-office services, school operations, extracurricular programs) is not provided or is plainly inadequate.

THRESHOLD 7: ESP RELATIONSHIP (For applicants proposing to contract with an ESP)

Documents considered include (but may not be limited to):
- Proposal narrative
  - Executive Summary
  - Addendum 3. Education Service Providers
- ☐ Attachment: Financial Plan Workbook
- ☐ Attachment: Budget Narrative
- ☐ Attachment: Annual report and/or business plan
- ☐ Attachment: Portfolio summary
- ☐ Attachment: Litigation documents
- ☐ Attachment: ESP audited financial statements and annual report
- ☐ Attachment: ESP contract
- ☐ Attachment: Organization audited financial statements
- ☐ Attachment: Organization-level budget

THRESHOLD 7: ESP RELATIONSHIP (For applicants proposing to contract with an ESP)
A response is inadequate if:
The contract is not in the form of a fee-for-service agreement, and/or any financial transactions, facility transactions, etc., are included in the contract.
The term sheet and/or contract indicate contract duration longer than the first term of the charter.
The term sheet and/or contract wholly fail to articulate roles of and differentiate responsibilities between the governing board, school staff, and the ESP (e.g., the board cedes independent oversight/authority over budget, performance).
The term sheet and/or contract do not assign ownership rights (e.g., curricular materials, FFE, facility/land) or employment authority (for members of school-level staff).

<div align="center">

Exhibit E
MISSISSIPPI CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER BOARD
STAGE THREE EVALUATION CRITERIA
NEW AND EXISTING OPERATORS

</div>

The Stage 3 Evaluation Process

Independent evaluators utilize the Stage 3 criteria in their individual and team assessments of each proposal. There are additional evaluation criteria for existing operator applicants. Based on evaluation criteria evaluators present a rating and a narrative analysis of each section of the proposal.

Within each section, specific criteria define the expectations for a response that "Meets the Standard."

<div align="center">

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 other sections of the proposal.

</div>

In general, the following definitions guide evaluator ratings:

Rating	Characteristics
Meets the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with **specific and accurate information** that shows **thorough preparation**; presents a **clear, realistic picture** of how the school expects to operate; and **inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.**
Partially Meets the Standard	The response meets the criteria in **many** respects but **lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.**
Does Not Meet the Standard	The response meets the criteria in **some** respects but has **substantial gaps** in a number of areas.
Falls Far Below the Standard	The response is **wholly undeveloped or significantly incomplete**; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

<div align="center">

A proposal 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.

</div>

Evidence of Capacity

Throughout the proposal, evaluators will assess the evidence that the applicant team has the capacity to execute the plan as presented.

In total, a high-quality proposal will demonstrate evidence that the team has the capacity needed in all key areas to open and operate a charter school that improves academic outcomes for students.

□ **Individual and collective qualifications** (documented, for example, by resumes and biographies for all members) **to implement the Education Plan** successfully, including capacities in areas such as school leadership, administration, and governance; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; performance management; and parent and community engagement.

□ **Individual and collective qualifications** for implementing the **Organizational Plan** successfully, including capacity in areas such as staffing, professional development, performance management, school start-up, general operations, and facilities management.

□ **Individual and collective qualifications** for implementing the **Financial Plan** successfully, including capacity in areas such as financial management, fundraising and development, accounting, and internal controls.

Stage Three Evaluation Criteria: New Operator Proposal School Overview

Section 1: Educational Program Design & Capacity

A strong Educational Program Design is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Operations Plan, and Financial Plan.

A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Curriculum and Instructional Design

- Framework for a rigorous, quality instructional design that reflects the needs of the school's target population and will ensure all students meet or exceed the expectations of the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks
  - ☐ Comprehensive, quality curriculum overview that includes a sample course scope and sequence for one subject for one grade for each division (elementary, middle, high school) the school would serve, and demonstrated alignment of course outcomes with applicable standards. Sound curricular choices, by subject, including reasonable evidence the curriculum will be appropriate and effective for the targeted students.
  - ☐ Sound instructional strategies and explanation of why they are well suited for the targeted student population, including effective methods and systems for providing differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.
  - ☐ Evidence that the proposed educational program has a sound base in research, theory, and/or experience, and has been or is likely to be rigorous, engaging, and effective for the anticipated student population.

Pupil Performance Standards

- ☐ Clear, rigorous learning standards (provided for one grade for each division the school would serve) and exit standards aligned with applicable standards.
- ☐ Thoughtful identification of and plan for development and adoption of any additional academic standards beyond state and authorizer that the school would adopt or develop, including explanation and evidence of how those standards would exceed the state standards.
- ☐ Clear, rigorous promotion and exit policies and standards.

High School Graduation Requirements

- ☐ Clear, persuasive explanation of how the school's graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other post-secondary opportunities (trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).

School Calendar and Schedule

- ☐ School calendar and daily and weekly schedules meet or exceed minimum state requirements regarding annual instructional time.
- ☐ Schedules and calendar align with the educational program; demonstrate that they are conducive to improving student learning.

School Culture

- Vision for school culture or ethos that will promote high expectations, a positive academic environment and intellectual and social development for all students, including those with special needs, English Language Learners, and students at risk of academic failure.
- Coherent plan for establishing and maintaining the intended culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents from the first day of school and throughout the school year.
- Articulate, compelling descriptions of the typical daily experiences of a student and a teacher in grades served in year one. Descriptions demonstrate a well-thought-out school design that reflects the vision and will support student intellectual and social development.

Supplemental Programming *(If applicable)*

- Sound plan, design, schedule, and funding for summer school that will meet anticipated student needs.
  - Well-designed plans and funding for extracurricular and co-curricular activities, programs, and services that will meet anticipated student needs and provide enrichment experiences.
  - Thoughtful, well-supported description of programs or strategies to address student mental, emotional, and social development and health, and any other student-focused activities and programs that are integral to the school's educational and student-development plans.

Special Populations and At-Risk Students

- Demonstrated understanding of – and capacity to fulfill – state and federal obligations and requirements pertaining to students with disabilities, students identified as intellectually gifted, and English Learners (ELs) including appropriate discipline procedures for students with disabilities.
- Sound explanation of evidence from which the projection of anticipated special populations was derived.
- Comprehensive and compelling plan for appropriate identification of students who are performing below grade level or at risk of academic failure or dropping out and a detailed plan for providing services to such students.
- Comprehensive and compelling plan for appropriate identification of students with special needs and to ensure they are served in the least restrictive environment possible, have appropriate access to the general education curriculum and school-wide educational, extra-curricular, and culture-building activities in ways that support their development, receive required and appropriate support services as outlined in their Individual Education Plans and 504 plans, and participate in standardized testing.
- Comprehensive and compelling plan for providing services to ELs, including methods for appropriate identification of ELs, specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the general education curriculum and core academic program for these students, plans for monitoring and evaluating student progress and success of ELs and for exiting them from services, and plan for including ELs in standardized testing and school-wide educational, extra-curricular, and culture-building activities.
- Plans describe evidence-based instructional programs and practices; effective design or adaptation of the educational program; qualified staffing; and support strategies and resources.

Student Recruitment and Enrollment

- Enrollment Policy complies with state law and ensures the school will be open to all eligible students.
- Sound and thoughtful student recruitment and marketing plan, timeline, and Enrollment Policy that will provide equal access to all interested students and families, including those in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure.

Student Discipline

- Student discipline policy that provides for appropriate and effective strategies to support a safe, orderly school climate and fulfillment of educational goals, promoting a strong school culture while respecting student rights. Legally sound policies for student discipline, suspension and expulsion that do not indicate students will be removed in an inappropriate manner, as well as appeals, including proper processes for students with disabilities.
- Appropriate plan for disseminating the discipline policy to teachers, parents, and students.

Parent and Community Involvement

- Effective strategies for informing parents and the community about the school's development.
  - Sound pre- and post- opening parent engagement plan, including family-school partnerships, that is welcoming and accessible to all parents.
  - Community resources and partnerships that will benefit students and parents and that include a) description of the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships; and b) evidence of commitment from identified community partners.

Educational Program Capacity

- Evidence that the school leadership and management team have the collective qualifications (documented by resumes and bios for all members) to implement the school design successfully, including capacities in areas such as school leadership, administration, and governance; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; performance management; and parent and community engagement.
- Sound plans for sourcing and training potential leaders for future campuses and for developing pipeline of potential leaders for the network. *(If applicable)* Existing leadership pipeline is adequate to meet growth projections and includes strong candidates for future schools.
- Evidence that organizations, agencies, or consultants that are essential to successful implementation of the plan are committed to having an ongoing role with the school.
- *(If School Leader candidate(s) is identified)* Evidence of the leader's experience in/ability to design, launch, and lead a school that effectively serves the target population, as well as evidence that the proposed leader is well qualified to implement the specific educational program being proposed. Any identified leadership training is appropriate for and aligned with the educational program.
- *(If School Leader candidate(s) is not yet identified)* Evidence of the Board and/or network's preparation and plan to recruit and retain a leader with the ability to lead a school that effectively serves the target population.
- Appropriate responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership/management team (beyond the school leader).
- *(If members of the leadership team are identified)* Individuals who demonstrate the qualifications, capacities, and commitment to carry out the designated leadership roles to ensure the success of the proposed school.
- *(If leadership team is not yet identified)* Sound timeline, criteria, and process for recruiting and hiring the leadership team.
- Sound plan for leading the development of the school from post-approval to opening, including identification of a capable individual or team to lead the planning and start-up, as well as a viable plan for compensating this individual or team that is aligned with the budget.

Section 2: Operations Plan & Capacity

A strong Operations Plan is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, and Financial Plan. A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Organization Charts

- Clearly indicate all positions in all years, including any changes in reporting/authority over time.
- Delineates appropriate board and management roles and lines of authority.

Legal Status and Governing Documents

- Proposed school's legal status and structure are in compliance with state law.
- Governing bylaws, policies, and procedures are comprehensive and sound.

Governing Board

- Effective governance structure for network and school governance, whether each school will have an independent board or there will be one or more boards overseeing multiple schools. Well-planned board(s) size, powers, duties, and current and desired composition (including diverse expertise and effective representation) that will foster school(s)/network success.
- Clear division of duties if there will be multiple boards serving multiple schools. *(If applicable)*
- Clear, appropriate plans for the board(s) to evaluate the success of the school(s) and school leader(s).
- Proposed board members who demonstrate *(as documented by resumes, bios, and Board Information sheets for all currently identified proposed members):* (a) will, capacity and commitment to govern the school(s)/network effectively; and (b) shared vision, purposes, and expectations for the school(s)/network.
- Evidence that the proposed governing board members will contribute the wide range of knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to oversee a successful charter school including educational, financial, legal, and community experience and expertise.
- Other effective governance procedures, including planned frequency of meetings and standing committees, duties, and current and desired composition (including diverse expertise and effective representation) that will foster school(s)/network success
- Appropriate proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy/procedures **that will minimize real or perceived conflicts.**
- Clear, appropriate plans for the board(s) to evaluate the success of the school(s) and school leader(s).
- Proposed board members who demonstrate *(as documented by resumes, bios, and Board Information sheets for all currently identified proposed members):* (a) will, capacity and commitment to govern the school(s)/network effectively; and (b) shared vision, purposes and expectations for the school(s)/network.
- Evidence that the proposed governing board members will contribute the wide range of knowledge, skills, and commitment needed to oversee a successful charter school including educational, financial, legal, and community experience and expertise.
- Sound plan and timeline for board recruitment, expansion, orientation of new members, and ongoing training for members. Plan should include a thoughtful identification of desired experience and capacities.
- *If there will be a network-level board,* plan for clear identification and plan for addressing board development needs relative to growth. *(If applicable)*
- ***If applicant is an existing not-for-it organization** other than *a charter school governing board* ~ Sound plan for transforming existing board to assume its new duties or forming a new board.
- Sound, timely plan for creating or transitioning to the school governing board. *(If applicable)*

Section 2: Operations Plan & Capacity Continued

A strong Operations Plan is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, and Financial Plan. A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Advisory Bodies

☐ Clear roles, duties, and composition of any advisory bodies/councils, and effective relationship to the school governing board and leadership.

Grievance Process

☐ Fair, accessible grievance process for parents and students.

Staff Structure

☐ Sensible staffing rollout plan for the school model(s) aligned with the educational program and conducive to school success.

☐ Effective structure and strategies for managing the administration-staff relationship.

Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

☐ Compensation packages, system, and strategy that are likely to attract and retain strong staff.

☐ Recruitment and hiring strategy, criteria, timeline, and procedures that are likely to result in a strong staff that meet ESEA requirements for being "Highly Qualified" and are well suited to the school.

☐ Plan for supporting, developing, and annually evaluating school leadership and teachers that is likely to produce and retain a successful staff.

☐ Sensible allocation of school vs. network responsibilities for staffing.

☐ Leadership and teacher evaluation tools that are likely to be effective.

☐ Effective planning for unsatisfactory leadership/teacher performance and turnover.

Professional Development

☐ Sensible allocation of school vs. Network responsibilities for professional development, including demonstrated understanding of and preparation for professional development needs that are common to all schools in the network.

☐ Professional development standards, opportunities, leadership, and calendar/scheduling that effectively support the education program and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement, including an induction program that will prepare teachers to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the educational program.

Section 2: Operations Plan & Capacity Continued

A strong Operations Plan is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, and Financial Plan. A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Performance Management

- □ *(Optional; maybe network-level or school-level)* Meaningful mission-specific educational and/or organizational goals and targets, which are measurable or demonstrable by externally credible measures or assessments.
- □ Quality interim assessments that are aligned with (each) school's curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.
- □ Effective plan (including qualified personnel) and system for measuring and evaluating academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, each school, and the network as a whole – throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the charter term.
- □ Comprehensive, effective plan (including qualified personnel) and system for collecting and analyzing student academic achievement data, using the data to refine and improve instruction – including providing training and support to school leadership and teachers – and reporting the data to the school community. This should include identification of the student data system to be used, as well as qualified personnel who will be responsible for managing and interpreting the data for teachers and leading or coordinating data-driven professional development.
- □ Thoughtful, appropriate corrective actions the school and network will take if either falls short of the MCSAB's (or the operator's) goals at any level, including explanation of what would trigger such actions and who would implement them.
- □ Sound plan for monitoring performance of the portfolio as a whole and thoughtfully considering portfolio performance in decisions regarding continued growth and replication.

Facilities

- □ Sound plan and timeline for identifying, financing, renovating, and ensuring code compliance for a facility that will meet the requirements of the educational program and anticipated student population.

Start-Up & Ongoing Operations

- □ Detailed start-up plan specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals, which is aligned with sound Start-Up Budget.
- □ Sound plan for student transportation, including both daily and special-event transportation.
- □ Sound plans for school and student safety and security, including security personnel, technology, equipment, and policies.
- □ Plan to secure comprehensive and adequate insurance coverage, including workers' compensation, liability, property, indemnity, directors and officers, automobile, and other.

Operations Capacity

- □ Individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as staffing, professional development, performance management, school start-up, general operations, and facilities management.
- □ *(If proposing an independent facility)* Demonstrated experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations.

Section 3: Financial Plan & Capacity

A strong Financial Plan is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, and Organization Plan. A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

Financial Plan

- ☐ Draft financial procedures policy or other reasonable assurance that the operator will have sound systems, policies and processes for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls, ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements, and conduct independent annual financial and administrative audits.
- ☐ Evidence that the school's leadership has a strong understanding of the appropriate delineation of roles and responsibilities among the administration and governing board regarding school finance.
- ☐ Evidence that the school will ensure financial transparency, including plans for **public adoption of the school's budget and public dissemination of its annual audit and an annual report.**
- ☐ Sound criteria and procedures for selecting contractors for any administrative services and the acquisition of liability insurance.
- ☐ **Complete, realistic, and viable start-up and five-year operating budgets.**
- ☐ Detailed budget narrative that clearly explains reasonable, well-supported revenue and cost assumptions, including grant/fundraising assumptions, including identifying the amount and sources of all anticipated funds, property, or other resources (**noting which are secured vs. anticipated, and including evidence of firm commitments where applicable**).
- ☐ **Sound contingency plan** to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.

Financial Management Capacity

- ☐ Individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Financial Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as financial management, fundraising and development, accounting, and internal controls.

Addendum 1. Request for Waivers from Mississippi Code Annotated § 37-28-47

A strong Request for Waivers is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, Organization Plan, and Financial Plan as well as any other applicable Addenda.
A solid case for a hiring waiver will have the following characteristics:

- ☐ Clearly identifies specific positions for which the applicant seeks hiring waivers. Job descriptions and required qualifications are detailed and understandable.
- ☐ Solid rationale for requesting the waiver, including reasonable efforts to date to fill the named positions with US residents.
- ☐ Demonstrates that a waiver of residency requirement in hiring will positively impact student achievement.

Addendum 2. For Conversion School Applications

A strong Conversion Application is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, Organization Plan, and Financial Plan as well as any other applicable Addenda. A solid case for conversion will have the following characteristics:

Community Need and Support

☐ Presents a compelling case for converting the school.

☐ Demonstrates, beyond delivering the required petitions, clear support from one or more key stakeholder groups (staff, families, LEA, etc.)

☐ Includes a thoughtful plan for community engagement during the conversion process, including information on timing and specific individuals who will execute the plan.

Enrollment and Recruitment Supplement

☐ Specific plans for engagement of students, families and the community that are realistic and likely to foster student retention and community support.

☐ *If applicable,* clear description of any enrollment preferences/priorities designed to support the enrollment of students who would be zoned to attend the school.

Turnaround Planning

☐ Effective strategies, programming, and support services – and demonstrated capacity (preferably including prior takeover/turnaround experience) – to transform an underperforming school culture into a positive, inclusive, high- performing culture and to significantly raise student achievement among at-risk populations currently attending a low-performing school.

☐ Strong partnerships with the targeted community, including a robust community engagement plan for the pre - opening year.

Addendum 3. Education Service Providers

A strong proposal using an Education Service Provider, regardless of the composition of the applicant team/organizations is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, Organization Plan, Financial Plan, and any other applicable Addenda.

A strong plan will have the following characteristics.

Details on following page

Addendum 3. Education Service Providers

A strong proposal using an Education Service Provider, regardless of the composition of the applicant team/organizations is coherent overall and aligned internally with the school's mission and vision, Educational Program, Organization Plan, Financial Plan, and any other applicable Addenda.

A strong plan will have the following characteristics:

ESP Selection

□ Compelling justification for the applicant organization's decision to contract with an ESP rather than operate the school(s) directly.

□ Compelling explanation of how and why this specific ESP was selected including when and how the applicant learned of the ESP, which other ESPs were considered, why the ESP was selected over other ESPs, and what due diligence was conducted.

ESP Track Record

□ Evidence that the applicant conducted reference checks on the ESP.

□ Evidence of the financial health of the ESP as demonstrated through an independent financial audit report and its most recent annual report.

□ No evidence of any management contract terminations or charter revocations, non-renewals, withdrawals, or failures to open.

□ Evidence of the ESP's success in serving populations similar to the population that the applicant intends to serve, including evidence of academic success and successful management of non-academic school functions (e.g., back- office services, school operations, extracurricular programs).

Legal Relationship with ESP

□ Evidence that the board is independent from the ESP and self-governing, including separate legal representation of each and arms-length negotiating.

□ No existing or potential conflicts of interest between the school's governing board and proposed ESP or any affiliated business entities.

□ No unexplained or unjustified relationships between the school and any subsidiary or related entities of the ESP.

□ Clear and detailed explanation of the supervisory responsibilities of the ESP (if any), including which school employees the ESP will supervise, how the ESP will supervise these employees, and how the charter school board will oversee the ESP supervisory responsibilities.

□ Detailed explanation and compelling justification of any lease, promissory notes or other negotiable instruments, any lease-purchase agreements or other financing relationships with the ESP, including evidence that such agreements are separately documented and not part of or incorporated in the ESP agreement. Such agreements must be consistent with the school's authority to terminate the ESP agreement and continue operation of the school.

□ Detailed explanation and compelling justification of any loans, grants, or investments made between the ESP and the school, including an explanation and justification of how any such loans, grants, or investments may be initiated, repaid, and refused by the school.

ESP Management Plan

- □ Detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the ESP.
- □ Detailed explanation the scope of services and costs of all resources to be provided by the ESP.
- □ Detailed description of the oversight and evaluation methods that the board will use to oversee the ESP, including school-wide and student achievement results which the management organization is responsible for achieving, and a description of how often, and in what ways, the board will review and evaluate the ESP's progress toward achieving agreed-upon goals?
- □ Detailed explanation of the conditions, standards, and procedures for board intervention, if the management organization's performance is deemed unsatisfactory.
- □ Detailed explanation of the compensation structure, including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the ESP and the schedule on which the ESP will receive compensation.
- □ Detailed explanation of the financial responsibilities of the ESP, including the ownership of items purchased with public funds, including which operating and capital expenditures each party will be responsible for assuming, what types of spending decisions the ESP can make without obtaining board approval, and what reports ESP submit to the board on financial performance, and on what schedule.
- □ Detailed description of the duration, renewal and termination of the management agreement, including how often the management agreement may be renewed, the conditions that both the ESP and the school must satisfy for the management agreement to be renewed and the procedures for determining whether the management agreement will be renewed.
- □ Detailed description of the grounds for which the ESP or the school can terminate the management agreement for cause (including provisions for notice to the other party, and any conditions under which either party may terminate the management agreement without cause.
- □ Explanation and justification of any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.
- □ A compelling plan for the operation of the school in the case that the management agreement is terminated.

> *In reviewing the draft management agreement presented as an attachment to the application, evaluators will look for provisions that align with the descriptions and explanations evaluated under the Legal Relationships and Organizational Structure sections above. A sound management agreement also will have the following characteristics:*

- □ Clearly defined terms.
- □ Fairly and reasonably distributed rights and responsibilities.
- □ Evidence of equitable bargaining power and balanced contractual authority.
- □ Does not include financial transactions (loans/grants/leases).
- □ Includes the following key areas: Roles and Responsibilities; Contract Duration, Renewal and Termination; Performance Oversight and Evaluation; Compensation and Finances; Intellectual and Physical Property; Contingency Planning for Terminated Contracts.

Finalized Request for Proposals 2013 — 10 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 402, R. 1.1-3.9

Title 10: Education Institutions and Agencies

Part 402: Charter Schools Application Process

Part 402 Chapter 1: Request for Proposals 2013

Charter School Request for Proposals 2013

Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board

Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

3825 Ridgewood Road

Jackson, MS 39211

E-mail: charterschools@mississippi.edu

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Rule 1.1 Instructions

The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board (MCSAB) invites proposals for high-quality charter schools seeking to open in the 2014-2015 school year, or thereafter. MCSAB will give preference to applications for schools intended to help underserved students.

All applications should reflect how the proposed charter school will:

1) improve student learning;

2) close achievement gaps between high- and low-performing groups;

3) increase educational opportunities for all students, but especially for those with a likelihood of academic failure;

4) allow teachers and school administrators to have a direct voice in the operation of the school;

5) encourage the use of high-quality models of teaching, governing and scheduling;

6) provide for exceptional levels of results driven accountability;

7) create expanded opportunities for involvement in the education system by students, parents and community members; and

8) encourage the replication of successful charter schools, if applicable

All new schools approved through this process will be public schools subject to the legal requirements set forth in Mississippi Code § 37-28-3 et seq.

Process Overview & Materials

The 2013-14 statewide timeline for charter approval or denial decisions is as follows:

DATE	ACTIVITY
25-Nov	MCSAB Releases RFP
22-Jan	Letter of Intent Due
27-Jan	Technical Assistance Meeting in Jackson Or Remotely via Webinar (date TBD)
14-March	Application Due
21-March	Affected School Districts Notified
28-March	Applications Reviewed for Completeness
11-April	Application Revisions Due
15-April	Capacity Interviews Begin
27-May	Capacity Interviews End
30-May	Final Review
2-June	Vote on Acceptance/Acceptance w/ Amendments/Deny
10-June	If needed, Amended Application Due
16-June	Amended Application Accepted/Denied
17-June	Contract Negotiations Begin
27-June	Contract Finalized

Application Content & Review Process: The Mississippi Charter Schools Act, Mississippi Code §§37-28-3 et seq., designates the contents required in a charter school application. This Request for Proposals contains appropriately detailed questions and guidelines concerning the format and content essential for applicants to demonstrate the capacities necessary to establish and operate a successful charter school and sets forth the mandatory elements which applicants must include in a proposed school plan. This Request for Proposals also incorporates fully herein by reference the Application Toolkit, which sets forth the performance framework for charter school oversight and evaluation and provides templates for use in the application. Finally, this Request for Proposals also incorporates fully herein by reference the Mississippi Charter School Application Evaluation Ratings and Sample Scoring Criteria, which sets forth the criteria that will guide the Authorizer Board's decision to approve or deny a charter application.

Letter of Intent: All applicants are required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) prior to submitting a completed application. The Letter of Intent template is available in the Application Toolkit. This provides formal notice to MCSAB regarding applicants' intention to submit an application to open a public charter school for during the 2013-2014 charter approval process. This letter is non-binding.

Complete Application:

1) **Cover Page**

2) **Checklist**

3) **Assurances:** A document of assurances is required with necessary signatures or the application is considered invalid. The assurances pages can be found within the Application Toolkit.

4) *Proposal Narrative:* The narrative section herein seeks information about all major aspects of the proposed school. A complete application must include each section outlined in this application document in the order given by the Applicant Checklist. Within the narrative of each section, please use the outline headings that have been provided.

5) *Budget Forms:* The budget and cash flow must be submitted in Microsoft Excel. There is no required budget or cash flow template. The final proposal narrative and attachments must be submitted in PDF form.

6) *Attachments*: Submit only those attachments that are referenced in this Request for Proposals. Additional material beyond the narrative and attachments referenced in the application will not be considered. A complete list of attachments is available in the Application Toolkit.

Subsequent Information: Within 5 days of receipt of the application, it will be reviewed for substantial completeness. Should the application fail to be substantially complete, it will not be reviewed upon the merits. MCSAB may request additional information at any time during the process, but will not accept unsolicited information from the applicant. This includes e-mail explanations, alterations to the plan, and/or comments to staff or board members. The plan submitted is considered final.

Formatting and Submission Requirements

- The final application must be submitted on three separate CD-ROMs. Each CD-ROM must contain the attachments, budget forms and proposal narrative.
- The budget form(s) must be submitted in Microsoft Excel. The final proposal narrative and attachments must be submitted in PDF form.
- Submit a full version of the application, as well as PDF versions of the narrative proposal and each individual attachment.
- Font must be either Arial or Times New Roman, with one-inch page margins, single-spaced, no smaller than 11-point font.
- Each section of the application must adhere to the page limits as indicated in the Request for Proposals. Attachments requested do not count against the page limit.

- Templates and forms for several of the attachments are provided in the Application Toolkit. Relevant attachments are to be completed and included as part of the application.
- If a particular question is not applicable to the proposal, please respond "Not Applicable." *A statement as to why the question is not applicable to the proposal may be requested upon review.*

> **Deliver Letter of Intent by 5:00pm CT on January 22, 2014 via fax, e-mail, or mail and deliver Application by 5:00pm CT on March 14, 2014* via mail or in person to:**
>
> Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board
>
> Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning
>
> 3825 Ridgewood Road
>
> Jackson, MS 39211
>
> Attention: Ms. Kim Gallaspy
>
> E-mail: charterschools@mississippi.edu

*No late submissions will be accepted.

Application Review

A team of professionals will review completed applications. The Mississippi Charter Schools Act of 2013 ensures that the following areas of expertise are represented on the Authorizer Board:

- Public and Nonprofit Governance
- Management and Finance
- Public School Leadership
- Assessment, Curriculum, and Instruction
- Public Education Law

The MCSAB works collectively to assess the quality of each application using a standards-based rubric that identifies quality criteria within a variety of domains. Each of these domains is represented in an application section, detailed below. MCSAB's quality criteria have been established in partnership with a variety of local and national experts and in consultation with exemplars and best-practice research. The rubric used to evaluate this application is entitled "Mississippi Charter School Application Evaluation and Sample Scoring Criteria" and is available on the Mississippi Department of Education and the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning websites, and is incorporated fully herein by reference.

If the application meets or exceeds the standard in four of five criteria, the team will proceed to the capacity interview. Those applications deemed substantially incomplete or failing to meet the standard in four of five criteria will be cut. The primary purpose of the capacity interview is to assess the capacity of the school's leadership team and governing board to effectively oversee the school's program, organizational viability, and finances. The interview is designed to determine the group's understanding of academic and fiscal accountability, and the characteristics of the students and district the team plans to serve. The capacity interview will also provide an opportunity for the application reviewers to pose questions generated during the application review process.

Following the capacity interview, some teams may be asked amend the application to meet or exceed the criteria in five out of five categories. All applicants are expected to meet or exceed the standards in all five categories before a charter will be granted. Teams may also be asked to participate in an interview with the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board.

If you have questions or concerns during the process, please e-mail charterschools@mississippi.edu. Do not contact members of the Charter Authorizer Board.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

APPLICANT CHECKLIST

Rule 1.2 Applicant Checklist

The applicant will use the first column of boxes to check off the sections completed. MCSAB will use the second column of boxes for its completeness check.

Application Component		Applicant Check	Reviewer Check
Cover Letter			
Checklist			
Assurances			
Proposal Narrative			
Table of Contents			
Executive Summary			
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~~Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.~~

~~EXECUTIVE SUMMARY~~

~~Rule 1.3 Executive Summary~~

~~Essential Information Form~~

~~Name of Proposed School~~	
~~Conversion or New Start~~	
~~Grade Configuration~~	
~~Model or Focus (e.g., Arts, College Prep, etc.)~~	
~~Proposed School District~~	
~~Primary Contact Person (name, email)~~	

~~Enrollment Projections:~~ *~~Delete unnecessary rows and/or provide additional columns if the school will not reach full enrollment by year five. Project student headcount (not funded FTEs). Replace "Year 1" with the first year the school plans to enroll students and each subsequent year for five years total.~~*

~~GRADE~~	~~Year 1~~	~~Year 2~~	~~Year 3~~	~~Year 4~~	~~Year 5~~
~~ECE~~					
~~K~~					
~~1~~					
~~2~~					
~~3~~					
~~4~~					
~~5~~					
~~6~~					
~~7~~					
~~8~~					
~~9~~					
~~10~~					
~~11~~					
~~12~~					
~~Total # students~~					

Student Demographics: Based on the district in which the proposed charter school will be located, project the demographic makeup of the school. The projections for the total number of students who receive free lunch and/or special education services must satisfy the 80% rule as described in the Application Toolkit.

	Free Lunch ONLY %	Students with Disabilities but not Free Lunch %	Total % Free Lunch and/or Students with Disabilities
District data			
Minimum Required % to Satisfy 80% rule			
Projected Demographics			

Address the following questions briefly in a narrative format. Please use the outline numbering and headers provided below, but do not repeat the questions

I. **Culture:** What is the mission and vision of the school? What outreach has been conducted to engage prospective parents, teachers and pupils within this region? Discuss the need for the school in the community. Describe the anticipated culture of the school.

II. **Leadership:** What critical qualifications, credentials and attributes have been identified for the school leader? If a leader has been selected, please provide a short biography for that leader. What critical qualifications, credentials and attributes have been identified for the other members of the school leadership team? If the other members have been selected, provide a short biography for those leaders as well.

III. **School Structure and Operations:** Provide a high level overview of the school team's plan to recruit and enroll students. Describe the school facilities and how students will be transported.

IV. **Education Program:** Provide a brief overview of the education program of the proposed school, including major instructional methods, key program components and assessment strategies.

V. **Instructional Staff:** Explain how instructional effectiveness will be supported through evaluations and professional development.

VI. **Governance:** Briefly outline the role of the Board with regard to school governance and academic oversight. Explain the rationale for seeking charter status.

VII. **Other**: Provide an overview of any relationships with education service providers (if applicable). Provide an abbreviated rationale for converting a noncharter school into a charter school (if applicable). Discuss the academic achievement levels of any other schools being operated by the applicants (if applicable).

Expand the following table to list all proposed Board members for the school.

Name	Current Professional Title and Organization	Board Role	Focus/Expertise

Finance: Complete the following table to summarize the detailed budget supplied in this application. Replace "Year 0" with the first year the proposed school plans to incur expenses, and "Year 1" with the first year the school anticipates receiving students, and each year thereafter for five years total. If there is no anticipated planning year, eliminate the column for "Year 0."

	Year 0*	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Number of Students	-	-	-	-	-	-
Per Pupil Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-
Federal Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant Funds**	-	-	-	-	-	-

Private Funds**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Sources**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-
Salaries and Wages	-	-	-	-	-	-
Benefits and Employer Taxes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Materials and Supplies	-	-	-	-	-	-
Services and Other Operating Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-
Facility Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Operating Income	-	-	-	-	-	-
Beginning Fund Balance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ending Fund Balance	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	*Year 0 refers to the startup year, if applicable. Per Pupil Revenue streams will not commence until Year 1, but there may be other sources of revenue and expense activity during the startup year. - **For any grants, private funds, or other sources identified above, indicate whether the funding has been secured and any plans to secure future funding within the budget narrative and provide evidence as available as part of Attachment X.					

Contracting with Education Service Providers (ESPs): Applicants seeking services from a third party ESP must indicate the extent to which the school may employ services through these organizations or corporations. **Note: A charter school and any education service provider that provides comprehensive management for a charter school must be a nonprofit education organization.**

   a. Does the school expect to contract with an ESP or other organization for a substantial portion of school management/operation? (Y/N) If so, please provide a description or copy of

the proposed contract, a recent corporate annual report, an audited financial statement, a description of the firm's responsibility for the fiscal management of the proposed school, and a summary of the company's history including a description of its past results in management efforts, as well as the background on its leaders. Please provide these documents as an attachment to this Executive Summary Narrative.

b. Is the applicant an existing operator applying to replicate its current school(s)? (Y/N) If so, list all the schools currently or previously operated by the ESP. Briefly summarize the academic outcomes of each school currently being operated by the ESP.

Schools ESP Operates	Location (City/State)	Dates of Operation

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Rule 1.4 Culture

This section describes the systems in place to support a strong school culture and involve key stakeholders in the school community. Address the following questions in a narrative format. Please use the high level outline components (e.g., "A. Mission Statement") to organize the response. Do not repeat the text of the question.

A. **Mission and Vision Statements**

   The mission and vision statements provide the foundation for the entire school proposal and operational plan. Accordingly, the rest of the school application should fully align with, and support the stated school mission and vision.

   1. Provide the mission of the proposed school. The mission statement should be a concise statement that does the following:

      a. Identifies the school's target student population and community to be served.

      b. Articulates clear guiding purposes and priorities that are meaningful, measurable and attainable.

      c. Provides the entire school community as well as external stakeholders a clear picture of what the school aims to achieve.

   2. Provide the vision statement for the proposed school. The vision statement should be a concise statement that articulates the school's ultimate goal and reason for existence.

B. **Targeted Student Population**

A. Identify the district the school proposes to serve.

1. In the case of a conversion, also identify the school that will be converted.

B. What will be the maximum student enrollment? Provide forecasted figures by grade level that illustrate the build-out of the school over time. If the forecasted enrollment is different than the maximum enrollment, explain the rationale.

C. Provide the expected demographics for the students the school plans to serve including the percentage of Free and Reduced Lunch, Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs). Estimate the percentage of students who will qualify for free lunch or receive special education services. The projections for the total number of students who receive free lunch and/or special education services must satisfy the 80% rule as described in the Application Toolkit.

D. Explain how the decision to serve this targeted population, including the grade levels that have been chosen, would meet the district's and community's needs.

C. **Evidence of Need and Community Support**

   1. Describe the need for a charter school in this district. Make reference to academic achievement, dropout rates, disciplinary statistics, and/or other indicators of need.

2. Describe the role of families and community members in developing and providing input into the proposed school.

3. Describe the outreach that has been conducted to engage prospective parents, teachers and pupils in the district the school is proposing to serve.

4. Describe evidence of support from any identified community partners, organizations, agencies, or consultants. This evidence may include letters of intent/commitment, in-kind donations, memoranda of understanding, and/or contracts, and should specify the resources to be committed or contributed from the partner, as applicable.

   a. As Attachment A, provide any applicable documents. If the school is relying on a community partner to provide a service or facility that is integral to the operation of the school or educational model, provide a copy of the contract or MOU as part of this attachment.

5. Provide evidence of support for the proposed school among prospective families, teachers, and pupils, or any combination thereof. Support may be gauged and demonstrated through community meetings, parent/teacher/student letters of support, surveys of prospective stakeholders, and/or evidence of letters of intent to enroll among other means.

   a. As Attachment B, provide any applicable documents of any community support.

D. **School Culture and Student Engagement**

1. Describe the planned culture for the school and how this culture will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.

2. Explain the systems, structures, practices, and traditions the school leader and leadership team will create to foster this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and families starting from the first day of school (note that a description of the planned discipline policy is requested in the next section).

3. Explain how the school culture will include and serve all students including students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and any students at-risk of academic failure.

E. **Student Discipline Policy**

1. What will be the key elements of the school's discipline policy and how will it reflect the school culture described above? Which roles on staff will be responsible for implementing the school's discipline policy?

   a. Provide a copy of the school's discipline policy as Attachment C.

2. Is there a strategy for positive behavioral reinforcements? What rituals or protocols will be in place as part of this strategy?

3. How will the discipline policy be practiced in the classroom to ensure students are on task and focused on learning?

4. How will the school ensure that minority students, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities are not disproportionately represented in disciplinary procedures?

   a. Attachment C should include disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities.

F. **Ongoing Stakeholder Involvement**

1. What community resources will be available to students and their families? Describe any partnerships the school will have with community organizations, businesses, or other educational institutions. Specify the nature, purpose, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships.

2. Describe how families will be engaged in the school's culture and operations. How will the school build family-school partnerships to strengthen support for learning and encourage family involvement?

3. Explain how families will be involved in the governance of the proposed charter school. . How will the school's policies, procedures, and culture reflect the importance of family satisfaction? How will family satisfaction be evaluated?

4. What communication protocols are planned for stakeholders? How will families be informed about school updates, board meetings and other events?

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Section II. LEADERSHIP

(10 page limit)

Rule 1.5 Leadership

This section outlines school leadership and the processes that will ensure school sustainability and achievement.

A. Leadership Team Personnel

1. Describe the essential responsibilities of the school's leader. Provide a job description for this position as Attachment D.

a. Summarize the profile of the school's ideal leader, including skills, qualifications, and characteristics.

2. Is it a requirement that the school leader have school leadership experience?

3. Will the school leader be the instructional leader at the proposed school? If not, who will be responsible for the instructional leadership at the proposed school?

4. Provide a detailed description of the recruiting, hiring, and selection process, and timeline for identifying the school leader. Who makes the hiring decision for the school leader position?

5. If the Principal/Head of School candidate has been identified:

6. Explain why this individual is well qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission and goals. Summarize the proposed leader's academic and organizational track record. Provide the school leader's resume and proof of United States citizenship as Attachment E.

7. As part of Attachment E, provide specific evidence that demonstrates the leader's capacity to design, launch, and manage a high-performing school. Provide specific data that demonstrate strong evidence of the school leader's ability to effectively serve the proposed target population. This evidence must include annual student achievement data, disaggregated by subgroup, for every school under the current or prior management of the leader.

8. If the school leader has never run a school, describe any principal leadership training programs that the proposed leader has completed or is currently attending.

a. As part of Attachment E, provide any evidence that demonstrates the leader's capacity to design, launch, and manage a high-performing school. Provide any available specific data that demonstrate strong evidence of the school leader's ability to effectively serve the proposed target population. This evidence may include data from the leader's previous role as a teacher or other administrator.

9. What additional personnel will make up the school's leadership team? Summarize the essential duties and responsibilities for each additional person on the leadership team.

10. Please provide job descriptions for all leadership team positions as Attachment F to this narrative.

11. What are the qualifications and credentials necessary for the other members of the leadership team?

12. Have the other members of the leadership team been identified?

13. ~~If so, provide as part of Attachment F resumes, proof of United States citizenship, and annual student achievement data, disaggregated by subgroup, for every school under the current or prior management of each identified leadership team member.~~

14. ~~If not, what is the timeline to fill each position?~~

B. ~~Leadership Team Coaching and Evaluation~~

1. ~~Explain the school's system for analyzing the school leader's need for coaching and professional development. How will the school supply these supports to the school leader?~~

2. ~~Explain how and when the governing board will evaluate the school leader or principal? What evaluation tool will be used? What key performance criteria will be examined? How will student academic performance be factored into the school leader's evaluation?~~

3. ~~How will the school's board handle unsatisfactory leadership performance?~~

4. ~~Who will coach and evaluate the members of the leadership team other than the principal?~~

~~Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.~~

Rule 1.6 School Structure and Operations

A. School Personnel Structure

1. Other than the leadership team discussed in Section II, outline the staff positions that the school will fill to ensure successful ongoing operations. Note any core functions that will be outsourced to third parties or consultants. *(The law requires any that any contracts for outsourced core functions be evaluated by the authorizer board as part of this process. Furthermore, no for-profit entity can be hired for core academic or management functions.)*

2. As Attachment G, supply an organizational chart for school personnel. For staff positions, include each position/title, name of person holding the position (if applicable), and the year in which the school anticipates adding the position to the staff roster. This chart should include leadership team positions. General education teaching positions can be included as one box on the org chart; however, special education and ELL positions should be listed separately from general teaching positions. *(This organizational chart will be compared against the budget figures supplied elsewhere; the two should sync. This chart must clearly present lines of authority and reporting between the governing board, education service provider (if applicable), staff, related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent and teacher councils), and all other external organizations that will play a role in managing the school.)*

3. As Attachment H, supply a staff roster that details all staff positions, such that teaching positions are listed individually and all paraprofessional or specialty teachers are included. The staff roster should include staff planned during the entire initial term of the charter school. This roster should be in list format as opposed to an organizational chart. If the school is phasing in the program, please use multiple columns to indicate which positions will be added in which years. Note on the roster whether positions are full-time or part-time.

4. Outline the proposed school's salary ranges and employment benefits for all employees, as well as any incentives or reward structures that may be part of the compensation system.

B. Student Recruitment and Enrollment

1. Describe the plan to recruit students in the pre-opening year, including the strategies, activities, events, responsible persons and milestones that will demonstrate progress over time.

2. How will the school team specifically reach out to families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, linguistically diverse families, and other youth at risk of academic failure?

3. Will the school leadership team be collecting Intent to Enroll forms during the pre-opening year? A sample Intent to Enroll form is provided in the Application Toolkit.

    a. If yes, how many Intent to Enroll forms have been collected as of the time of

application submission?
4. Outline the planned enrollment process and timeline, policies, preferences, and requirements, including how any enrollment preferences and requirements comply with Mississippi Code § 37-28-23.
   a. Provide a copy of the school's enrollment policy, including the policy for enrollment preferences, in Attachment I.
5. Describe the school's lottery procedures.
   a. How do these lottery procedures comply with the statutory requirement in Mississippi Code § 37-28-15 that lotteries be "equitable, randomized, transparent, and impartial"?
   b. Provide the school's lottery policy, including policies around waiting lists, as Attachment J.
6. What is the target re-enrollment rate for each year?
7. Describe the student recruitment plan once the school has opened.
   a. In what ways will it be different than the pre-opening year, in terms of the strategies, activities, events, persons responsible and milestones?
8. Describe the goal(s) for student attendance and explain how the school will ensure high rates of student attendance.
   a. Who will be responsible for collecting and monitoring attendance data?
   b. What will happen in the event that attendance targets are not reached?

C. Operations
1. Transportation: Describe the transportation plan that details how reliable and safe transportation will be provided for all students.
   a. If the school will enter into a contract with a third-party transportation provider, attach the proposed or signed contract as Attachment K.
2. Food Service: Detail how reliable food services will be provided for all students, including whether food will be prepared on or off site.
   c. Does the school intend to participate in the National School Lunch program and/or the National School Breakfast program?
      - If yes, detail the steps that have been taken to secure participation in these programs.
   d. Indicate whether the school will participate in the local school district's food service programs.
3. Provide a list of the types of insurance coverage the school will secure, including a description of the levels of coverage. Types of insurance could include, but not be limited to, Worker's Compensation, liability, or property insurance.
4. Describe any partnerships or contractual relationships with external stakeholders central to the school's operations or mission.

D. Facility
1. Define the process for identifying and securing a facility that is appropriate for the instructional needs of the school, including any brokers or real estate consultants being employed to assist in finding a facility.
2. Describe how the identified facility will meet the basic requirements to accommodate the school plan, including number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, classroom types, common areas, overall square footage and amenities.
3. Describe backup or contingency plans for facilities if a facility has not yet been

secured.

    4.   As Attachment L, provide a completed School Facility Questionnaire.

    5.   As Attachment M, provide the facility floor plan.

E. Start-up Plan

    1.   Provide a detailed school start-up plan, identifying tasks, timelines, and board members and/or staff who are responsible for each task as Attachment.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

IV: EDUCATION PROGRAM
(30 page limit)

Rule 1.7 Education Program

This section will describe the educational program designed to meet the needs of all students through well-developed curriculum, an assessment system, programs for special populations, and clear systems for instructional planning.

A. Standards and Curriculum

1. Explain how the school team will base its instructional program on Mississippi's state standards, including the Common Core State Standards, as is required by Mississippi Code § 37-28-15.

    a.   If the school team plans to adopt or develop additional academic standards beyond the state standards, explain what kinds of standards (content areas, grade levels) the school team intends to adopt or develop.

    b.   Provide evidence of how these additional proposed standards meet or exceed state standards.

2. Describe the proposed curriculum. In particular, describe:

    a.   The curricular model and focus (e.g., curriculum overview and teaching methods)

    b.   The learning environment (e.g., classroom-based or independent study, class size, structure, etc.)

    c.   Class size and structure

3. Present evidence that the proposed curriculum is research-based and has delivered or will deliver rigorous, engaging and effective instruction for the target student population.

    a.   If evidence of effectiveness in other schools serving similar populations is not available, explain why the proposed program is likely to succeed with the school's targeted population.

4. Explain how the curriculum is aligned to the standards.

5. Describe any plans to offer virtual courses to students enrolled in the charter school.

6. For high schools only, please provide a comprehensive explanation of how the courses and curriculum will prepare students for career- ready and/or college-level course work.

7. What elective courses will be offered?

8. Provide an overview of the course scope and sequence by subject for all major existing grades that the school would serve (e.g., K, 3, 5, 8, 12 as applicable).

    a. How is this course scope and sequence aligned with Mississippi's state standards, including the Common Core State Standards?

    b. What resources have been used in developing the scope and sequence?

9. For each core subject area, unique focus area, and performance level (grade level, age grouping, etc.) for the first five years of operation, discuss the resources and instructional materials to be used to aid in the transference of information (trade books, multimedia aids, science kits, etc.) and that are aligned with the mission and philosophy of the school and the proposed learning standards.

    a. Discuss how the resources and instructional materials will lead to the accomplishment of the school's goals.

10. Describe how the school's curriculum will ensure cultural relevancy.

    a. Provide an overview of how the particular framework and/or the curriculum materials will address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

11. If the curriculum is not fully developed, provide a timeline outlining the process and benchmarks for curriculum development during the school's pre-opening year.

    a. Who will be responsible for completing the alignment of curriculum with standards?

    b. Are funds allocated in the budget to account for this process?

B. Pedagogy

1. Describe the expected instructional methodology and strategies that teachers will employ in order to effectively deliver the school's curriculum.

    a. What strategies will teachers use to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the targeted student population, students with disabilities, students requiring intervention and students needing accelerated curriculum?

2. What planning tools will teachers use to prepare lessons?

3. How will students' formative assessment data be used to influence teachers' instruction?

4. How will teachers ensure that each student masters content objectives and develops related skills to demonstrate proficiency across all standards?

5. Describe the investment strategies to be implemented to involve students in the school and their academics including any school-specific routines and rituals.

C. School Schedule & Calendar

6. How many days and hours of instruction will students receive?

a. As Attachment O, provide the school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation as evidence that the proposed school will be in session no fewer days than the minimum number of school days established for all public schools in Mississippi.

2. Identify the number of in-service days for teachers.

3. Explain how the calendar will support the stated goals of the educational program.
4. Describe the structure of the school day and week.

a. Note the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times.

b. Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade for core subjects such as Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies.

5. Explain how the school's daily and weekly schedule will optimize student learning for all students, including those needing either acceleration or intervention.

a. As a Attachment P, provide daily schedules for one week of classes, both from the perspective of a student and the perspective of a teacher.

D. Progress Monitoring and Assessment

1. How will the school use data to refine and improve instruction?

2. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole – throughout the school year and at the end of each academic year.

   a. Which formative and summative assessments will be used and how will these assessments align to the curriculum?

   b. How are the proposed assessments known to be valid and reliable indicators of progress?

   c. Identify any other measures or assessments you plan to use for indicators and goals.

3. Explain how and how frequently the school will collect and analyze longitudinal student academic achievement data.

   a. Describe the information system(s) the school will use to manage student performance data.

   b. Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible and involved in the collection and analysis of assessment data.

   c. Identify the staff member(s) who will be responsible for warehousing the data.

   d. Identify the staff member(s) who will be responsible for interpreting the data for classroom teachers.

4. Identify the staff member(s) responsible for leading or coordinating professional development related to the use of data in improving student achievement.

5. Describe any additional data that will be collected, beyond items identified above in the description of the assessments.

6. How will the school report the data to the school community (specifically families)?

7. Explain the school's policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next.

    a. How and when will promotion and graduation criteria be communicated to families and students?

    b. What is the protocol for redress when families disagree with promotion decisions?

8. *For high schools only*, list the school's graduation requirements.

    a. Explain any graduation requirements.

    b. How do these requirements ensure students are ready to participate in college, career, military service or trade school?

    c. Does the school intend to seek SACS accreditation?

    d. Explain how the school will ensure students meet graduation requirements.

    e. Explain how students will earn credit hours.

    f. How will grade-point averages be calculated?

    g. What information will be on a student's transcript?

E. English Language Learner Students

1. How will the school learn about the home language of students prior to the first day of instruction?

    a. How will the data about home language be utilized?

2. When will students be assessed for placement?

    a. What valid and reliable English Language proficiency assessment will be used to determine proficiency levels in listening, reading, writing, and speaking English?

    b. How often will students be assessed for progress?

    c. How will the results be utilized?

    d. How will families be made aware of the school's programs and services?

    e. Who will notify families about the results, what will be included in the notification, and when will it happen?

3. Describe the program to be used to ensure that students acquire adequate English language skills.

    a. How will the instructional schedule be designed in order to provide adequate instruction?

    b. What are the performance objectives and what standards will be used to measure the progress of ELL students?

    c. What instructional techniques will be utilized to help ELLs develop and understand academic vocabulary appropriately in speaking, reading, and writing?

    d. How will teachers support students' various English language development levels?

> e. How will the school ensure that families are made aware of the school's programs and services?

4. Describe the plan to exit/re-designate students from the ELL program.

> a. What will determine the exiting/re-designation of students?

> b. What valid, reliable, and objective criteria will be used to measure English proficiency in each of the four language domains?

> c. Describe the plan to monitor students after exit/re-designation.

> d. How will the school determine if additional ELL program services are needed?

F. Students with Disabilities and Special Needs

1. Explain how the school will identify and evaluate students with disabilities pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 USCS Section 1400 et seq., Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USCS Section 794, and Title 11 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 USCS Section 12101 et seq. as well as Title 37, Chapter 23, Sections 133-150 of the Mississippi Code of 1972.

> a. Provide as Attachment Q the school's policies for identifying and evaluating students with disabilities.

> b. Which staff will be responsible for this identification and/or evaluation?

> c. How will the school avoid misidentification?

2. How will the school team ensure that students with disabilities can receive adequate services at the proposed school pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 USCS Section 1400 et seq., Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USCS Section 794, and Title 11 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 USCS Section 12101 et seq. as well as Title 37, Chapter 23, Sections 133-150 of the Mississippi Code of 1972?

> a. As part of Attachment Q, provide the school's policies for serving students with disabilities.

> b. Which staff will be responsible for serving students with disabilities?

3. Describe the specific, research-based instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services, to ensure students' access to the general education curriculum, and to ensure academic success for students with disabilities.

4. How will the school regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of students receiving special education services so that students attain those goals set forth in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)?

5. How will the school ensure that students receiving special education services participate in the state testing system as mandated by state law?

G. Academic Intervention & Acceleration

1. How will the school's assessment system enable the school to identify students in need of academic intervention or acceleration? What process will be used to identify those students? Which staff members will be involved?

2. Will the school use a response to intervention (RTI) process for students?

3. For students identified as in need of accelerated learning opportunities what is the school's plan to address those needs?

4. For High Schools Only: Describes the opportunities that students will have for dual enrollment, dual credit, AP, IB, or other advanced academic courses.

5. For High Schools Only: Explain what systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out of high school and/or not meeting the proposed graduation criteria (i.e., credit recovery, etc.).

H. Gifted and Talented Students

1. Explain how the school will identify gifted/talented and academically advanced students in accordance with Mississippi Code § 37-23-171-181...

    a. Identify the testing protocol, assessments to be used, and proposed timeline for the testing and identification of gifted and talented students.

2. What methods will the school use to improve the representation of traditionally under-represented student cohorts in its gifted and talented programs?

3. Describe the instructional programs and strategies that the school will use to appropriately address the educational needs of gifted students in accordance with Mississippi Code § 37-23-171-181.

    a. Will the programs require additional instructional materials?

4. How will the school adjust its schedule, if necessary, to meet the needs of G&T students?

5. How will the assessment system described earlier support the ongoing tracking of progress for students who may be above grade level?

6. How will the school provide professional development and train both G&T and general education teachers to serve the needs of G&T students?

I. Co-curricular or Extracurricular Programming

1. Describe any unique or supplementary programs students (and families) will be offered to promote improved mental, emotional and physical health.

    a. Who will conduct these programs?

    b. Will they be optional?

    c. What community resources will be leveraged to offer these programs?

2. Describe the extra- or co-curricular activities or programming the school will offer.

    a. What are the activities, how often will they occur, who will manage or oversee the activities and how will they be funded (including, will there be a fee for student participation?

i. Please describe any fees for student participation. As Attachment R, provide a copy of the school's policy for fees and hardship waivers in accordance with Mississippi Code § 37-7-335.

b. Include a description of sports to be offered.

c. Will the charter school join the Mississippi High School Activities Association?

i. f not, what leagues or other associations will the charter school join for the purposes of competitions?

3. Describe any volunteer or service programs for students, if these have not already been addressed elsewhere in the application.

4. *For schools offering summer school*: Describe the summer school program to be proposed.

a. How many students are expected to attend summer school?

b. How will they be selected for participation?

c. How many hours and weeks of summer school will be provided?

d. How will it be funded?

e. What specific student needs will the summer school address?

J. Performance Framework

1. Outline the measurable annual goals on each item in the Performance Framework (see the Application Toolkit) that the school will set during the first three years.

a. Attach a completed Performance Framework as Attachment S.

b. Elementary and K-8 schools that are phasing in one grade at a time will not receive a state-level rating until their third graders have taken the state assessment. If the school will be an elementary or K-8 school, describe specific performance targets on progress monitoring assessments described above that you will use to measure the success of the school.

2. Describe the corrective actions the school will take if it falls short of student academic achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide, classroom or individual student level.

a. Explain what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them. Please make specific reference to Mississippi's third grade gate law.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Rule 1.8 Instructional Staff

This section will describe the systems in place to promote teacher quality, beginning with a rigorous hiring process and including coaching, evaluation, and professional development.

A. Teacher Recruitment, Hiring, & Retention

1. Describe the protocol that will be used in hiring teachers. Describe the professional backgrounds, depth of experience, and personal qualities that will be sought in teachers and other school staff and how those qualities will help the school achieve its goals.

2. What will be done to ensure that all staff hired is "Highly Qualified" in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) by the timeline designated in the Mississippi Public Charter Schools Act of 2013. Explain other key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to the school design. Note whether there is a plan to request a waiver for licensed instructional staff.

3. What will be done to ensure that all hired staff have received and passed criminal back ground checks, in accordance with the law?

4. Describe the timeline for interviewing and selecting teachers. How will the school publicize open positions? Who will make hiring decisions for teachers? How will the school team assess whether good hiring decisions are made on an annual basis?

5. Explain what cultural competencies will be required of key staff positions in order to appropriately serve the proposed target population.

6. What strategies will be deployed in order to promote retention of the school's best performing teachers? Is there a target retention rate? Is retention part of the annual goal setting process? Does staff retention factor into the school leader's evaluation?

B. Teacher Coaching

1. What are the primary goals for teacher coaching in the proposed school? Are there specific areas on which the instructional leaders expect to focus? What criteria will be used to establish coaching feedback?

2. Describe the school's plan to coach teachers. Which personnel will be involved in teacher coaching? Will teachers receive feedback from non-supervisory coaches or peers?

3. What research basis is being used to create classroom observation protocols and feedback instruments? What methodologies will teacher coaches employ to ensure they are delivering relevant and differentiated feedback to drive improved student outcomes? How will the teachers receive coaching and feedback on their instructional planning?

C. Teacher Evaluation

1. Will the MSTAR framework be a part of the teacher evaluation system?

   a. If not, what are the standards that will be used to evaluate teachers? How will these standards be developed?

      b.   Explain the protocol the school will use to evaluate the performance of the teachers. Who will have primary responsibility to evaluate teachers?

      c.   Specifically address what role student progress and achievement will play in teachers' evaluations.

2.   What steps or actions will the school take when teacher performance is unsatisfactory?

D. Professional Development

1.   Describe the professional development standards and opportunities that will be offered to the teaching staff, and identify who will be responsible for developing, leading and evaluating professional development at the school. Provide the professional development plan as Attachment T.

2.   As a part of Attachment T, provide a scope and sequence, along with an explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.

3.   Identify the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing plan will be structured to accommodate this plan. Note whether teachers will have time for common planning or collaboration, and how such time will typically be used.

4.   Explain how the professional development program will support staff in the cultural competencies necessary to effectively serve linguistically and culturally diverse students.

5.   Explain how the professional development program will be evaluated to assess its effectiveness and success.

E. Pedagogy

1.   Describe the expected instructional methodology and strategies that teachers will employ in order to effectively deliver the school's curriculum. Include strategies teachers will use to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the targeted student population, students with disabilities, students requiring intervention and students needing accelerated curriculum.

2.   What planning tools will teachers use to prepare lessons? How will students' formative assessment data be used to influence teachers' instruction?

3.   How will teachers ensure that each student masters content objectives and develops related skills to demonstrate proficiency across all standards?

4.   Describe the investment strategies to be implemented to involve students in the school and their academics including any school-specific routines and rituals.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Rule 1.9 Governance

The Governing Board is the entity legally responsible for holding the charter, entering into the contract with Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board and overseeing the operation and academic performance of the charter school. Governance includes all financial planning, budgeting and oversight. Below is the budget narrative, where applicants are asked to describe in detail the fiscal plan for the proposed school. The specifics of this plan are requested in the budget form. The two should sync.

A. **Governance Philosophy**

   1. Explain the general philosophy of governance that will guide the proposed school.
   2. What are the roles and responsibilities of the school's board in regards to the school operation? Please make sure that within the answer, management is clearly distinguished from governance responsibilities.
   3. How will the board interact with the principal or head of school?

B. **Board Capacity and Structure**

   1. **School Oversight** As Attachment U, provide an organizational chart that clearly presents the school's organizational structure, including lines of authority and reporting between the governing board, education service provider (if applicable), staff, related bodies (such as advisory bodies or committees), and any other external organizations that will play a role in managing the school.
   2. Outline the key expectations for board members.
       a. What actions would trigger removal from the board and under what process?
       b. What are the attendance and committee service requirements for board members?
   3. Describe the size and composition of the governing board, both in the present and future.
       a. Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board, as well as their involvement with the school's target population.
       b. List all current board members and their roles, and summarize their interests in and qualifications for serving on the school's board.
       c. How will the proposed composition ensure that: (a) the school is an educational and operational success and (b) that key stakeholders and community members will be active in the governance of the school?
       d. As Attachment V, provide a completed Charter School Board Member Questionnaire for each listed board member. The Questionnaire can be found in the Application Toolkit.
   4. Explain the criteria and procedure by which board members have been and/or will be selected.
   5. Identify your timeline to recruit additional members and the skill sets you plan to add to the board.
   6. Explain the board development plan for increasing the capacity of the governing board.
       a. What kinds of orientation or training will new board members receive, and what kinds of ongoing development or training will existing board members receive?
       b. When will this training occur and what topics will be addressed?
   7. How frequently will the board meet?

8. How will board agendas, minutes and decisions be reported to stakeholders?

C. Board Oversight

1. How will the board approach its oversight role? Describe the metrics or progress indicators that the board will consider in its analysis of the school, as well as how the board will receive this information (i.e., dashboard.) Be sure to include both the academic and financial metrics, and the frequency with which the board will review these metrics. These metrics will likely inform any contractual agreements subsequent to application approval.

2. How will the board oversee and implement the school's grievance process and policy?
   a. What is the role of the board when a staff member or a family member has a grievance?
   b. What are the goals of the board in terms of monitoring and resolving staff and family complaints?

D. Board Status and Compliance

1. Describe the proposed school's legal status, including whether Articles of Incorporation have been filed and whether the school has obtained federal tax-exempt status.

2. Describe the process by which the proposed school board developed its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.
3. Provide as Attachment W the proposed or filed Articles of Incorporation, the governing board's Bylaws, and the board's Conflict of Interest Policy.

4. Describe how the school and governing board will comply with Mississippi Code § 25-41-1 et seq and Mississippi Code § 25-61-1 et seq, which pertain to open meetings and open records laws.

E. Budget and Policy Narrative

When developing the budget, applicants should become familiar with Mississippi Code § 37-28-55, where details regarding state, local, and federal funding sources can be found. Also, remember to withhold the 3% authorizer fee from state and local dollars to support the Authorizer Board. As a general recommendation, applicants should do their due diligence in ensuring that the budget and budget narrative are consistent with other sections of the application. All applicants are required to submit a complete charter application budget as a separate electronic document in Microsoft Excel. Applicants do not need to submit a hard copy of the budget form.

1. In the budget file submitted, detail a proposed budget for the start-up year and subsequent five years.
   a. Budget should provide reviewers with good visibility to clear assumptions around funding rates and drivers. Applicants should include any notes within the budget file to substantiate source behind key assumptions.
   b. Any increase to revenues, expenses, funding rates, from year to year, should also be noted and substantiated.
   c. File should also include start-up and first-year cash flow projections with clearly stated

assumptions regarding timing of revenue and expenses.

2. Additionally, submit a budget narrative that provides additional information around budget decisions and line items within the budget file. Be sure to include a statement of how each line item helps the school to meet its vision and goals. There should be a discussion of the broader financial outlook of the proposed school, foreseeable risks, and efforts towards sustainability and solvency.

3. Describe the anticipated private revenue sources including contributions and grants.
   a. Note which are secured and which are anticipated. Provide evidence of secured and anticipated fundraising contributions in Attachment X.
   b. Describe how each revenue stream will be used in support of non-core operational expenses.
   c. Disclose all sources of private funding and all funds from foreign sources, including gifts from foreign governments, foreign legal entities and domestic entities affiliated with either foreign governance or foreign legal entities. Provide evidence of secured funds as part of Attachment X.
   d. Detail any contingency plans should these anticipated private revenue sources not be secured.

4. Describe the fundraising plan for the first year, as well as any additional fundraising that will need to occur over the next five years.
   a. Detail who will be involved with fundraising, and any contingency plans should anticipated funds not be secured.

5. Describe any services to be contracted, such as business services payroll and auditing services, including costs and criteria for selecting such services.
   a. Which services, if any, will be contracted out with the local education agency?
   b. How will the board avoid any conflicts of interest in the awarding of services and contracts?

6. Please provide the costs associated with the facility plan presented earlier in the application. If the facility plan included any renovation or construction plans, please details the estimated costs, timeline, and financing associated with the proposed plan.

7. If anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than expected, what specific changes will be made to ensure the school meets its financial obligations (explain in narrative format)?
   a. What are the established benchmarks the board will use for financial performance?
   b. In addition, is there a contingency set aside in this budget?

8. If there are any anticipated cash shortages, please identify those and describe how the proposed school will meet its cash obligations. If there is a plan for the proposed school to take on any short-term or long-term debt, please provide an overview of amount, assumed borrowing costs, and anticipated term.

9. Describe the systems, policies and procedures, including internal controls, which will be in place to responsibly manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and financial reporting requirements including a year-end audit.
   a. Provide copies of the school's financial policies in Attachment Y. These policies must include an audit policy that complies with Mississippi Code § 37-28-57.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

~~Rule 1.10 Waivers~~

~~**Request for Waiver from** Mississippi Code § 37-28-47, relating to employment of a nonimmigrant foreign worker~~	
~~Rationale for Waiver Request, including efforts to recruit lawful permanent residents of the United States for the relevant position(s)~~	
~~How will a waiver of this statute help student achievement?~~	

~~Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.~~

Rule 1.11 Conversion Charter Schools

The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board also welcomes conversion school applicants who specifically wish to provide a high quality option for students where a majority of parents and/or teachers and/or school board members of the existing school wish to convert the existing noncharter public school, or where the existing school is undergoing State or District turnaround efforts. Conversion charter schools must have a clear plan for dramatically improving persistently underperforming school cultures, significantly raising student achievement and effectively meeting the needs of at risk populations, especially students with disabilities. These conversion school applicants are expected to establish strong partnerships with the school community.

Please address the following questions if a conversion school is being proposed.

A. **Petition.**
   1. As Attachment Z, provide the petition signed by a majority of teachers or a majority of parents of students in the existing noncharter public school, or by a majority vote of the local school board, or in the case of schools in districts under state conservatorship, by the State Board of Education.
B. **Community Need & Support.**
   1. Why is the noncharter public school being proposed for conversion into a charter school?
   2. What specifically will be done to seek parent and community support?
C. **Student Recruitment & Enrollment.**
   1. Describe the plan for successfully recruiting, transitioning, and retaining students who are in the existing school or who would be going to the existing school.
   2. As part of Attachment I, provide the school's policy for giving enrollment preferences to students who reside within the former attendance area of the converted public school. This policy should also provide for the enrollment of students outside of the former attendance zone but within the school district in the event that the school has excess capacity after enrolling resident students. The policy should state lottery procedures for students seeking excess capacity seats if these seats become oversubscribed.
D. **Addressing the Needs of a Turnaround**
   1. Describe how the proposed school will meet the needs of the student population currently attending the underperforming school.
      a. How will a strong school culture be built?
      b. How will the proposed educational model ensure the school significantly raises student achievement?
   2. Provide an accelerated phase-in plan that details how the proposed school would take responsibility for all grades and all existing programs of a school, including programs for students with severe disabilities, English Language Learner programs, and any early childhood education programs.
   3. Please describe the plan to work with the existing school during the transition.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Section IX (if applicable): Education Service Provider Relationship

(11 page limit)

Rule 1.12 Education Service Provider Relationship

If the proposed school intends to contract with an education service provider (ESP)—such as a charter management organization—provide the following additional information:

A. ESP Selection

1. Explain how and why the ESP was selected.

B. Background Information

1. As Attachment AA, provide background information, including proof of United States citizenship, on the principal individuals affiliated with the ESP. Background information should include a resume for each of the principal individuals.

2. As part of Attachment AA, provide evidence that the ESP is a nonprofit organization. This evidence should include an IRS tax-exempt determination letter.

C. ESP Track Record

1. List of all schools operated by the ESP that serve the same grade levels as and student populations demographically similar to the anticipated population of the proposed school. Include name, year opened, contact information, location, number of students, and contact information for the authorizer for each currently operating school.

2. Explain the ESP's success in serving student populations similar to the target population of the school. Describe the ESP's demonstrated academic track record as well as successful management of non-academic school functions (e.g., back-office services, school operations, extracurricular programs).

3. As Attachment AA, provide student performance data, including disaggregated student performance data (growth data where possible), for all schools operated by the ESP that serve the same grade levels as and student populations demographically similar to the anticipated population of the proposed school.

4. Provide evidence of the financial health of the ESP in Attachment T.

D. Legal Relationships

1. As a part of Attachment U, provide evidence that the board is independent from the ESP and self-governing, including separate legal representation of each and arms-length negotiating.

2. Disclose and discuss any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the ESP or any affiliated business entities and the school governing board.

3. If the charter school intends to enter into a lease, execute promissory notes or other negotiable instruments, or enter into a lease-purchase agreement or other financing

relationships with the ESP, the applicant must provide evidence that such agreements are separately documented and not a part of or incorporated in the ESP agreement as part of Attachment BB.

E. Contract

1. As Attachment BB, provide the term sheet for the ESP which must include the following:

   a. The proposed duration of the service contract;

   b. Roles and responsibilities of the governing board, school staff, and the ESP;

   c. The scope of services and resources to be provided by the ESP;

   d. Performance evaluation measures and timelines;

   e. The compensation structure, including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the ESP;

   f. Methods of contract oversight and enforcement;

   g. Investment disclosure; and

   h. Conditions for renewal and termination of the contract.

2. Provide a detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the ESP in contrast with the roles and responsibilities of the governing board and school staff.

3. Describe the scope of services and all resources to be provided by the ESP.

4. Describe the oversight and evaluation methods that the Board will use to oversee the ESP.

   a. What are the school-wide and student achievement results that the management organization is responsible for achieving?

   b. How often, and in what ways, will the board review and evaluate the ESP's progress toward achieving agreed-upon goals?

   c. Will there be an external evaluator to assess the ESP's performance?

   d. What are the conditions, standards, and procedures for board intervention, if the management organization's performance is deemed unsatisfactory?

5. Describe the compensation structure, including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the ESP.

   a. What is the schedule on which the ESP will receive compensation?

6. Describe the financial responsibilities of the ESP, including the ownership of items purchased with public funds.

   a. Which operating and capital expenditures will each party be responsible for?

   b. What types of spending decisions can the management organization make without obtaining board approval?

   c. What reports must the management organization submit to the board on financial performance, and on what schedule?

7. Explain the duration, renewal, and termination of the management agreement.

   a. How often will the management agreement be renewed?

b. Describe the conditions that both the ESP and the school must satisfy for the management agreement to be renewed.

c. Describe the procedures for determining whether the management agreement will be renewed.

d. On what grounds can the ESP or the school terminate the management agreement for cause (including provisions for notice to the other party)?

e. What are any conditions under which either party may terminate the management agreement without cause?

f. List any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Section X (if applicable): Applicants Currently Operating One or More Schools in Any State or Nation

Rule 1.13 Applicants Currently Operating One or More Schools in Any State or Nation

1. Discuss and provide evidence of past performance.

2. Discuss and provide evidence of current capacity for growth.

3. Provide evidence of statistically significant gains in student achievement or consistently produced proficiency levels as measured on state achievement tests. Ensure that this data is disaggregated by student subgroup, highlighting the performance of students who are of a similar demographic of those the applicant is seeking to serve in the proposed charter school. This will be Attachment CC.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Part 402 Chapter 2: Application Toolkit 2013

Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board

Application Toolkit 2013

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Table of Contents

Rule 2.1Introduction

Introduction

This application toolkit is designed to provide guidance and assistance to applicants for public charter schools in Mississippi. It also includes templates for certain documents, which will be required in any applications submitted in response to the Charter Schools Request for Proposals 2013.

Definitions

(a) "Applicant" means any person or group that develops and submits an application for a charter school to the authorizer.

(b) "Application" means a proposal from an applicant to the authorizer to enter into a charter contract whereby the proposed school obtains charter school status.

(c) "Authorizer" means the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board established under Section 37-28-7 to review applications, decide whether to approve or reject applications, enter into charter contracts with applicants, oversee charter schools, and decide whether to renew, not renew, or revoke charter contracts.

(d) "Charter contract" means a fixed-term, renewable contract between a charter school and the authorizer, which outlines the roles, powers, responsibilities and performance expectations for each party to the contract.

(e) "Charter school" means a public school that is established and operating under the terms of charter contract between the school's governing board and the authorizer. The term "charter school" includes a conversion charter school and start-up charter school.

(f) "Conversion charter school" means a charter school that existed as a noncharter public school before becoming a charter school.

(g) "Education service provider" means a charter management organization, school design provider or any other partner entity with which a charter school intends to contract for educational design, implementation or comprehensive management.

(h) "Governing board" means the independent board of a charter school which is party to the charter contract with the authorizer and whose members have been elected or selected pursuant to the school's application.

(i) "Noncharter public school" means a public school that is under the direct management, governance and control of a school board or the state.

(j) "Parent" means a parent, guardian or other person or entity having legal custody of a child.

(k) "School board" means a school board exercising management and control over a local school district and the schools of that district pursuant to the State Constitution and state statutes.

(l) "School district" means a governmental entity that establishes and supervises one or more public schools within its geographical limits pursuant to state statutes.

(m) "Start-up charter school" means a charter school that did not exist as a noncharter public school before becoming a charter school.

(n) "Student" means any child who is eligible for attendance in a public school in the state.

(o) "Underserved students" means students participating in the federal free lunch program who qualify for at-risk student funding under the Mississippi Adequate Education Program and students who are identified as having special educational needs.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15

Rule 2.2 Guidance

Guidance

The 80% Rule

The Rule and Definitions

One of the important aspects of Mississippi's charter school law is its sensitivity to concerns that charters will under-enroll students with the greatest need to be served. As a result, the legislature added the 80% rule to the law. Mississippi Code § 37-28-23(5) reads, "The underserved student composition of a charter school's enrollment collectively must reflect that of students of all ages attending the school district in which the charter school is located, to be defined for the purposes of this chapter as being at least eighty percent (80%) of that population."

The term "underserved" is defined in Mississippi Code § 37-28-5 as "students participating in the federal free lunch program who qualify for at-risk student funding under the Mississippi Adequate Education Program and students who are identified as having special educational needs."

What does this mean?

Essentially, a charter school's percentage of underserved students (students qualifying for free lunch and/or special education services) must be at least 80% of the percent of underserved students of every age within the traditional school district in which the charter resides.

For example, if 60% of students in a district are underserved, a charter school's enrollment of underserved students must equal 60% X 80%, or 48%.

Calculating a Proposed Charter School's 80% Target of Underserved Students

Step 1: Gather the appropriate data.
- Publicly available data does not differentiate between students who are only receiving free lunch or special education services versus students who receive both. You will need to know these exact percentages in order to correctly calculate the 80% target. The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board will provide the correct data to all applicants who have properly completed a Letter of Intent by the deadline.

Step 2: Find the district's total population of underserved students.
- Complete the chart below to correctly calculate the district's total underserved population.

% of students qualifying for FREE LUNCH ONLY	% of students qualifying for SPECIAL EDUCATION ONLY	% of students qualifying for BOTH FREE LUNCH AND SPECIAL EDUCATION	Add boxes 1-3 together to find the TOTAL % of underserved students

Step 3: Calculate the charter school's minimum percentage of underserved students.

- Total District % of Underserved Students:
- Multiply the number above by 80% (remember to move decimal places since you are finding a percent of a percent):

Step 4: In the application, project the demographics of your proposed school.
- Make sure that the projected demographics satisfy the 80% rule.

Does a charter school's free lunch percentage and special education percentage separately have to equal 80% of the district's population of both of these groups?
No. The legislation requires that the underserved population at the charter school collectively reflect that of the district's. Therefore, a charter could serve a population of students receiving special education services that is exactly equal to that of the district's while serving a smaller percentage of students who qualify for free lunch, as long as the total underserved population is at least 80% of the district's underserved population. However, if the percentage of students in either category is very different from that of the district, a charter school could be investigated to determine if it engaged in any unlawful practice to bring about that result.

What happens if a charter school does not enroll an appropriate underserved population?
Mississippi Code § 37-28-5 states, "If the underserved student composition of an applicant's or charter school's enrollment is less than eighty percent (80%) of the enrollment of students of all ages in the school district in which the charter school is located, despite the school's best efforts, the authorizer must consider the applicant's or charter school's recruitment efforts and the underserved student composition of the applicant pool in determining whether the applicant or charter school is operating in a nondiscriminatory manner. A finding by the authorizer that a charter school is operating in a discriminatory manner justifies the revocation of a charter."

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15

Understanding Funding for Charter Schools for Budgeting

Federal $$ (from state)

State $$ (from state)

Local $$ (from local district)

Charter school
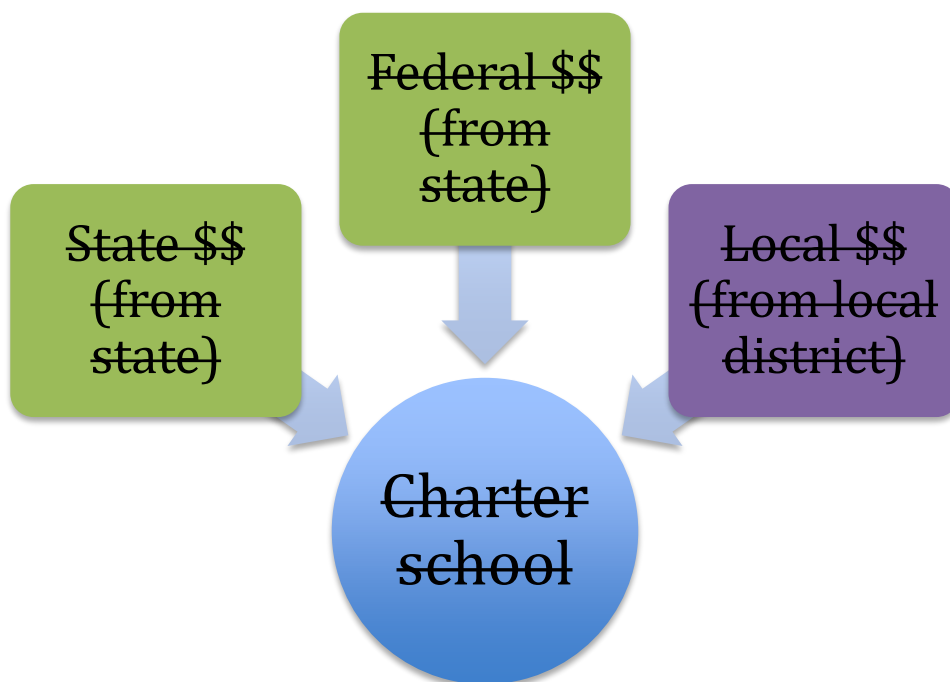
BALLPARKING A PER-PUPIL AMOUNT

The fastest way to ballpark a per-pupil amount for budgeting purposes is to look at the most recent per-pupil amount spent by the district in which your charter will reside. Look at pages 31-35 of the 2011-2012 Superintendent's Report to get an idea of this figure: http://ors.mde.k12.ms.us/pdf/a/2013%20Superintendent's%20Annual%20Report%20for%20SY%202011-2012%20version12.pdf. The information below will help you gain a more precise estimate as well as an understanding of where the dollars come from and how your school will receive them.

STATE DOLLARS

All state dollars that support education, with the exception of any state facilities funds, will flow directly to approved charter schools. There are two main categories of relevant state funds: Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP) funds and state categorical funding. In 2011-2012, state funds averaged approximately 50% of a school district's total revenue.

MAEP and how to use it for budgeting

MAEP is the state funding formula for K-12 education. The purpose of MAEP is to guarantee a minimum amount of funding for every public school child in the state. The share of MAEP dollars that a school district gets is based on a formula in law. Because charter schools are their own local educational agencies (LEAs), MAEP will be calculated for you separately from the

district in which you reside. Your school's share of MAEP will flow directly from the Mississippi Department of Education to your school in the same manner in which school funding is distributed to traditional public schools.

The formula is as follows:

Average Daily Attendance x Base Student Cost + At-Risk Component - Local Contribution + 8% Guarantee = MAEP Formula Allocation

- Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is the number of student who, on average, attend your school every day. For MAEP, this number excludes students who are in self-contained special education classes. ADA is different than a school's enrollment, which is the number of children signed up to attend your school. Since MAEP is lagged a year, your ADA for the previous school year will be used for your current year calculation. *However, in the first year, your projected enrollment will be used initially and then your second year payments will reflect a reconciliation up or down between the projected enrollment and your first-year ADA. For a conservative budgeting estimate for your first year, you may want to assume your first-year ADA will be 10% lower from your projected enrollment. For a conservative budgeting estimate for each year thereafter, estimate that 95% of your enrollment excluding estimated self-contained special education students will attend your school everyday.*
  - o Note: There is a special "high-growth component" to ADA for districts with rapidly expanding enrollments. This may apply to many charter schools. However, the current law requires that a district have rapidly expanding enrollments for the three preceding years in order to qualify. In the first three years, there is no provision for charters to qualify for the high-growth component.
- Base student cost is the number calculated by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) to reflect the minimum amount of money required to adequately educate a child in the state of Mississippi. MDE has a formula it uses to determine the base student cost each year. For the 2014-2015 school year, the base student cost is preliminarily calculated to be $5,054.97. However, the legislature rarely appropriates enough money to meet the full estimate of the base student cost. *For a conservative budgeting estimate, you should estimate that the appropriated base student cost will be at least 12% lower than the calculation, which is approximately how much lower the base student cost appropriation was from the calculated base student cost in FY2014. For future budget years, you should estimate that the base student cost will not increase by more than 1-2%.*
- The At-Risk Component is additional 5% of base student cost funding for each child a district serves who qualifies for free lunch. A school's free lunch count on October 31 of the preceding year is used. For a charter school's first year, the projected free lunch count would be used. *For a conservative budgeting estimate, you should estimate that you will serve at least 80% of the percent of students qualifying for free lunch in the district in which your charter resides.*

- The Local Contribution is the amount of local tax dollars a district must pay towards the guaranteed state minimum per-pupil expense. This money is not transferred to the state, only taken into account when calculating the state's share of the minimum per-pupil amount. The local contribution is somewhat tricky to calculate because it includes a few different types of local funding sources: ad valorem tax reduction grants, in lieu payments, and the value of 28 mills. It also looks at data from the second preceding year rather than the prior year like other components of MAEP. Furthermore, the local contribution is capped at 27% of program costs. This means that in school districts where the value of 28 mills is very high, the local contribution will be a maximum of 27% of the total base student cost and at-risk component. Most districts are not at the 27% cap. Every year, the Mississippi Department of Education calculates what the local contribution is that each district must make towards MAEP based on all of these rules. It then tells each district how much its local contribution will be. A charter school's local contribution will be equal, on a per-pupil basis, to that of the district in which the charter resides. *For a conservative budgeting estimate, you should use the most recent local contribution for your first year budget and then use the percent of the contribution in future budget years.* The Charter School Authorizer Board will provide you with the most recent local contribution per-pupil for the relevant district once you turn in a letter of intent.
- The 8% Guarantee is a provision added by the legislature to guarantee that all districts receive at least as much MAEP funding as they did in 2002 plus 8%. This provision impacts very, very few districts. The Charter School Authorizer Board will alert you as to whether the district in which your school will reside will receive 8% Guarantee funds.

State Categorical Funds

Charter schools are entitled to state categorical funds as are traditional school districts. There are five categorical funds: transportation, special education, gifted education, alternative education, and vocational education.

- Transportation – If a charter school chooses to take state transportation funds, it must abide by the reporting requirements for the program. For those rules, see http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/safe-and-orderly-schools/pupil-transportation.
- Special education – In order to receive federal special education funds, a charter school must accept state funds for special education and follow the rules and regulations for both. To learn more about special education, refer to the Special Education Office at MDE: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/special-education.
- Gifted education – If a charter school chooses to take gifted education funds, it must abide by the reporting requirements for the program. For more information, see http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/curriculum-and-instruction/advanced.
- Alternative education – If a charter school provides alternative education and accepts alternative education dollars, it must abide by the reporting requirements for the program. For more information, see http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/dropout-prevention-and-compulsory-school-attendance/alternative-education-ged.

- Vocational education—If a charter school chooses to offer vocational education courses and take vocational education dollars, it must abide by the reporting requirements for the program. For more information, see http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/career-and-technical-education.

Note on Lump Sum MAEP Allocations
In years in which the state legislature does not fully fund the MAEP formula (which is nearly every year), school districts are given their dollars in a "lump sum" to be used as they see fit, within the law. The one exception is that school districts must still spend an appropriate amount of state funds on special education, as this is required to receive federal dollars and to maintain compliance with federal law.

FEDERAL DOLLARS
Federal dollars flow directly from the state to the charter school based on the eligibility of children enrolled in the charter school for the various federal programs. These federal funds would include, for example, Title I and IDEA. The Mississippi Department of Education administers all federal funding sources based on the rules attached to each program. *Since charter schools are their own local educational agencies (LEAs), they will need to apply for federal funds in the same way that traditional school districts do.* Please refer to the Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Federal Programs for more information: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/federal-programs. In 2011-2012, an average of approximately 18% of a school district's total revenue came from federal sources. Please note that this number could be a lot higher for school districts with very high populations of economically disadvantaged students.

LOCAL DOLLARS
For each student enrolled in a charter from a local district, the legislature intended for money to follow the child from the local school district to the charter. This means that the local district will divert to the charter a proportionate share of the local funding. Charter schools will not receive any amount of the local taxes that were levied for bonded indebtedness, short-term notes, or vocational-technical programs. In 2011-2012, an average of approximately 31% of a school district's total revenue came from local sources.

Only the local school board will make a request to the appropriate municipal or county board for an amount to fund all public school students (traditional and charter) in that district. The local board can only ask for the amount of last year's aggregate receipts plus the allowable percentage increase already in state law; it will not be able to ask for an additional percentage increase due to the presence of a charter in the district. The district will transfer to the charter a proportionate share of the actual receipts each month.

Since the school district typically bases its request to the taxing authority on its previous budget, it does not necessarily calculate a local "per-pupil" amount each year. To estimate how much local funds a charter may receive, you can estimate a per-pupil amount based on the district's

enrollment and its local revenue (see pages 37-39 in the Superintendent's Report: http://ors.mde.k12.ms.us/pdf/a/2013%20Superintendent's%20Annual%20Report%20for%20SY%202011-2012%20version12.pdf). Remember that this figure will include not only the local contribution to MAEP but also the operational taxes levied above 28 mills. It may also include revenue resulting from taxes for short-term notes, bonded indebtedness, or vocational-technical programs to which a charter is not entitled. To determine whether a school district may be taxing its residents for these additional expenses, refer to pages 45-49 of the Superintendent's Report to see if additional mills are being levied: http://ors.mde.k12.ms.us/pdf/a/2013%20Superintendent's%20Annual%20Report%20for%20SY%202011-2012%20version12.pdf . *For a conservative budgeting estimate, you should determine whether your local school district raises revenue that charters are not entitled to before using the most current local revenue per-pupil estimate in your budget.*

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Performance Framework

Applicants must create a performance framework that represents the measures, metrics and indicators of success for the proposed school. The format in which the applicant presents this data is flexible. However, the performance framework must include goals for two areas. The performance framework must contain academic program and governance goals. Include the framework as Attachment S.

Academic goals:

a. student academic proficiency (for all major content areas)

b. student academic growth (for all major content areas)

c. achievement gaps in (major content areas)

> **a.** proficiency and

> **b.** growth between major student subgroups

d. attendance

e. recurrent enrollment from year to year

f. in-school suspension rates (if applicable)

g. out-of-school suspension rates (if applicable)

h. expulsion rates

i. post-secondary readiness (for high schools) that will include the percentage of graduates:

> **a.** submitting applications to post-secondary institutions

> **b.** high school completion

> **c.** postsecondary admission

> **d.** postsecondary enrollment and/ or

> **e.** postsecondary employment

Governance Goals

f. financial performance

g. sustainability

h. board performance

i. stewardship (including compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and terms of the charter contract)

All data concerning student populations must be disaggregated by major student subgroups (gender, race, poverty status, special education status, ELL status, and gifted).

Source: Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-28-29

Resources

School Culture

- **Strategic School Design (SSD):** New school applications may find it helpful to incorporate elements of SSD into their applications. For more information on SSD, consult the book The Strategic School: Making the Most of People, Time and Money by Karen Hawley Miles and Stephen Frank.
- **Student Attendance:** Refer to Mississippi's compulsory school attendance law, which can be accessed here: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/dropout-prevention-and-compulsory-school-attendance/compulsory-attendance.

Education Program

- **Mississippi Academic Standards:** All schools must employ standards that meet or exceed Mississippi's Academic Standards. Charter schools must use the Common Core State Standards. Review the standards at: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/curriculum-and-instruction
- **Graduation Requirements:** High schools approved by the MS Charter Schools Authorizer Board will be expected to meet or exceed the same graduation requirements as all other MS traditional public high schools, set forth at http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/docs/2012-board-agenda/tab_16_appendix_a_and_standard_20_rev.pdf?sfvrsn=2h
- **Mississippi Standardized Tests:** All schools in Mississippi must administer (at a minimum) the correct, state-mandated assessments to monitor student progress. Review information about these standardized assessments at: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/student-assessment
- **Mississippi Third Grade Reading Gate**: Review information at http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/docs/sped-powerpoints-page/3rd-Grade-Reading-Gate.pdf?sfvrsn=2
- **Gifted education**: Review the regulations for a Gifted Education Program using state add-on funds here: https://districtaccess.mde.k12.ms.us/curriculumandInstruction/Advanced Learning and Gifted Programs/2013 Regulations for the Gifted Education Programs in Mississippi - Board Approved 2013.05.17.pdf
- **Mississippi High School Activities Association**: Information about the MHSAA for charter schools that want to join can be found here: http://www.misshsaa.com/

Governance

- **Training modules for governing board members** of Mississippi charter schools can be found at: http://www.msbaonline.org/AboutMSBA/tabid/387/Default.aspx
- **MDE Resources on Funding**:
  - General explanation of Mississippi Adequate Education Program funding: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/docs/school-financial-services-library/maep_explanation_2010C2281CA29877.pdf?sfvrsn=2
  - Worksheet to calculate charter at-risk funding: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/school-financial-services/school financial services fets formulas
  - Financial Policies and Procedures: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/school-financial-services
- **For information on Title I, II, and III grants**, refer to: http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/federal-

programs

- **NACSA's Issue Brief** *Good to Govern* **on charter governing boards**: http://nacsa.mycrowdwisdom.com/diweb/catalog/item/id/77222/q/q=boards&c=82
- **Facilities**: Refer to Mississippi Code § 37-28-61, regarding a charter school's "right of first refusal" to facilities.

Education Service Providers

- *Charting a Clear Course: A Resource Guide for Building Successful Relationships between Charter Schools and School Management Organizations*, available at: http://www.publiccharters.org/publication/?id=393 .

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15

Rule 2.6 Letter of Intent

Letter of Intent
This letter of intent (LOI) serves to provide a formal notice to the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board regarding an applicant's intention to submit a proposal for opening a charter school.
The information presented in the Letter of Intent is non-binding.

Name of Proposed School	
Grade Configuration	
Model or Focus	
Primary Contact Person	
Phone	
Email	
District	
Proposed Leader (if known)	
Replication?	
Contract with ESP?	

Enrollment Projections: *Provide additional rows and columns if necessary. Replace "Year 1" with the academic year the applicant plans to begin operating and the four subsequent academic years.*

Grade	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
X					
X					
X					
Total # of students					

Mission of School:

Provide a brief overview of the education program of the school:

Complete the following table to list Board members for the school at this time. Add rows as is necessary.

Name	Current Professional Title and Organization	Board Role	Focus/Expertise

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15

Rule 2.7 Sample Intent to Enroll Form

Sample Intent to Enroll Form

This confidential Intent to Enroll Form is used to demonstrate interest in having your child(ren) enroll at _____. Signing this Intent to Enroll does not obligate the student to attend _____ nor does it guarantee admission. However, parents/legal guardians who sign this Intent to Enroll are indicating a sincere desire to enroll their child(ren) in this school in the event that the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board approves the applicant's proposal to open.

Parents and guardians should understand that the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board must vote to approve any new charter school, whether a conversion or a start-up, and such vote has not yet occurred for the school referenced herein.

School Information		
School Name:		
Grades Served:		
Proposed District Location:		
Anticipated Opening Date:		
School Leader/Contact:		
Parent/Legal Guardian Information		
Parent/Legal Guardian's Name(s):		
Primary Phone:		
Email:		
Student's Home Address		
Street Address:		
City:	State: MS	Zip Code:
Student Information		
Please list each child whom you are interested in enrolling in the school.		
Student's Name:	Age:	Grade:
Student's Name:	Age:	Grade:
Student's Name:	Age:	Grade:

Parent/Legal Guardian Name (Print)

_____

Parent/Legal Guardian (Signature)

_____

~~Date_____/_____/_____~~

~~Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15~~

Charter School Board Member Questionnaire
(To be completed individually by each proposed board member for the Charter School)

The purposes of this survey are: 1) to supply pertinent information to the application review team; 2) to encourage board members to reflect individually as well as collectively on their common mission, purposes, and obligations at the earliest stage of school development; and 3) to identify any potential conflict of interest you may have as a board member.

Conflict of Interest
The information requested below is being requested to identify any potential conflicts of interest that you may have as a board member. This is in alignment with best practices in non-profit and charter school governance and is also DPS policy for its board members. If the charter school is approved, any conflict of interest that is identified must be addressed by the charter school in alignment with its board conflict of interest policy.

Background/Criminal History Checks
Background checks are an important volunteer management tool for charter schools. The safety of students, employees, and board members is of upmost importance. Moreover, the judicious oversight of the school's finances and operations is among the governing board's main responsibilities. Accordingly, applicant is to submit criminal background checks on all Charter School Board Members.

Contact Information

Name of charter school	
Your name	
Home address	
City/State/Zip	
Telephone	
Email	
Employer Address	
Employer City/State/Zip	

Are you a Mississippi resident? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

Are you a United States citizen? (Please provide proof as an attachment to this document.)

☐ Yes. ☐ No.

Will any of your children attend this public charter school? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

If yes, how many?

Will you be able to attend regularly scheduled board meetings? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

Check your highest education level:

☐ High School/GED ☐ Associate's Degree ☐ Trade/Business School
☐ BA or BS Degree ☐ Master's Degree ☐ MD, DO, JD, Ph.D., etc.

Please check each area of expertise you would contribute to the board:

Community Service	Education	Finance	Fundraising	Law
Management	Marketing	Parental Involvement	Personnel	Public Relations

Board members' resumes should be attached to this questionnaire.

Have you ever managed a school? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

If yes, provide as an attachment to this document annual student achievement data, disaggregated by subgroup, for every school under your current or prior management.

Conflict of Interest

1. Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district or another Charter School. ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

    If yes please list the board(s) and date(s) of service.

2. Have you been cited for a breach of ethics for unprofessional conduct, or been named in a complaint to a court, administrative agency, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

    If yes, please explain.

3. Do you or an immediate family member have a close personal relationship with the School or any individual(s) associated with the School that would make it difficult for you to execute your duties as a board member in an independent manner?
    ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

If yes, please describe.

4. Do you or any immediate family members have any contractual agreements with the School? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

   If yes, please describe.

5. Have or will you or any member of your immediate family receive funds, gifts, loans, services or any other consideration for any purpose from the School or any other company contracting or providing service to the School? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

   If yes, please describe.

6. Will you or any member of your immediate family be leasing or selling any real estate property to the School? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

   If yes, please explain the arrangement in detail.

7. Have or will you or any immediate family members be guaranteeing or granting any loans or services—at no charge or for charge—to the School or any other company contracting or providing service to the School? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

   If yes, please describe.

8. Are or will you or any immediate family members be employed at the School (either directly or as an employee of the educational service provider or any other company contracting or providing service to the School? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

   If yes, please describe.

9. Are or will you or any immediate family member be serving as an officer, director, trustee, sole proprietor, employee, sales representative, agent, consultant, independent contractor, or advisory board member to the educational service provider or any other company, organization or agency funding projects, goods or service to the School? ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

If yes, please describe.

10. Do you or an immediate family member own stock or have direct or indirect financial interest in any contract where the financial interest amounts to $250 or 5% or more of the contract costs to the School, or the financial interest amounts to $5000.00 or more in any corporation, partnership, association or joint venture involving the School, educational service provider, or any other company or entity contracting with the School?
    ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

If yes, please describe.

11. Do you or an immediate family member know any individual(s) or entity(ies) that does or plans in the next year to engage in business or any exchange of services with the School?
    ☐ Yes. ☐ No.

If yes, please describe.

12. Other than your current board position, do you currently serve as an elected or appointed public official?   ☐ Yes.   ☐ No.

If yes, please describe.

13. Do you currently serve with any other board, group or corporation that has an interest in the actions you would take as a member of the board?   ☐ Yes.   ☐ No.

If yes, please explain.

14. Do you foresee any potential ethical or legal conflicts of interest if you serve on the School Board?   ☐ Yes.   ☐ No.

If yes, please explain.

15. To the best of your knowledge, are there situations not described in this questionnaire which may give the appearance of a conflict of interest between you or a member of your immediate family, or would make it difficult for you to execute the duties of your office in an independent manner?
    ☐ Yes.   ☐ No.

If yes, please describe.

School Mission and Program:

1. What is your understanding of the school's mission and guiding beliefs?

2. What is your understanding of the school's proposed educational program?

3. What do you believe to be the characteristics of a successful school?

Governance:

1. Why do you wish to serve on the board?

2. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

3. Describe any previous experience you have that is relevant to serving on the charter school's board (e.g., other board service). If you have not had previous experience of this nature, explain why you have the capability to be an effective board member.

4. Provide a forecast of where you see the school after its first year of operation and then again in four years. Please be sure to include high level academic and financial components.

5. What specific steps do you think the charter school board will need to take to ensure that the school is successful?

6. How would you handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the school's board was acting unethically or not in the best interests of the school?

<div align="center">

Certification

</div>

I recognize that all information submitted with this conflict of interest disclosure (with the exception of the background check) becomes a matter of public record, subject by law to disclosure upon request to members of the general public. I will hold the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board, its trustees, officers, employees or authorized agents harmless from liability for the disclosure of any information it reasonably believes is true based upon my representations.

I hereby certify that the information contained in this document is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and, if the proposed charter school is approved, agree to notify the chair of the board at the charter school at which I will serve of any change that may create a conflict of interest. Further, if the proposed charter school is approved, I recognize that falsification or

failure to submit a complete annual conflict of disclosure becomes justification for removal.

_____

Board Member's Signature **Date**

_____

Board Member's Typed Name **Date**

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15

Rule 2.9 School Facility Questionnaire

School Facility Questionnaire

School Name:					
Primary Contact for Facility Planning:					
Telephone:			Email:		

Provide grade levels and student enrollment estimates for the first five years. Replace "Year 1" with the academic year the applicant plans to open, and then "Years 2-5" with the subsequent years.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Grades					
Enrollment					

School District in which charter school will be located:

Description of the facility/ies under consideration including available square footage and quotes (for years 1-5) from property owners: (Note: Charter school has right of first refusal for vacant school facility.)

Facility #1:

Facility #2

Are you interested in investigating the possibility of occupying a district-owned facility should a district-owned facility be available?

Core Classroom Requirements Years 1-3:				
Baseline assumption for number of students per classroom:				
Year 1	**Year 2**		**Year 3**	
Administrative/Support Spaces				
Main Office	☐ Yes		☐ No	
If yes, list number of private offices needed (e.g., principal, AP, etc.):				
Satellite Office	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Work Room/Copy Room	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Supplies Storage	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Teacher Work Room(s)	☐ Yes		☐ No	
If yes, list number of work/planning rooms needed.				
Number of art rooms (with or without kiln)	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Number of computer labs	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Library Media Center (LMC)	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Performance/Dance Room	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Auditorium	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Other (list room type and number)				
Physical Education/Athletic Requirements				
Locker Rooms	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Weight Room	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Field(s) – soccer, football, multipurpose	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Baseball Field	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Softball Field	☐ Yes		☐ No	
Other (please list):				
Other Needs				
Large space for class/school assemblies (e.g., morning meeting, cafeteria)				
Spaces not addressed and/or special considerations:				
School Lunch Requirements				
Food Preparation/Distribution Center				
Eating Area				

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15

Attachment Checklist

A. Evidence of support from community partners
B. Evidence of support from prospective families/stakeholders/ community members
C. School Discipline Policy
D. School Leader job description
E. Identified school leader resume and evidence of capacity to lead, proof of US Citizenship
F. Leadership team job descriptions, resumes, proof of US Citizenship and evidence of capacity to lead
G. Organizational chart for school personnel
H. Personnel roster
I. Enrollment policy
J. Lottery policy
K. Transportation plan
L. School facilities questionnaire
M. Facilities floor plan
N. Start up plan
O. School calendar
P. Daily schedule samples
Q. Policy for students with disabilities
R. School policy for fees and hardship waivers
S. Performance framework
T. Professional development scope and sequence
U. Organizational chart with lines of authority for governing board
V. Completed board member questionnaires
W. Articles of incorporation
X. Fundraising plan and evidence
Y. Financial policies
Z. Petition for conversion
AA.   Education service provider background information
BB.   Education service provider contract information
CC.   Evidence for Applicants with schools currently open

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15

Rule 2.11 Assurances

Assurances

1. The applicant shall be an equal opportunity employer and shall perform to all other applicable requirements; accordingly, the applicant shall neither discriminate nor permit discrimination in its operation or employment practices against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or sex in any manner prohibited by law. Further, the applicant agrees to comply with the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.
2. The applicant shall not limit admission based on ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, income level, disabling condition, proficiency in the English language, or academic or athletic ability, except as otherwise provided by Mississippi Code § 37-28-23.
3. The underserved student composition of the proposed charter school's enrollment collectively will reflect that of students of all ages attending the school district in which the charter school is located, to be defined as being at least eighty percent (80%) of that population.
4. The applicant must enroll all students who wish to attend the school unless the number of students exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level or building.
5. The applicant will not engage in any sectarian practices in its educational program, admissions, or employment policies or operations.
6. The applicant may not discriminate against any student on the basis of national origin, minority status, or limited proficiency in English. Consistent with federal civil rights laws, the applicant must provide limited English proficient students with appropriate services designed to teach English and the general curriculum.
7. The applicant will not charge tuition.
8. The applicant will provide a transportation plan for students attending the proposed charter school.
9. The applicant will abide by all civil rights and health and safety requirements applicable to noncharter public schools, except as otherwise provided by Mississippi Code § 37-28-1 et seq.
10. The proposed charter school will be subject to, at a minimum, the student assessment and accountability requirements applicable to noncharter public schools in the state.
11. The applicant agrees to abide by the following state statutes:
    a. Mississippi Code § 25-41-1 et seq;
    b. Mississippi Code § 25-61-1 et seq;
    c. Mississippi Code § 37-3-51;
    d. Mississippi Code § 37-3-53;
    e. Mississippi Code § 37-11-18;
    f. Mississippi Code § 37-11-18.1;
    g. Mississippi Code § 37-11-19;
    h. Mississippi Code § 37-11-20;
    i. Mississippi Code § 37-11-21;
    j. Mississippi Code § 37-11-23;
    k. Mississippi Code § 37-11-29 and 37-11-31;
    l. Mississippi Code § 37-11-67;
    m. Mississippi Code § 37-13-3;
    n. Mississippi Code § 37-13-5 and 37-13-6;
    o. Mississippi Code § 37-13-63(1);
    p. Mississippi Code § 37-13-91;

q. ~~Mississippi Code § 37-13-171(2) and (4);~~
r. ~~Mississippi Code § 37-13-173;~~
s. ~~Mississippi Code § 37-13-193;~~
t. ~~Mississippi Code § 37-15-1 and 37-15-3;~~
u. ~~Mississippi Code § 37-15-6;~~
v. ~~Mississippi Code § 37-15-9;~~
w. ~~Mississippi Code § 37-15-11;~~
x. ~~Mississippi Code § 37-16-1, 37-16-3, 37-16-4, and 37-16-9; and~~
y. ~~Mississippi Code § 37-18-1.~~

12. ~~The applicant will comply with all applicable federal laws, rules, and regulations regarding qualification of teachers and other instructional staff.~~

13. ~~The applicant will abide by criminal history record checks and fingerprinting requirements applicable to employees of other public schools for teachers and other school personnel, members of the governing board, and education service provider employees. The applicant further agrees that the criminal record information and child abuse registry checks will be on file at the proposed charter school for any new hires applying for employment.~~

14. ~~The applicant agrees to terminate any teacher or administrator for committing one or more of the following acts:~~
    a. ~~Engaging in unethical conduct relating to an educator-student relationship as identified by the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board;~~
    b. ~~Fondling a student as described in Mississippi Code § 97-5-23 or engaging in any type of sexual involvement with a student as described in Mississippi Code § 97-3-95; or~~
    c. ~~Failure to report sexual involvement of a charter school employee with a student as required by Mississippi Code § 97-5-24.~~

15. ~~The applicant agrees that it shall certify its student enrollment to the Mississippi Department of Education for the purpose of state funding in the same manner as school districts.~~

16. ~~The applicant agrees to adhere to generally accepted accounting principles.~~

17. ~~The applicant agrees to disclose publicly all sources of private funding and all funds received from foreign sources, including gifts from foreign governments, foreign legal entities and domestic entities affiliated with either foreign governments or foreign legal entities. The term "foreign" means a country or jurisdiction outside of any state or territory of the United States.~~

18. ~~The applicant assures that it possesses legal authority to apply for and to receive a charter.~~

~~.~~

I, the undersigned, am an authorized representative of the charter school applicant and do hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief. In addition, I do hereby certify to the assurances contained above.

_____

Authorized Official's Signature   Date

_____

Authorized Official's Typed Name   Date

_____

Authorized Official's Signature   Date

_____

Authorized Official's Typed Name   Date

The authorized official signatures lines may be duplicated as needed.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-28-15 et seq.

Mississippi Charter School Application Evaluation

Ratings and Sample Scoring Criteria

Rule 3.1 Ratings and Criteria

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:

Rating	Characteristics
Meets or Exceeds the Standard (3)	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.
Partially Meets Standard (2)	The response meets the criteria in some aspects, but lacks sufficient detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Does Not Meet Standard (1)	The response is significantly incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; is unsuited to the mission and vision of the district 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. On each bulleted criterion, indicate a numerical score in the right-hand column indicating your impression of the applicant's response based on the rating system that has been provided. Provide brief comments to support your ratings in the far right column and enter page numbers from the full PDF document to support your comments. In the "Additional Comments" box

at the end of each section, please list one or more suggested interview questions. Finally, please tally a composite score for each section of the proposal.

Sections for Conversion Charter Schools and Education Service Providers are specific to only those applicants. Although the same rating system will be used, the points from these sections will not be aggregated with points from other sections.

If the application meets or exceeds the standard in four of five criteria, the team will proceed to the capacity interview. Those applications deemed substantially incomplete or failing to meet the standard in four of five criteria will be cut. 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." Mississippi Code Section 37-28-19"2" Thus, an initial or amended charter application, to be approved, must be ready to be incorporated into a charter agreement.

Qualifying Checklist

To be completed prior to applications being submitted for full proposal review

-

_____ Applicant met application due date and time

_____ Applicant is NOT a private school seeking conversion into a charter school

_____ Applicant provided proof of United States citizenship for all governing board members and school leadership team members

_____ Applicant is a nonprofit organization

_____ Applicant is contracting with an Education Service Provider that is a nonprofit organization

-

OVERALL SCORE & 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: ————————

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Section I CULTURE

(12-page limit)

Evaluation Detail

A. Mission, Vision and Educational Philosophy
Check one (required)

—————— Meets the Standard (3)

—————— Partially Meets the Standard (2)

—————— Does Not Meet the Standard (1)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	RATING	COMMENTS
A response that meets the standard will:		
Include an executive summary		
State the school's mission and briefly describe the 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.		
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 plan to ensure ongoing stakeholder involvement in the school's operations and governance structure.		
Present a coherent plan of student recruitment and enrollment, student and community engagement. This plan must include the plans and timelines for student recruitment and enrollment, including lottery policies and procedures that ensure that		

every student has an equal opportunity to be considered in the lottery and that the lottery is equitable, randomized, transparent and impartial so that students are accepted in a charter school without regard to disability, income level, race, religion or national origin. Must also satisfy 80% rule.		
Present the plan for establishing a positive culture that reflects the school's discipline philosophy. This plan must include the school's student discipline policies, including those for special education students.		

Total points for this section:

Strengths

Concerns and Suggested Interview Questions

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Section II LEADERSHIP

(10-page limit)

Evaluation Detail

    A. Leadership
        Check one (required)

        _____ Meets the Standard (3)

        _____ Partially Meets the Standard (2)

        _____ Does Not Meet the Standard (1)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	RATING	COMMENTS
A response that meets the standard will:		
Describe the essential responsibilities of the school's leader and leadership team.		
Provide a detailed description of the recruiting, hiring and selection process for the school leader.		
If the leader has been already selected, the response addresses the specific evidence that demonstrates the leader's capacity to design, launch, and manage a high performing school.		
Include background information, which must include student achievement data, disaggregated by subgroup, for every school under the current or prior management of each board member and leadership team member.		
Describe the school's plan for recruiting and developing school leadership and staff, which may not include utilization on nonimmigrant foreign worker visa programs.		
Describe how the Board will monitor the leader's performance and plans for assistance if needed.		
Describe the leadership team structure of the school.		

Describe how the school will support the school leader through coaching or other prescribed professional development.		

Total points for this section:_____

Required Exhibits:

Resumes of Selected Leadership Members and/or Job Descriptions

Organizational Chart

Leadership Proposed salary ranges (w/benefits and performance bonuses)

Strengths

Concerns and Suggested Interview Questions

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Section III: SCHOOL STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

(10-page limit)

Evaluation Detail

A. School Structure and Operations
Check one (required)

_____ Meets the Standard (3)

_____ Partially Meets the Standard (2)

_____ Does Not Meet the Standard (1)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	RATING	COMMENTS
A response that meets the standard will:		
Provide an outline of staff positions and salary ranges/benefits		
Describe the plan to recruit students in the pre-opening year and the metrics that will be monitored in order to demonstrate progress in this area.		
Outline the enrollment process according to requirements stated in the RFP		
Outline the lottery procedures according to requirements stated in the RFP		
Describe the transportation plan for the school according to requirements stated in the RFP		
Describe the food service plan for the school according to requirements stated in the RFP		
Provide required proofs of required insurance coverage.		
Describe the process for securing a facility that will meet the basic requirements of the school.		
Provide a detailed start-up plan with tasks identified according to person responsible.		

Total points for this section:_____

Required Exhibits:

Staff Roster that details positions

Proposed salary ranges (w/benefits and performance bonuses)

Strengths

Concerns and Suggested Interview Questions

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Section IV EDUCATION PROGRAM

(30-page limit)

Evaluation Detail

    A. Education Program
        Check one (required)

            _____ Meets the Standard (3)

            ___   Partially Meets the Standard (2)

            ___   Does Not Meet the Standard (1)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	RATING	COMMENTS
A response that meets the standard will:		
State if the school intends to use a curriculum that has already been developed or if the school intends to develop core curriculum.		
Describe the proposed curriculum and the evidence basis for the selection of this curriculum. 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.		
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.		

For each core subject area, unique focus area, and performance level (grade level, age grouping, etc.) for the first five years of operation, present the resources and instructional materials to be used to aid in the transference of information (trade books, multimedia aids, science kits, etc.) and that are aligned with the mission and philosophy of the school and the proposed learning standards.		
Describe the pedagogy that will be employed to effectively deliver the school's curriculum.		
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. The school must be kept in session no less than the minimum number of school days established for all public schools in Section 37-13-63.		
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 and report data to the school community.		
Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to comply with assessment requirements applicable to Mississippi schools consistent with state and federal law.		
List high school graduation requirements.		
Describe how the school will offer unique supplementary programs and how community resources will be leveraged to accomplish this objective.		
Describe the school's approach to educating students with varying needs- students with disabilities, ELL students, gifted and talented students and those who are academically behind grade level expectations.		
Describe the school's academic intervention and acceleration systems with special emphasis to RTI and high school requirements listed in the RFP.		
Describe the school's plan to identify and serve gifted and talented students.		

Describe the school's plan for identifying and successfully serving students with disabilities (including all of the school's proposed policies pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, and the school's procedures for securing and providing evaluations and related services pursuant to federal law).		
A description of co-curricular or extracurricular programs and how those programs will be funded and delivered.		
Outline the measurable annual goals on each item in the Performance Framework		

Total points for this section:_____

Required Exhibits:

Sample daily schedule for each grade at which the school intends to operate

Annual calendar for the first year of operation

Annual goals for the Performance Framework

Strengths

Concerns and Suggested Interview Questions

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Section V INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

(10-page limit)

Evaluation Detail

    A. Instructional Staff
        Check one (required)

        _____   Meets the Standard (3)

        _____   Partially Meets the Standard (2)

        _____   Does Not Meet the Standard (1)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	RATING	COMMENTS
A response that meets the standard will:		
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.		
Describe the instructional skills, experience, qualifications 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?		
Describe the teacher coaching process and the tools that will be used to monitor teacher performance.		
Describe the standards and tools that will be utilized to evaluate teachers.		
Describe how the school will approach professional development as an important element in the school's design.		
Identify the research, experience or theoretical base and foundational materials that will guide		

curriculum development and implementation.		

Total points for this section:_____

Strengths

Concerns and Suggested Interview Questions

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Section VI GOVERNANCE

(15-page limit)

Evaluation Detail

A. Governance
Check one (required)

_____ Meets the Standard (3)

___ Partially Meets the Standard (2)

___ Does Not Meet the Standard (1)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	RATING	COMMENTS
A response that meets the standard will:		
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 non-profit status**.		
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.		
Explain the general philosophy of governance of the proposed school. Include the key expectations of board members, the board's roles and responsibilities and how the board will interact with the principal/head of school.		
Explain how the board will approach its oversight role and implement a grievance process.		
Describe the proposed school's legal status as described in the RFP.		
Present a detailed budget for the start up year and subsequent five years.		
Describe the fundraising plan for the first year, contingency plans if funds are not secured and what services will be contracted if any.		
Describes the systems and procedures for managing the school's finances and identify the staff positions that will		

be responsibilities for financial oversight and management.		

Total points for this section:_____

Required Exhibits:
Prospective Board Member Resumes
Governing Bylaws
Budgetary Documents
Fundraising Plan

Strengths

Concerns and Suggested Interview Questions

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Optional Section

Conversion Charter Schools

Evaluation Detail

Check one (required)

_____ Meets the Standard (3)

__ _____ Partially Meets the Standard (2)

__ _____ Does Not Meet the Standard (1)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	RATING	COMMENTS
A response that meets the standard will:		
The request for proposals additionally shall require the applicant to demonstrate support for the proposed charter school conversion by a petition signed by a majority of teachers and a majority of parents of students in the existing non charter public school, or by a majority vote of the local school board, or in the case of schools in districts under state conservatorship, by the State Board of Education. This documentation must be provided in the application.		
Describe how the proposed school will meet the needs of the student population currently attending the underperforming school. How will a strong school culture be built? How will the proposed educational model ensure the school significantly raises student achievement?		
Explains a compelling case for converting a noncharter public school into a public charter school.		
Provide an accelerated phase in plan that details how the proposed school would take responsibility for all grades and all existing programs of a school, including center programs for students with severe disabilities, English Language Learner programs, and any early childhood education programs.		

Describe the plan for successfully recruiting, transitioning, and retaining students who are in the school being replaced or who would be going to the school that is being replaced. What specifically will be done to seek parent and community support?		
Please describe the plan to work with the existing school during the transition.		

Total points for this section:_____

Strengths

Concerns and Suggested Interview Questions

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.

Optional Section

Education Service Providers (ESP)

Evaluation Detail

Check one (required)

_____ Meets the Standard (3)

_____ Partially Meets the Standard (2)

_____ Does Not Meet the Standard (1)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	RATING	COMMENTS
A response that meets the standard will:		
Explain how and why the ESP was selected		
List of all schools operated by the ESP that serve the same grade levels as and student populations demographically similar to the anticipated population of the proposed school. Include name, year opened, contact information, location, number of students, and contact information for the authorizer for each currently operating school.		
Explain the ESP's success in serving student populations similar to the target population of the school. Describe the ESP's demonstrated academic track record as well as successful management of non-academic school functions (e.g., back- office services, school operations, extracurricular programs).		
Provide student performance data, including disaggregated student performance data (growth data where possible) for all schools operated by the ESP that serve the same grade levels as and student populations demographically similar to the anticipated population of the proposed school. *The applicant is required to submit clear evidence that it has produced statistically significant gains in student achievement or consistently produced proficiency levels as measured on state achievement tests-see RFP for specific required*		

data.		
Provide evidence of the financial condition of the ESP.		
Provide evidence that the board is independent from the ESP and self governing, including separate legal representation of each and arms-length negotiating.		
Discuss any potential conflicts of interest between the ESP and the school.		
If the charter school intends to enter into a lease, execute promissory notes or other negotiable instruments, or enter into a lease-purchase agreement of other financing relationships with the ESP, the applicant must provide evidence that such agreements are separately documented and not be a part of or incorporated in the ESP agreement		
Provide a detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the ESP.		
Describe the scope of services and costs of all resources to be provided by the ESP.		
Describe the oversight and evaluation methods that the Board will use to oversee the ESP. What are the school-wide and student achievement results which the management organization is responsible for achieving? How often, and in what ways, will the board review and evaluate the ESP's progress toward achieving agreed upon goals? Will there be an external evaluator to assess the ESP's performance? What are the conditions, standards, and procedures for board intervention, if the management organization's performance is deemed unsatisfactory?		
Describe the compensation structure, including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the ESP. What is the schedule on which the ESP will receive compensation?		
Describe the financial responsibilities of the ESP, including the ownership of items purchased with public funds. Which operating and capital expenditures will each party be responsible for? What types of spending decisions can the management organization make without obtaining board approval? What reports must the management organization submit to the board on financial performance, and on what schedule?		

Explain the duration, renewal and termination of the management agreement. How often will the management agreement be renewed? Describe the conditions that both the ESP and the school must satisfy for the management agreement to be renewed. Describe the procedures for determining whether the management agreement will be renewed. On what grounds can the ESP or the school terminate the management agreement for cause (including provisions for notice to the other party)? What are any conditions under which either party may terminate the management agreement without cause? List any indemnification provisions in the event of default or breach by either party.		

Total points for this section:_____

Strengths

Concerns and Suggested Interview Questions

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-28-15.