

**FY21 New Charter School Application**

**Updated August 1, 2020**

# Introduction

The Minnesota Guild (Guild) seeks applications on an annual basis from developing teams who are interested in starting a new high-quality charter school in Minnesota. This document specifies the instructions for submitting a new charter school application to the Guild in fiscal year 2021 (FY21). **This review cycle is aligned with the May 1, 2021 statutory deadline, by which authorizers must submit a new charter school affidavit to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), for new schools wishing to serve students beginning in the fall of 2022.**

**Background**

American educator and innovator Albert Shanker introduced the seminal notion of charter schools to the American public in 1988. He envisioned the charter school model as a means to enable small groups of teachers and parents to use research-based proposals to educate children in innovative ways, tapping into teacher expertise to try new things and leverage team approaches to learning, organization, and management. This model was to be built on a shared commitment to competence and accountability.

Over the course of his career, Shanker became convinced that the best way for teachers to improve the profession was to focus on quality. If teachers could influence the quality of public school teaching, they could fully realize the profession’s goals of helping all children achieve their potential and become successful citizens.

A spirit of innovation and commitment to quality have long been hallmarks of education in Minnesota, which enacted the Nation’s first charter school law in 1991 and launched the first U.S. charter school. Numerous quality initiatives have been developed to improve teacher preparation, peer and mentor support, ongoing professional development, instruction standards, and approaches to compensation and evaluation.

The Minnesota Guild of Public Charter Schools (the Guild) was launched as a charter school authorizer to help realize Shanker’s original vision for teacher-led charter schools. [Minnesota Statues, section 124E](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E) provides approved authorizers the authority to approve or deny charter school applications, monitor charter school operations, and hold charter schools accountable for their mission and statutory requirements.

The Guild will support the establishment and operation of charter schools that embody the very best practices in teaching, learning and student achievement, built on a sustainable base of operating efficiency and community engagement. In doing so, the Guild will help students, teachers and families in Guild-authorized schools work more effectively to attain high standards and achievement. Success in this effort will lead to more models of demonstrated impact to benefit students across Minnesota and the Nation, ultimately realizing Shanker’s hope for charter schools as a major impetus to create public school education for the 21st Century.

The Guild currently authorizes 14 operational schools and 3 pre-operational schools. This new charter school application invites qualified developers to submit a new charter school application to join the Guild’s portfolio of quality schools.

**Mission:** As a single purpose authorizer, the Guild will improve the educational achievement of Minnesota students by advocating a systemic approach to charter school formation and operation that promotes stakeholder accountability, autonomy, and competence. The Guild authorizes and monitors charter schools in accordance with [Minnesota Statutes section 124E](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E). The Guild’s charter school portfolio encompasses a variety of school types and populations served by educational programs in Minnesota, with a specific interest in schools that serve students most affected by the achievement gap and low graduation rates.

**Vision:** The Guild advances the original vision of the chartered school model, in which teachers have the choice to professionally organize and work to create innovative, research-based schools that rely on teacher expertise to identify and use effective teaching strategies, promote engaged student learning, create professional autonomy, and ensure effective, shared responsibility for outcomes.

**Guild Priority: Teacher-Powered Schools**

As a single-purpose charter school authorizer under [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.05](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.05), the Minnesota Guild may not limit its authorizing decisions to any single curriculum, learning program, or method. However, the Guild is committed to growing a portfolio of high-quality, innovate charter schools that promote, establish, and expand teacher-powered models and autonomies.

The teacher-powered model includes 15 areas that provide teachers autonomy to make decisions impacting school and student success. These areas of autonomy include charter school board governance, making all decisions about the school’s learning program, choosing the process and methods for teacher evaluation, and managing the allocation of the school’s financial resources. Charter schools may implement one, or many, areas of autonomy to be considered a teacher-powered school. Visit the [Teacher-Powered Schools Initiative web page](https://www.teacherpowered.org) for additional information and resources.

Additionally, the Guild seeks to promote and is especially interested in authorizing new charter schools that address the additional statutory purpose ([Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.01, subdivision 1(5)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.01#stat.124E.01.1)), “create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.” Finally, the Guild’s new charter school application is aligned with the priorities, criteria, and requirements of Minnesota’s Federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant project.

# Timeline

[Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.06, subdivision 4](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.06#stat.124E.06.4) states that an authorizer must submit a new charter school affidavit to MDE at least 14 months before July 1 of the year the new charter school plans to serve students (i.e., May 1, a year before opening). The Guild’s FY21 new charter school application review process includes the following key dates based on that statutory deadline:

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| --- | --- |
| **Key Date/Deadline:** | **Event/Action:** |
| August 1, 2020 | FY21 New Charter Application Finalized |
| Wednesday, October 7th from 10a – 12p | Information Webinar for Interested Applicants |
| **Sunday, November 15, 2020** | **Letter of Intent (LOI) Due to the Guild** |
| Wednesday, December 2nd from 10a-12p | Technical Assistance Webinar for LOI Applicants |
| Mid-November to Mid-December, 2020 | Individual Meetings with Interested Applicants |
| **Monday, January 18, 2021 by 11:59 P.M.** | **Full Application due to the Guild via email** |
| January/February 2021 | Application Review Process by the MN Guild |
| **Monday, March 1, 2021** | **Guild Notifies Applicants of Initial Decisions** |
| March/April 2021(only for selected applicants) | Application Revisions by developersDetailed Budgets SubmittedCapacity Interviews |
| **Saturday, May 1, 2021** | **Guild New Charter Affidavits Due to MDE** |

***\*Please Note: While the Guild is committed to the above application review and decision-making calendar, one/more key dates could be changed due to pandemic, national/state emergency, etc.***

**Review and Evaluation Process**

New charter school applications are reviewed and approved by the Guild through the following phases:

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| **Phase One – Letter of Intent (LOI)*** Informational Webinar: An informational webinar will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, October 7, 2020. The webinar introduces interested groups to the Guild’s application and review process and provides an initial opportunity for the Guild to provide technical assistance.
* All applicants are ***REQUIRED*** to submit a letter of intent (LOI) by November 15, 2020.
* The LOI notifies the Guild your group intends to submit a full new charter school application and provides a basic overview of your proposed new school.
* The LOI also establishes necessary communications between the Guild and the developing group before the application deadline and helps the Guild prepare sufficient resources for the review of FY21 charter school applications.
* While the LOI is not evaluated, it establishes eligibility to submit a full application in January, 2021.
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| **Phase Two (Only for groups that submitted a LOI by November 15, 2020)** * Technical Assistance Webinar: A technical assistance webinar will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, December 2, 2020 for groups that submitted a LOI. This webinar takes a deep dive into the application requirements and evaluative criteria and provides an important opportunity for the Guild to provide technical assistance to interested groups.
* Individual Meetings: The Guild will also meet with interested groups (either remotely or in person) to discuss the group’s vision for a new charter school and provide a one-on-one opportunity for the Guild to provide technical assistance.
* Technical Review: Full applications submitted electronically by January 18, 2021 will undergo a technical review to verify that the application is complete. **Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.**
* Desk Review: Applications will be reviewed by Guild staff, consultants, and/or board members against the evaluative rubric (included at the conclusion of this document). An application must achieve a “Meets Standard” rating in all application sections to be further considered for approval.
* Review Consensus: As necessary, application reviewers will discuss individual reviews and arrive at consensus ratings and recommendations.
* Initial Selection Process: Guild Board will make **initial** decisions at its February board meeting.
* Applicants will be notified by March 1 if they are selected to move forward in the Guild’s new charter school review process.
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| **Phase Three (Only for applicants initially selected by Guild Board in February, 2021)*** Negotiations Response: Selected applicants may be asked to review/clarify one or more sections of the application and resubmit to the Guild, **likely within a two-week window**.
* Detailed Budget: Applicants will be asked to submit a comprehensive budget, providing additional specificity and detail for the pre-operational planning year and the initial years of operation.
* Capacity Interviews: Applicants will be invited to participate in a capacity interview, during which time the Guild will evaluate the founding team’s knowledge of the application and capacity to establish a high-quality charter school. This interview will take place in person at the Guild’s office and/or held remotely via Zoom. **All key developers/founders are required to attend.**
* The Guild will work with applicants to prepare new school affidavits for MDE. This will include communication exchanges, reviews, edits, etc.
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| **Phase Four – Final Decision*** Final Application Approval: Guild Board will make final approval decisions at its April 29, 2021 board meeting.
* If a final application is not approved, the Guild will notify the applicant by Friday, April 30.
* Affidavit submission approved applicants will be notified immediately and the Guild will submit a new charter school affidavit to MDE by May 1, 2020.
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**Instructions**

**Letter of Intent (LOI)**

* All applicants are ***REQUIRED*** to submit a letter of intent (LOI) if they would like to submit a full application to the Guild in January, 2021 (***using the form below***).
* The LOI provides the Guild with a basic overview of your proposed new school and helps the Guild prepare sufficient resources for the review of new charter applications. ***Please address the following in your overview:***
1. Mission and vision of the proposed school;
2. Ages/grades of students to be served;
3. Target population of students to be served;
4. Proposed location of the school;
5. Need and demand for the new school;
6. Estimated number of students to be served at capacity;
7. Educational philosophy and instructional approach of the school;
8. How the school will meet the primary statutory purpose of charter schools;
9. Which additional statutory purposes the school will meet and how; and
10. How the applicant will promote a teacher-powered school model (optional).
* The LOI form below **MUST** be used for your LOI submission.
* **Submit your LOI to the Guild via email to** **buddy.ferrari@guildschools.org** **no later than November 15, 2020.**
* If the LOI form is not submitted by November 15, 2020, the developing group is ***not*** eligible to submit a full application in January, 2021.

**Full Application**

* **An email containing an electronic version of the application must be received by the Guild via email by 11:59p on Monday, January 18, 2021.** Applicants must send an electronic copy of the application, including all attachments, in either Microsoft Word, Excel, and/or PDF via e-mail to buddy.ferrari@guildschools.org.

**Application Format and Organization**

* 8 ½” ⨯ 11” page orientation
* 0.5-1” margins on all sides
* 11-12-point font
* Insert page numbers and name of school in footer on each page
* Total page limit is 55 pages (not including Section XII – Early Learning Programs). ***Page limits do not apply to required attachments.*** Suggested page length of each section is specified in the guidelines below. Please limit attachments to those that are requested.

**Required Attachments**

* Verification of Criminal Background Check
* Articles of Incorporation (if the organization is incorporated)
* Proposed bylaws
* Proposed enrollment and lottery policy
* Founder contact list
* Founder résumés
* Proposed organizational chart (if not included in the application narrative)
* Proposed school year calendar
* Proposed school day schedule
* Start-up budget plus a three-year operating budget (four total years)
* Cash flow projection on a monthly basis for the start-up year and the first operational year (two total years)
* Copy of letter submitted to the resident school district(s) in which the new charter school proposes to locate
* Evidence of parent and community interest in the school
* The proposed management agreement or other comprehensive service agreement (if applicable)



**Letter of Intent (LOI) to Apply – Due November 15, 2020**

**New Charter School Application**

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| --- | --- |
| Name of proposed school:  |  |
| Primary contact person:  |  |
| Date of proposed opening: |  |
| Email:  |  |
| Phone:  |  |
| Mailing address:  |  |

Name, email address, and phone number ***for each*** member of the founding team (add lines as needed):

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Full Name  | Email Address  | Phone Number  |
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Attach a two-page overview of the proposed school (***see LOI instructions above***). Add additional rows, if necessary, below.

*By our names and signatures below, we affirm support of this LOI to submit a new charter school application to the Guild (either hard copy or e-signatures are acceptable):*

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date



**New Charter School Application – Due January 18, 2021**

**Cover Page**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of proposed school:  |  |
| Primary contact person:  |  |
| Date of proposed opening: |  |
| Email:  |  |
| Phone:  |  |
| Mailing address:  |  |

Name, email address, phone number, and proposed position with the new school ***for each*** member of the founding team (add lines as needed):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Full Name  | Email Address | Phone Number | Proposed Position with School  |
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| Does the school expect to contract with a charter management organization or educational management organization for school management or operation? **□ Yes □ No** | If yes, identify the charter management organization: |

Submit this cover page, along with the entire application, via email to buddy.ferrari@guildschools.org by 11:59 p.m. on January 18, 2021. Incomplete applications and/or applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed. Add additional rows, if necessary, below.

*By approval and submission of this application, the founders agree to and support the information included in this application, in its entirety (**either hard copy or e-signatures are acceptable):*

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date

Founder Name  Founder Signature and Date



**FY21 New Charter School Application**

**Important Note:** *These application requirements are aligned with the Minnesota Department of Education’s (MDE) most recent New Charter School Affidavit Instructions, dated 2/14/2020, located* [*here*](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/chart/aures/)*. These requirements are also aligned with MDE’s Charter School Start Up Grant – Winter Competition – Application – State Fiscal Year 2021, located* [*here*](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/DSE/MDE031540)*.*

Directly address each section below. Responses should be concise and comprehensive.

**Section I. Executive Summary (3 pages)**

1. Provide a brief explanation of why you are seeking to open a public charter school and identify what unmet need you are addressing by starting a school.
2. How the autonomy and flexibility granted to your charter school is consistent with the definition of a charter school in [ESEA § 4310 (2)](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/legislation/title-iv.html#sec4310).
3. State the grade levels and number of students to be served.
4. State the proposed location of the new school.
5. Briefly describe the educational philosophy, instructional methodology, and key programmatic features the school will implement in order to accomplish its vision and mission.
6. Plans to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement in the intended community and meet or exceed the outcomes adopted by the commissioner for public school students.
7. Indicate which charter school statutory purposes and World’s Best Workforce priorities the school will address.
8. Summarize the relevant experience of the school’s founders.
9. Indicate if the school will address the Guild’s priority to promote teacher-powered schools.

**Section II. Vision and Mission (2 pages)**

1. State the vision of the proposed school. This should be a clear, concise, and compelling vision statement that articulates the long-term change you hope to see as a result of the school’s success.
2. State the mission of the proposed school. This should be a clear, concise, compelling, and broadly-inclusive mission statement that articulates the school’s purpose or desired results and how it plans to achieve the desired results.
3. Describe how the school will evaluate whether its mission is being accomplished and its vision realized.
4. Describe how the school intends to support the Guild’s priority to promote teacher-powered schools (encouraged, but not required.)

**Section III. Need and Demand (4 pages)**

1. Provide a description and evidence of the need for a school, serving proposed grades, in the location identified. “Need” means the reasons the proposed school is necessary in the community to be served. Need can be demonstrated by, for example, describing why existing school options in the community are insufficient or inadequate.
2. Provide a description and evidence of the demand for a school, serving proposed grades, in the location identified. “Demand” means the desire of prospective families to enroll their children in the proposed school’s education program. Demand can be evidenced by, for example, feedback from listening sessions or survey results from prospective families.
3. Based on the identified need and demand, describe the new and unique characteristics this school would provide to students that distinguish it relative to other education options available to students in the area.
4. Complete and include the table provided below in your response to this section. Identify the number of students expected to attend the school each year by grade level (add additional columns to the table if it will take more than five years to reach full enrollment).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grades** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** |
| **Pre-K** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **1** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **2** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **3** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **4** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **5** |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **7** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **8** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **9** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **10** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **11** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **12** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** |  |  |  |  |  |

1. An analysis of existing district and charter schools in the proposed location, including program model, grades served and student enrollment. The analysis should demonstrate how the proposed school will be able to generate sufficient enrollment to meet the targets provided above given already existing/approved school options in the proposed location.
2. Describe the community support for an additional school in this geographic area. Include evidence of community support for, and interest in, the proposed charter school sufficient to support the school to reach its anticipated enrollment. This should include letters/emails of support from community organizations. Detail the strategies that have been used to engage the community in the development of this school. Include information about key community partners.
3. Provide evidence of parent interest in the school (as attachments). This should include a list of interested families with email addresses and phone numbers provided (the Guild will contact families on this list to verify their interest in attending the new school). Additional information may also include survey information that includes a sample survey and results and/or sign-in sheets from community information sessions.

**Section IV. Purpose and Priorities (4 pages)**

1. As articulated in [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.01, subdivision 1,](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.01#stat.124E.01.1) the primary purpose of a charter school is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement. Describe how the school intends to meet the primary purpose of a charter school as defined in statute, how this aligns to the school’s mission and vision, and how the school will report on its progress towards meeting this purpose.
2. Identify the additional statutory purpose(s) the charter school intends to meet (*at least one additional purpose is required.)* Describe how the school intends to meet the identified purpose(s), how the identified purpose(s) align(s) to the school’s mission and vision, and how the school will report on its progress towards meeting the identified purpose(s).
3. As articulated in [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.01, subdivision 1](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.01#stat.124E.01.1), additional purposes of a charter school include to:
	1. increase learning opportunities for all pupils;
	2. encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
	3. measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes;
	4. establish new forms of accountability for schools; and
	5. create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site (*this additional purpose is strongly encouraged, but not required*.)
4. Address how the charter school will design its programs to at least meet the outcomes adopted by the commissioner for public school students, including priorities under the state’s [World’s Best Work Force](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/120b.11):
5. All children are ready for school;
6. All third-graders can read at grade level;
7. All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed;
8. All students are ready for career and college; and/or
9. All students graduate from high school.
10. Per Minnesota’s Federal CSP Grant Project, describe how the charter school will address the following optional priority areas (strongly encouraged, but not required):
	1. Charter schools that intend to serve and identify strategies to reach early learners and/or postsecondary students.
	2. Charter schools that intend to enroll a higher percentage of low-income, rural or racially diverse students.

**Section V. Goals, Student Performance Expectations, and Evaluation Plan (6 pages)**

**Requirements:**

* Provide ***student achievement/growth*** goals in SMART format that focus on improving **all** pupil learning and **all** student achievement in mathematics, reading, and science.
* These goals should use state assessments as the method of measurement.
* If your school will serve third-graders in the first four years of operation, include a third-grade literacy goal under reading, as required by WBWF.
* Generally, up to three goals should be developed.
* [Per Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.01](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.01).
* If your school will serve 12th grade students in the first four years of operation, provide ***a graduation rate goal*** based on the state’s measurement/definition of graduation as required by WBWF.
	+ State aspirational goal for 2020: 90% of all students graduating in four years, with no student group below 85%, by 2020.
	+ If applicable, one goal should be developed.
* Provide ***other student*** performance goals in SMART format that are school/mission specific.
* These might be academic in nature (e.g. using NWEA MAP tests to measure growth) or they may be what is referred to in statute as “non-academic” (e.g., using the HOPE survey to measure student autonomy).
* School-specific student goals may be related to student attendance, mastery, achievement of IEP goals, knowledge, skill development, and/or accomplishments in areas that are specifically related to your student population and/or school’s mission.
* Generally, up to two goals should be developed.
* Finally, provide ***organizational/governance*** and/or ***financial*** performance goals. (e.g., teacher retention, Montessori certification, strategic plan goals, contribute 2% of annual revenue to fund balance each year, etc.)
	+ These goals are school specific and highlight the unique aspects of your school.
	+ Generally, one to two goals should be developed.

**Instructions:**

1. Provide all goals in SMART format.
2. Provide student performance goals for improving all pupil learning and all student achievement in areas including mathematics, reading, and science. In addition, provide goals that measure student growth, knowledge, skill development, and accomplishments in other areas related to the school’s mission. Finally, provide one/more goals for organizational/governance and/or financial performance.
3. For each contract outcome/goal, ***provide a brief rationale statement*** (e.g., why the goal is important for your school, how does it promote a high-performing charter school, why specific targets are rigorous and reasonable, etc.) and the expected level of performance over the term of the initial charter contract. Include projected baseline data and other relevant information that clarifies how these goals are designed to promote high expectations for all students, including students with special needs and English Learners.
4. After stating all goals, describe the school’s plans to use assessment data to monitor progress towards meeting academic performance goals and impact teaching and learning to improve student achievement. Include the school’s plan to collect and use baseline data in the beginning of the school’s first year of operation to evaluate the school’s goals and educational program.

**Section VI. Educational Program (10 pages)**

1. Describe the guiding educational philosophy of the proposed school.
2. Describe the key aspects of the school culture that will be developed to promote student academic achievement and other aspects of student development.
3. Describe the educational program with clear plans to improve all pupil learning and all student academic achievement at grade levels to be served, including instructional methodology, curricula and instructional techniques.
4. Include ***current and compelling*** research that provides evidence that the program will achieve the desired outcomes for the proposed target population.
5. Provide information on the innovative aspects of the proposed education program.
6. Describe how students will receive a comprehensive education. Include information about alignment with Minnesota Academic Standards. Additionally, specifically indicate if the proposed school intends to incorporate: 1) digital, online, hybrid or blended learning; 2) project-based learning; and/or 3) work-based learning.
7. Identify how the education program is designed to engage students in ways that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, responsive, and relevant. Discuss how the charter school will strive to eliminate disparities for racial and ethnic groups. Describe the school’s plans to promote equity and inclusion that demonstrate understanding of the challenges to academic achievement for students in racial and ethnic groups and/or with disabilities.
8. Describe how the school will offer both remediation and acceleration where appropriate based on student need. Include how the school will serve students who are not meeting grade level expectations but do not qualify for services such as Title, Special Education, or English Learner supports.
9. *Special Education*: Describe how the charter school will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/), including:
	1. Describe how the school will provide access to students with disabilities to a free appropriate education in the least restrictive environment in compliance with all laws.
	2. Describe the school’s Child Find Process.
	3. Describe the methods and strategies for serving students with disabilities, including: kinds and types of services provided directly by the school, distinguished from services provided by third-party contracts; the appropriately licensed personnel the school will devote to special education and their associated administrative responsibilities; how the school will assess/review/revise and implement IEPs; and how the school will provide accommodations for students.
	4. Describe the professional development plan for special education and general education teachers and support staff, as well as other staff (as applicable), as it pertains to serving students with disabilities.
10. *English Learners.* Provide a description of the program design, methods, and strategies for serving students who are English Learners. Include identification processes, monitoring, instructional strategies, assessment, professional development of staff, exit criteria, and staffing.
11. Describe the instructional leadership structure at the school, including teacher leadership roles and how the school will promote a teacher-powered model of school leadership. Specify “N/A” if this does not apply to your new school.
12. Describe the school’s plan for teacher professional development and evaluation, including how the quality of instruction will be monitored and improved, and how it will be responsive to students’ academic performance. Address the school’s plans for job-embedded professional development initiatives that are likely to sufficiently prepare teachers to deliver the school’s unique program to the targeted student population.
13. Describe skills and experiences needed by educational staff to efficiently and effectively carry out the educational program model. Include the plan for recruiting, training, and retaining high quality staff.
14. Provide a proposed school year calendar and school day schedule (as attachments). Describe how the calendar and schedule are designed to support the educational program and meet state requirements for minimal instructional hours per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.03, subdivision 6](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.03) and section [120A.41](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/120A.41). Include (either in attachments or in application narrative):
15. A description of a student’s “typical day” experience.
16. A snapshot of the school’s proposed daily/weekly schedule that includes length of day.
17. A snapshot of the school’s proposed school year calendar that includes total annual instructional hours.
18. If the school plans to provide any out-of-school time programs such as before/after school or summer school, describe those programs.

**Section VII. Governance, Management, and Administration (10 pages)**

1. Describe the governance and management/administrative leadership structure at the school, including plans to enter into a management or other comprehensive service agreement/contract (if applicable). Include a rationale for the management and leadership structure.
	1. Provide an Organizational Chart (either in the application narrative or as an attachment).
	2. If applicable, provide a draft of the school’s management agreement or other comprehensive service agreement (as an attachment).
2. Describe the level of authority the governing board will delegate to the school’s administrator/leader or administrative/leadership team. Include a description of the relationships and separation of duties between the board and school leadership.
3. Describe plans to promote teacher leadership in school governance and administration/management. If your school will address “create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site” as an additional statutory purpose, specifically describe plans to realize that intent.
4. Describe how the board will:
5. Have capacity to oversee the successful development and implementation of the educational program, accountability goals, outcomes, and state education priorities identified in this application.
6. Have capacity to oversee the effective and responsible management of public funds and demonstrates effective financial management practices and policies.
7. Have capacity to oversee and be responsible for the school’s compliance with its legal obligations.
8. Have experience and expertise that includes pre-kindergarten-12th grade education, legal compliance, real estate and facilities, school financial management and accounting, fundraising and development, community engagement, and parent involvement.
9. Describe the school’s governance plan and how the board will ensure effective and accountable governance of the school’s operations. The plan should:
	1. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a charter school board, including board duties outlined in [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.07, subdivision 6](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.07#stat.124E.07.6):
		1. Carry out the school’s mission and goals;
		2. Evaluate how charter contract goals and commitment are executed;
		3. Evaluate student achievement, postsecondary and workforce readiness, and student engagement and connection to goals;
		4. Establish a teacher evaluation process under [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.03, subdivision 2(h)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.03);
		5. Provide professional development related to the individual’s job responsibilities; and
		6. Describes plans for how the school intends to meet the student pupil transportation requirements.
	2. Describe how the governing board provides strong policy oversight.
	3. Describe how well-qualified individuals will be recruited to serve on the school’s board, including plans to recruit individuals who are representative of the students and families being served by the school.
10. Describe the school board’s plan to ensure effective and transparent management of the school’s operations that are sufficient to deliver the proposed educational program, accountability goals, outcomes, and state education priorities.
11. Describe the school’s plan to carry out start-up activities at the school, leading up to a successful opening. Include a discussion of the potential start-up challenges, how you plan to address these challenges, and how the vision, mission, and ideas of the founders will be translated to the operational leader(s) once the school opens.
12. Consistent with [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.12, subdivision 2](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.12#stat.124E.12.2)., describe the qualifications for all persons that hold administrative, supervisory, or instructional leadership roles at the school.
13. Consistent with [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.12, subdivision 2](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.12#stat.124E.12.2)., describe the evaluation process to be implemented by the board of directors for all persons that hold administrative, supervisory, or instructional leadership roles at the school.
14. Describe the process for hiring individuals in leadership positions at the school. Include how that will be an open and fair process that reaches out to candidates who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, and disability.
15. Describe the plan for initial and ongoing training of board members. Include plans for onboarding of new board members.
16. Explain how the board will comply with Open Meetings and Open Records laws.
17. Explain how the founding and ongoing governing board will create and adopt board policies.
18. Charter Management Organization (CMO): If your school intends to contract with a CMO or other organization for management services, provide specific evidence demonstrating the provider’s successful track record in academic, operational and financial performance.

**Section VIII. Financial Management (3 pages)**

1. Describe the process the school will use to do the following, differentiating between the role of the board and the role of school administration/leadership:
2. Develop and approve the annual budget;
3. Monitor the school’s expenditures and revenues in relation to the budget;
4. Develop and implement appropriate financial policies and practices, including but not limited to purchasing, accounting, and payroll;
5. Ensure timely and accurate financial reporting;
6. Select the financial auditor;
7. Monitor the near term and long-term financial health of the organization;
8. Manage the school’s finances day-to-day;
9. Maintain strong internal controls; and
10. Include a plan to establish an emergency/long-term reserve fund balance.
11. Provide (as an attachment) a start-up budget plus a three-year operating budget (four total years) for the charter school. The budget attachment should:
12. Demonstrate an understanding of funding sources available to the charter school and the types of expenditures required to operate the charter school.
13. Identify realistic assumptions and their basis.
14. Identify minimum enrollment needed for solvency and is aligned with the enrollment table provided above.
15. Align staffing assumptions/expenditures with the narrative in other application sections.
16. Account for direct student instructional expenses, PERA/TRA contributions, and other benefits.
17. List any planned services to be contracted to outside providers.
18. Includes an alternate budget if the school does not receive a federal CSP grant.
19. Provide (also as an attachment) a cash flow projection on a monthly basis for the start-up year and the first operational year (two total years). Include:
	1. A narrative that includes detailed assumptions; and
	2. A Year 1 cash flow contingency plan (start-up year), delineating a plan if the school does not receive a CSP grant.
	3. An accounting for state funding holdbacks.

***Please Note: A more detailed budget will be required in March 2021 if your application is considered for approval.***

**Section IX. Operations (6 pages)**

*Facilities*

1. Describe the requirements for the school’s facility, including learning spaces and other characteristics that are designed to meet the unique needs of the school and students to be served by the school.
2. Describe the school’s plan, including the timeline, process, and milestones to be met, to secure a suitable facility as described above. Indicate any potential facilities that have been identified, and a proposed lease or ownership arrangement of the facility, including any potential conflicts of interest.

*Transportation*

1. Describe the school’s planned transportation arrangements.

*Food Service*

1. Describe the school’s planned food service program.

*Health Services*

1. Describe the school’s plan to provide required health services.

*Student Discipline*

1. Describe the school’s discipline process that creates a safe and healthy environment for students and staff, is equitable for all student groups, and is consistent with [Minnesota’s Pupil Fair Dismissal Act](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/disc/).

*Community and Parent Involvement*

1. Describe how parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school. Describe the school’s clear vision and effective strategies for meaningful parent and community engagement through all phases of school planning, start-up and implementation.

**Section X. Marketing and Outreach (4 pages)**

1. Describe how students in the community will be informed about this charter school and will be given an equal opportunity to attend this charter school. Include how the school will reach students of diverse backgrounds.
2. Describe how the school will conduct an open admissions process including the use of a lottery to provide equal access to all students who apply. Provide a proposed enrollment and lottery policy as an attachment.
3. Describe how the school will intentionally and specifically conduct outreach to educationally and economically disadvantaged and hard-to-reach populations, including students with special needs and English Learners.

**Section XI. School Founders (3 pages)**

* + 1. For each member of the applicant team (founders, developers, consultants, etc.) identified on the Application Cover Page, describe: their experience/involvement with pre-K-12 education and the design and operation of a charter school; other relevant experience in areas of management, finance, human resources, legal compliance, etc.; expected role and responsibilities during the pre-operational planning period; whether they intend to become a member of the board; whether they intend to apply for employment at the new school; and affiliations/relationships with other founders and current/potential consultants and vendor organizations.
		2. Per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.07](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.07), list the proposed members of the initial board of directors for the charter school (if known). Describe the process for appointing or electing the initial board of directors.
		3. Provide a contact list for all members of the founding team (as an attachment). Include phone numbers and email addresses for all founding team members.
		4. Provide résumés of all members of the founding team (as an attachment).
		5. Identify the date of the most recent background check obtained for school founders and whether adverse information was identified.

**Criminal Background Check Certification Form**

Conduct background checks as instructed below for all key founders, complete the form below, and attach the completed form with you full application.



**FY21 New Charter School Application**

**Criminal Background Check**

**Certification Form**

**Name of New Charter School Application Group:**

The Minnesota Guild’s FY21 new charter school application requires applicant groups to conduct criminal background checks for all key founders/board members/individuals likely to become board members (“key founder”) if the application is approved.

Criminal Background Checks: Please run a criminal background check for each key founder per the following site: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca/Pages/criminal-history-search.aspx>. Background checks should be no older than December 1, 2020.

This certification form verifies that background checks do not include adverse information for any of the key founders of the applicant team. You must retain individual background check reports. The Guild may review those documents during a future site visit. Please do **not** submit detailed background check reports to the Guild.

Complete the following table for each key founder.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Key Founder Full Legal Name** | **Key Founder Role** | **Date of Criminal Background Check** | **Result of Criminal Background Check** | **Notes (if applicable)** |
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Add additional rows to the table as necessary.

**Certification**: By signing below, I hereby certify that the criminal background check information provided above is accurate. If one or more background checks produce adverse information, I agree to immediately notify the Guild to discuss the results.

Signature of Authorized Representative\* (*either hard copy or e-signatures are acceptable*):

Name of Authorized Representative:

Date:

\*If the applicant group has already incorporated the new charter school as a nonprofit organization, the authorized representative should be the nonprofit’s current board chair.

**Section XII. Early Learning Programs (Instructional Preschool or Prekindergarten; if applicable)**

Check the box(es) that relate to the proposed Early Learning Program:

[ ]  Early childhood health and developmental screening

[ ]  Preschool instructional program (not prekindergarten) to provide early childhood education and preparation for transition to kindergarten for children ages 3-5 (enter estimated number of children to be served annually)

**Anticipated size of Preschool Instructional Program when fully enrolled:**

[ ]  Instructional Prekindergarten Program for four-year-olds to prepare children for entry into kindergarten the following year (enter estimated number of children to be served annually)

**Anticipated size of Instructional Prekindergarten Program when fully enrolled:**

**Part A. Early Learning Program Description, Need, and Demand**

Provide the following information regarding the school’s proposed early learning program(s):

1. A brief description of the program(s).
2. Whether the program(s) will be free to all participants or fee-based.
	* 1. If fee-based, include the fee structure that will be used.
		2. Indicate if the school will provide enrollment preference to kindergarten for students participating in the school’s early learning program, per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.11(c)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/124E.11).
3. Describe the school’s plans to fund the early learning program(s). If applicable, describe the school’s intent to pursue a Minnesota Parent Aware rating for the early learning program and other possible funding sources to sustain the program if available, such as [Early Learning Scholarships](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/sch/index.htm), [Voluntary Prekindergarten](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/vpk/), [School Readiness Plus,](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/plus/) and [Title I](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/ESEA/parta/index.htm).
4. Provide evidence to document need and demand for the program(s), including the following:
5. Evidence of interest from prospective families and community-level support for the early learning program(s) as attachments. This could include but is not limited to letters/emails of support from parents and community organizations, survey information that includes a sample survey and survey results, and sign-in sheets from community information sessions.
6. Discussion of how the program(s) fulfills an unmet need in the community.

**Part B. Instructional Preschool and/or Prekindergarten**

**Comprehensive Child Assessment:** Assess each child's cognitive skills with a comprehensive child assessment instrument when the child enters, and again before the child leaves the program, to inform program planning and promote kindergarten readiness.

1. Describe the assessment process used to measure individual child progress in all the prekindergarten and preschool instructional classes that includes the use of a standardized child assessment instrument, such as High Scope Child Observation Record (COR), Teaching Strategies Gold, or Work Sampling System.
	1. The assessment must be used at least at program entrance and program exit.
	2. At a minimum, the comprehensive assessment should measure children’s progress in the domains of language, literacy, and mathematical thinking. Other domains may include approaches to learning, general cognitive development, physical and motor development, social and emotional development, creativity and the arts.
	3. The child assessment should be one [approved by Minnesota Parent Aware](https://www.parentaware.org/#/). It must be a valid and reliable child assessment instrument that is developmentally appropriate and comprehensive.
	4. The comprehensive child assessment must align with [Minnesota’s Early Childhood Indicators of Progress – Minnesota’s Early Learning Standards (Revised 2017)](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/highqualel/ind/index.htm).
2. Describe how the child assessment results are used to inform curricula and instruction throughout the school year.
3. Describe how families are involved in the assessment process throughout the year.
4. Describe how assessment results are shared between the early learning and kindergarten staff, in order to maximize the building of a coherent system between early learning and kindergarten.
5. Describe how the child assessment process is responsive to the cultural and linguistic needs of children in the school’s early learning program.

**Intentional Instructional Practice:** Provide intentional instructional practice aligned with [Minnesota’s Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs) – Minnesota’s Early Learning Standards](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/highqualel/ind/index.htm) and [Minnesota’s Kindergarten Academic Standards](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/k/). Instructional practices must be based on early childhood research and professional practice focused on children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills and development that prepare children for the transition to kindergarten, including early literacy skills.

1. Describe how program content and intentional instructional practices are aligned with Minnesota’s ECIPs.
	1. The school should consider using a [Minnesota Parent Aware approved curricula](https://www.parentaware.org/programs/#/) that is already aligned with the ECIPs.
2. Briefly describe the curriculum used in the early learning program, such as High Scope Preschool Curriculum or Opening the World of Learning (OWL).
3. Indicate how the ECIPs are incorporated into the program based on the age of children participating in the early learning program.
4. Provide an overview of instructional practice to support children’s early literacy skills development.
5. Describe a balance of child-initiated learning and teacher-directed pedagogies appropriate for young children’s development and interests.
6. Provide a brief overview of the program’s early learning approaches (such as use of project-based learning, inquiry-based learning, learning centers, interactive learning, and play-based learning).

**Kindergarten Transition**: Coordinate appropriate kindergarten transition with parents and kindergarten teachers.

1. Briefly describe the program plan for transition to kindergarten that includes meaningful coordination and planning with kindergarten teachers, and engages families in a variety of ways to support children’s learning and successful transition to kindergarten.
	1. The transition plan should be responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of children and their families participating in the early learning program and school.
2. Describe how the curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices between the early learning program and kindergarten program are aligned.
3. Describe strategies to engage families in meaningful ways to support their children’s learning throughout the transition into the kindergarten year beyond one-time events.
4. Describe a plan for providing guidance to families not enrolling their child in the charter school kindergarten program.
5. If a free program, indicate if the charter school will provide enrollment preference to kindergarten for students participating in the early learning program as allowed by [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.11(c)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=124E.11).

**Community-Based Services:** Coordinate relevant services and programs with community organizations.

1. Provide a brief description of how the program coordinates with community organizations and how those resources are shared with families.
	1. Coordination may include referrals to community programs based on child needs, such as local public health organizations, social services, mental health services, or other early learning or childcare programs.
	2. The coordination with community-based services should reflect the needs of the children participating in the early learning program.
	3. The community-based services utilized should be responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of children and their families participating in the early learning program and school.
2. Describe how information about community-based services can be made available to families using a variety of strategies, such as family advocates, school-home liaisons, parenting educators, social media, and informal school events.

**Staff Ratios and Licensure:** Ensure staff-child ratios of one-to-ten and maximum group size of 20 children, with the staff being supervised by a licensed early childhood teacher.

1. Briefly describe how the early learning program is provided and how ratios and group size are provided to ensure a high-quality early learning program.
2. For each prekindergarten and preschool instructional class, describe staff licensure area and MN teaching license file folder number and other credentials, as appropriate. If this information is not available at the time of submission, please indicate anticipated staffing licensure areas. MDE may require the school to submit staff licensure areas and MN teaching license folder numbers and other credentials when staff is hired.

**Teacher Content Knowledge:** Ensure teachers are knowledgeable in early childhood curriculum content, assessment and instruction.

1. Describe licensed staff training/professional development specific to early learning curriculum, instructional practices and assessment that has been completed in the past five years. If this information is not available at the time of submission, please indicate anticipated teacher knowledge in early childhood curriculum content, assessment and instruction. MDE may require the school to submit evidence of teacher knowledge in early childhood curriculum content, assessment and instruction when staff is hired.

**Completion of Early Childhood Screening:** Ensure participating children have completed health and developmental screening within 90 days of program enrollment under Minnesota Statutes, sections [121A.16](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=121A.16) to [121A.19](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=121A.19).

1. Provide a description of how and where participating children receive health and developmental screening either through a traditional school district or comparable screening from a health care provider (such as Child and Teen Checkups through local public health organizations) if the charter school is ***not*** providing the early childhood health and developmental screening program.
	1. It is not necessary for the charter school to provide early childhood health and developmental screening, but must describe how children receive the comprehensive health and developmental screening to identify possible problems that may interfere with children’s learning.
2. Provide a plan for those children who do not successfully complete early childhood screening, including how referrals will be made.

**Part C. Early Childhood Health and Development Screening (if applicable)**

Describe the school’s plan and capacity to provide the early childhood screening program in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, sections [121A.16](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=121A.16) to [121A.19](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=121A.19) and Minnesota Rules [3530.3000](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=3530.3000), [3530.3300](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=3530.3300), and [3530.3400](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=3530.3400).

1. In discussing the school’s plan and capacity to provide an early childhood screening program, describe how the school will meet MDE accountability requirements for data submission in accordance with [Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.17](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=121A.17). This includes the establishment of the MARSS Preschool Screening (PS) Record and the annual data submission to MDE Early Learning Services for children receiving the early childhood screening program directly from the school or through a contracted service provider with a comparable screening program, such as a local public health organization.
	1. The purpose of establishing the MARSS PS Record is to provide state screening aid to the school and to ensure the screening requirement has been met. More detail on establishing the MARSS PS Record is described in [MARSS Procedure 26](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/schfin/MARSS/inst/).

|  |
| --- |
| **FY21 New Charter School Application****Review Rubric** |
| **School Name:** | **Reviewer Name:** |
| **Strengths:** |
| **Areas for Improvement:** |
| **Overall Recommendation** | **Denial** | **Additional Information Required** | **Approval** |
| **Narrative Justification of Recommendation:** |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Overall Section Ratings** |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| **I. Executive Summary**  |  |  |  |
| **II. Vision and Mission**  |  |  |  |
| **III. Need and Demand** |  |  |  |
| **IV. Purpose**  |  |  |  |
| **V. Goals, Student Performance Expectations, and Evaluation Plan**  |  |  |  |
| **VI. Educational Program**  |  |  |  |
| **VII. Governance, Management, and Administration**  |  |  |  |
| **VIII. Financial Management**  |  |  |  |
| **IX. Operations**  |  |  |  |
| **X. Marketing and Outreach**  |  |  |  |
| **XI. School Founders**  |  |  |  |
| **XII. Early Learning Program**  |  |  |  |

Evaluation Rating Key

* Beginning: Lacks significant detail, demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues, concepts, and/or ability to open and maintain a quality charter school.
* Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
* Meets: Address most of the criteria, is reasonably comprehensive, and indicates the applicant understands the issues, concepts, and/or ability to open and maintain a quality charter school.

An application must achieve a “Meets Standard” rating in all application sections to be further considered for approval.

***I. Executive Summary***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| A clear, concise overview explains the key elements of the proposed charter school including: origins; grade levels and number of students to be served; proposed location; educational philosophy, instructional methodology and key program features; how the school will improve student achievement; alignment with statutory purposes and priorities; experience of school founders; and the Guild’s priority to promote teacher-powered schools. |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***II. Vision and Mission***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| Clear, concise and compelling vision and mission statements articulate the desired long-term outcomes, the school’s purpose, and how it plans to achieve the desired outcomes/impact. |  |  |  |
| A clear description is presented of how the school will know if its mission is being accomplished and its vision realized. |  |  |  |
| Compelling plans to support the Guild’s priority to promote teacher-powered schools are described (encouraged, but not required.) |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***III. Need and Demand***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| Compelling evidence documents the need for a school with these characteristics and proposed grade configuration in the location identified. |  |  |  |
| Enrollment projections are supported by evidence of actual or potential demand, and marketing and recruitment plans seem likely to generate enrollment sufficient to meet projections. |  |  |  |
| An analysis of existing district and charter schools (operational as well as preoperational, i.e., approved by MDE but not yet operational) that demonstrates how the proposed school will generate sufficient enrollment given existing/approved school options in the proposed location. |  |  |  |
| Clear evidence of community support is presented that is likely to further the school’s mission and program. |  |  |  |
| Documented evidence of parent interest in the new charter school is presented. |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***IV. Purpose and Priorities***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| Presents a clear description of how the school intends to meet and report on progress towards meeting the primary purpose of a charter school as defined in statute. |  |  |  |
| Presents a clear description of how the school intends to meet and report on progress towards meeting the additional purpose(s) of a charter school as defined in statute. |  |  |  |
| Identified additional purposes align with the Guild’s prioritized purpose: (5) create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site (this additional purpose is strongly encouraged, but not required.) |  |  |  |
| Presents a clear description of how the school intends to design its programs to at least meet the outcomes adopted by the commissioner for public school students, including priorities under the state’s World’s Best Work Force. |  |  |  |
| Presents a clear description of how the school will address federal CSP priority areas (strongly encouraged, but not required.) |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***V. Goals, Student Performance Expectations, and Evaluation Plan***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| Academic goals are focused on improved student achievement and are presented in SMART format. |  |  |  |
| Academic goals are comprehensive and include, but are not limited to, addressing student proficiency and/or growth using state assessments. |  |  |  |
| Goals clearly address primary and additional charter school purposes per Minnesota Statutes. |  |  |  |
| Goals incorporate additional measures of student performance and development, including but not limited to, school developed measures or rubrics, nationally normed assessments, or other valid and reliable assessment tools. |  |  |  |
| The evaluation plan indicates a clear and coherent approach to measuring and reporting the educational performance and progress of individual students, cohorts, and the charter school as a whole including valid, reliable, and multiple measures of student outcomes. |  |  |  |
| A strong plan for intentional use of achievement data to guide instruction and impact student achievement is evident. |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***VI. Education Program***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| All section requirements are addressed. |  |  |  |
| The school’s philosophical approach is aligned to the school mission and is focused on improving student outcomes. |  |  |  |
| The school culture that will be developed is likely to promote student achievement and student development. |  |  |  |
| The educational program, including instructional methodology, teaching techniques, and curriculum:* Is fully and clearly described;
* Is based on current research;
* Is aligned to state standards;
* Provides for a comprehensive education; and
* Presents a clear plan to improve student academic achievement.
 |  |  |  |
| Innovative aspects of the school’s education program are clearly described. |  |  |  |
| If applicable, clear plans are presented to incorporate digital, online, hybrid or blended learning; project-based learning; and/or work-based learning. |  |  |  |
| The educational program is designed to engage students in ways that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, responsive, and relevant. Strategies to eliminate disparities for racial and ethnic groups are addressed and intentional plans to promote equity and inclusion are presented. |  |  |  |
| A clear plan for offering both remediation and acceleration based on student need is provided. |  |  |  |
| A plan is described to provide students with disabilities access to a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. This plan is in compliance with all laws; and is likely to successfully support increased student learning. |  |  |  |
| The school has a plan to serve students who are English Learners (ELs) in accordance with all laws, which is likely to successfully support increased student learning. |  |  |  |
| Instructional leadership roles and responsibilities are clearly identified and a clear plan to promote a teacher-powered model of school leadership is presented (encouraged, but not required.)  |  |  |  |
| The professional development and teacher evaluation plans are data driven, specific to the school’s unique program and targeted student population, and demonstrate that the quality of instruction will be monitored and improved. |  |  |  |
| The school has a plan for recruiting, training, and retaining high quality instructional staff to meet the unique needs of the school’s educational program. |  |  |  |
| The proposed school year calendar and school day schedule are compliant with statute and designed to support the educational program and achievement of proposed academic goals. |  |  |  |
| Out-of-school or extracurricular programs are described clearly and completely. |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***VII. Governance, Management, and Administration***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| All section requirements are addressed. |  |  |  |
| A clear school governance, management and leadership structure is described, a rationale for the structure is provided, and the structure is aligned with the school’s mission, educational program, goals, and other aspects of the application. If applicable, a draft of the school’s management agreement or other comprehensive service agreement is attached. |  |  |  |
| An organizational chart is provided and clearly distinguishes between governance (board) and management/administration (school leadership). |  |  |  |
| The application clearly describes the level of authority the governing board will delegate to the school’s administrator/leader or administrative/leadership team, including the relationships and separation of duties between the board and school leadership. |  |  |  |
| * A clear plan is presented to promote teacher leadership in school governance and administration/management.
* If applicable, specific plans are described to address the additional statutory purpose, “create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.”
 |  |  |  |
| The application clearly describes how the board will:* Have capacity to oversee the successful development and implementation of the educational program, accountability goals, outcomes, and state education priorities identified in this application.
* Have capacity to oversee the effective and responsible management of public funds and demonstrate effective financial management practices and policies.
* Have capacity to oversee and be responsible for the school’s compliance with its legal obligations.
* Have experience and expertise that includes pre-kindergarten-12th grade education, legal compliance, real estate and facilities, school financial management and accounting, fundraising and development, community engagement, and parent involvement.
 |  |  |  |
| The application clearly describes the school’s governance plan and how the board will ensure effective and accountable governance of the school’s operations. The plan:* + Demonstrates a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a charter school board, including board duties outlined in Minnesota Statutes;
	+ Describes how the governing board provides strong policy oversight; and
	+ Describes how well-qualified individuals will be recruited to serve on the school’s board, including plans to recruit individuals who are representative of the students and families being served by the school.
 |  |  |  |
| The school board’s plan to ensure effective and transparent management of school operations is sufficient to deliver proposed education program, accountability goals, outcomes, and state education priorities. |  |  |  |
| The school’s plan to successfully carry out start-up activities is described. The plan includes a discussion of potential start-up challenges, plans to address those challenges, and how the vision, mission, and ideas of the founders will be translated to the operational leader(s) once the school opens. |  |  |  |
| Qualifications for all persons that hold administrative, supervisory, or instructional leadership roles at the school are described and the board’s evaluation process for those positions is presented. |  |  |  |
| The board’s process for hiring individuals in leadership positions at the school is described, including: 1) how the process will be open and fair; and 2) specific plans to reach out to candidates who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, and disability. |  |  |  |
| Presents a clear description of the board’s plans:* For initial and ongoing training of board members, including plans for onboarding new board members;
* To comply with Open Meetings and Open Records laws; and
* For how the founding and ongoing governing board will create and adopt board policies.
 |  |  |  |
| If the school intends to contract with a CMO or other organization for management services, specific evidence is provided to demonstrate the provider’s successful track record in academic, operational and financial performance. |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***VIII. Financial Management***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| All section requirements are addressed and attachments included. |  |  |  |
| The financial management plan addresses all criteria, demonstrates a strong understanding of charter school finance, and is likely to be successful. |  |  |  |
| The comprehensive start-up plus three-year operating budget addresses all criteria and is reasonable. |  |  |  |
| The proposed budget is aligned with the proposed school described in other sections of the application, including the enrollment projection table. |  |  |  |
| The application includes a contingency budget if the school does not receive a federal CSP grant. |  |  |  |
| The monthly cash flow projection for the start-up year and first operational year addresses all criteria and is reasonable. |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***IX. Operations***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| The facilities plan is described completely and likely to lead to the school securing a suitable facility that meets the unique needs of the school and complies with health and safety and building code requirements. |  |  |  |
| Potential conflicts of interest related to facilities are identified. |  |  |  |
| The school’s planned transportation arrangements are reasonable. |  |  |  |
| The school’s planned food service program is reasonable. |  |  |  |
| The health services plan is reasonable. |  |  |  |
| The discipline process creates a safe and healthy environment for students and staff, is equitable for all student groups, and is consistent with Minnesota Statutes. |  |  |  |
| A vision and strategy for meaningful parent and community support and engagement is presented that is likely to further the school’s mission and program. |  |  |  |
| Parent and community engagement begins in the design stage and continues in substantive ways throughout the planning and implementation phases of the school. |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***X. Marketing and Outreach***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| Outreach and recruitment plan demonstrates understanding of the community to be served and is likely to be effective, including reaching families traditionally less informed about educational options:* + Plan addresses how parents and students in the community will be informed about this charter school and given an equal opportunity to attend this charter school.
	+ Plan addresses how this school will intentionally and specifically conduct outreach to educationally and economically disadvantaged and hard-to-reach populations, including students with special needs and English Learners.
	+ Plan addresses how the school will reach out to students of diverse backgrounds.
 |  |  |  |
| An open admissions process is described and an enrollment and lottery policy are provided. Process and policy are consistent with statutory requirements and indicate the school will not limit admission beyond grade level and class size capacity and will only exempt prospective students from the lottery that are provided preference in federal guidance and state law. |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***XI. School Founders***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| All section requirements are addressed. |  |  |  |
| Primary school founders are well-positioned to develop, plan, and implement a new high-performing charter school. The founding group:* + Has capacity to oversee the successful development and implementation of the educational program presented in the application;
	+ Has capacity to oversee the effective and responsible management of public funds;
	+ Has capacity to oversee and be responsible for the school’s compliance with its legal obligations; and
	+ Has experience and expertise that includes K-12 education (pre-K if applicable), design and operation of a charter school, management, legal compliance, real estate and facilities, school financial management, human resources, fundraising and development, community engagement, and parent involvement.
 |  |  |  |
| The application clearly describes founders’:* Intent to become a member of the board;
* Intent to apply for employment at the new school; and,
* Affiliations/relationships with other founders and current/potential consultants and vendor organizations.
 |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***XII. Early Learning Program (if applicable)***

***A. Early Learning Program Description, Need, and Demand***

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| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| All section requirements are addressed. |  |  |  |
| The application provides a summary of the school’s proposed early learning program(s), including the fee structure of the program(s) (if fee-based), and indication whether the school will grant enrollment preference to kindergarten for students participating in the school’s free early learning program(s) (if applicable). |  |  |  |
| The application describes how the early learning program(s) will be funded. The funding mechanism(s) are reasonable and allowable. |  |  |  |
| The application provides compelling evidence of the need and demand for the proposed program(s). |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***B. Prekindergarten and/or Preschool Instructional Program***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| All section requirements are addressed. |  |  |  |
| Comprehensive Child Assessment |  |  |  |
| Intentional Instructional Practice |  |  |  |
| Kindergarten Transition |  |  |  |
| Community-Based Services |  |  |  |
| Staff Ratios and Licensure |  |  |  |
| Teacher Content Knowledge |  |  |  |
| Completion of Early Childhood Screening |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |

***C. Early Childhood Health and Development Screening***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths** |  |
| **Areas for Improvement** |  |
| **Questions** |  |
|  | **Beginning** | **Approaches** | **Meets** |
| All section requirements are addressed. |  |  |  |
| The application includes a description of the school’s plan and capacity to provide an Early Childhood Screening program in accordance with applicable law. |  |  |  |
| The plan includes a description of how the school will meet MDE accountability requirements for data submission. |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL SECTION RATING** |  |  |  |