



**New Charter School Application
Updated June 2024**

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Introduction

The Minnesota Guild (the Guild) seeks applications on an annual basis from developing teams who are interested in starting a new high-quality charter school in Minnesota. This new charter school application integrates national standards as outlined by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) pertaining to Application Process and Decision Making, Commitment and Capacity, and Oversight and Evaluation. Additionally, application criteria and requirements reflect the Minnesota Association of Charter School Authorizers' (MACSA) Principles and Standards guidance.

This document specifies the instructions for submitting a new charter school application to the Guild. These application requirements are aligned with the Minnesota Department of Education's (MDE) most recent *New Charter School Affidavit Instructions*, and *Guidance for Authorizers on New Charter School Application Requirements from 2023 Legislative Session*, both of which can be [referenced here](#). These requirements are also aligned with MDE's *Charter Schools Program (CSP) Start-Up Grant Opportunity*, located [here](#).

This review cycle is aligned with the May 1st 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 fourteen months thereafter (e.g., an approved May 1, 2025 affidavit would be eligible to begin serving students in the 2026-27 school year.)

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 was launched as a charter school authorizer to help realize Shanker's original vision for teacher-led charter schools. [Minnesota Statutes, chapter 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, contractual outcomes and statutory requirements.

The Guild supports 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 15 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.

Vision: The Minnesota Guild of Public Charter Schools advances positive educational outcomes for students that lead to success in life.

Mission: The Guild advocates for teacher leadership, professional autonomy, and the creation of innovative schools for student engagement and the ownership of learning. The Guild strives to support students, families, and communities most affected by the achievement gap and low graduation rates.

Teacher-Powered Schools

As a single-purpose charter school authorizer under [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.05](#), the Minnesota Guild may not limit its authorizing decisions to any single curriculum, learning program, or method. However, the Guild is interested in and committed to growing a portfolio of high-quality, innovative 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](#) for additional information and resources.

Timeline, Review and Evaluation Process

[Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.06, subd. 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 new charter school application review process includes the following key dates based on that statutory deadline:

Phase	Event/Action:	Key Date/Deadline:	Guild Review Activities
One	New Charter Application RFP Posted	August 1	The Guild will post its updated new charter school application on the Guild’s website by August 1st
	Information Webinar for Interested Applicants	September	Informational Webinar: The webinar introduces interested groups to the Guild’s LOI and application and review process and is an initial opportunity for the Guild to provide technical assistance.
	Letter of Intent (LOI) Due to the Guild	October 15	Must be submitted via email as attachments by 11:59 p.m. on October 15th
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants are REQUIRED to submit a letter of intent (LOI) by October 15th. • All required LOI information must be provided. • The LOI provides a basic overview of your proposed new charter school and detailed information about the development team forming the school. • The LOI is formally evaluated using the rubric below and approval establishes eligibility to submit a full application in January for the current application cycle. 		

Phase	Event/Action:	Key Date/Deadline:	Guild Review Activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 charter school applications. 		
	Developer Capacity Interviews	Late October to Early November	The Guild will interview developing groups (either remotely or in person at the Guild’s office) to help determine which applicants will be invited to submit a full application to the Guild. (See evaluative rubric below.)
	LOI Approval(s) Determined	November 15	Guild Executive Director notifies LOI applicants via email on November 15th.
Two	Technical Assistance for Accepted LOI Applicants	Late November to early January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Assistance Webinar: A technical assistance webinar will be held virtually in December of the application year 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. The Guild will also meet virtually with each applicant group to clarify application requirements and answer developers’ questions.
	Full Application Due to the Guild	January 15	Must be submitted via email as attachments by 11:59 p.m. on January 15th

Phase	Event/Action:	Key Date/Deadline:	Guild Review Activities
Three	Application Review Process	January/February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Review: Full applications submitted electronically by the deadline will undergo a technical review by Guild staff to verify the application is complete. Incomplete applications will not be further reviewed. • Peer Reviewer and Inter-Rater Reliability Training: Application reviewers will participate in remote training to promote consistent reviews and inter-rater reliability. • Desk Review: Complete applications will be reviewed by Guild staff, consultants, and/or board members against the evaluative rubrics built into the application instructions. • Review Panel and Consensus: As necessary, application reviewers will discuss individual reviews and arrive at consensus ratings and recommendations. • An application must achieve a “Meets Standard” rating from the review panel in all application sections to be further considered for approval. • Negotiations Response: Selected applicants may be asked to review/clarify one or more sections of the application and resubmit an updated application to the Guild, <i>likely within a two-week window.</i> • Final Application Approval: Guild Board will make final approval decisions at its February board meeting.
	Capacity Interviews - Round Two	March	Second Capacity Interviews: Applicants will be invited to participate in a second capacity interview, during which time the Guild will further 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. All key developers/founders are expected to attend.
Four	Guild Notifies Applicants of Initial Decisions	March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants will be notified of the Guild’s decision in March.
	Application Revisions by developers Detailed Budgets Submitted	March/April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed Budget: Selected 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. • The Guild will work with applicants to prepare new school affidavits for the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). This will include communication exchanges, reviews, edits, etc.

Phase	Event/Action:	Key Date/Deadline:	Guild Review Activities
	Affidavit Submitted to MDE	May 1	Affidavit Submission: Guild will submit a new charter school affidavit to MDE by May 1st.

***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 reasons beyond Guild control (legislative changes, state policy, pandemic, national/state emergency, etc.)*
- The Guild is committed to growing its portfolio of high-quality charter schools. While the expected plan is to run a new charter school application process each year, the Guild board maintains the final decision regarding whether or not an annual application process is conducted. Factors such as the number of schools undergoing renewal, recent new charter school approvals, current capacity, etc., may cause an annual application process to be foregone for that year. This discretion is essential for the Guild to effectively oversee its current portfolio and obligations and make new charter school decisions to promote a portfolio of high-quality schools.*

Letter of Intent (LOI) Instructions

- 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 (**using the forms below.**)
- The LOI provides the Guild with a basic overview of your proposed new school, the capacity of the developing group and the compelling demand and need for the new school. The LOI also helps the Guild prepare sufficient resources for the review of full new charter applications.
- **Please address the following in your LOI (please limit your LOI narrative to ten (10) pages, not counting attachments and forms):**
 1. Mission and vision of the proposed school;
 2. Ages/grades of students to be served;
 3. Proposed school opening date;
 4. Target population of students to be served;
 5. Proposed location of the school (be as specific as possible);
 6. Estimated number of students to be served at capacity;
 7. Need and demand study for the new school (**submit as an attachment to your LOI narrative - does not count toward page limit**):
 - current and projected demographic information;
 - student enrollment patterns;
 - information on existing schools and types of educational programs currently available;
 - characteristics of proposed students and families;
 - availability of properly zoned and classified facilities; and
 - quantification of existing demand for the school or site;
 8. Educational philosophy and instructional approach of the school;
 9. How the school will meet the statutory purposes of charter schools; and
 10. Additionally, *for each school founder/developer* (include all persons involved in the development of the application), provide a brief narrative or chart that includes:
 - Their experience/involvement with pre-K-12 education and the design and operation of a charter school - all past charter school experience **must** be cited;
 - Other relevant experience in areas of public schools, management, finance, human resources, legal compliance and/or non profits;
 - Expected role and responsibilities during the pre-operational planning period;
 - Whether they intend to become a member of the initial board of directors per Minnesota Statutes, section 124 E.07;
 - Whether they intend to apply for employment at the new school;
 - Affiliations/relationships with other founders and current/potential consultants and vendor organizations; and
 - Any criminal and/or bankruptcy history (failure to discuss information may result in disapproval of the new charter school LOI/application.) For each board member, identify the date of the most recent criminal background/bankruptcy check obtained for school founders and whether adverse information was identified (do not send background check reports to the Guild - maintain records for future reference).
 11. Complete the LOI and criminal background check/bankruptcy disclosure certification forms.
- The LOI and required forms below **MUST** be used for your LOI submission.
- Please limit your LOI narrative to no more than ten (10) pages plus attachments and forms.
- **Submit your LOI to the Guild via email to jim.zacchini@guildschools.org no later than 11:59 p.m. on October 15th.**
- If the LOI form is not submitted by October 15, the developing group is **not** eligible to submit a full application in January of the current application cycle.



**Letter of Intent (LOI) to Apply – Due October 15
New Charter School Application**

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

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

Full Name	Mailing Address	Email Address	Phone Number

Add additional rows, if necessary.

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):

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Add additional rows, if necessary.



New Charter School Application

Criminal Background Check and Bankruptcy Disclosure Certification Form

New Charter School Application Founding Group:

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

Criminal Background Checks: Developing schools must 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 must be no older than six months.**

This certification form verifies that background checks do not include adverse information for any key founders of the applicant team. Further, this form certifies that any bankruptcy is disclosed for individual key founders. You must retain individual background check reports and bankruptcy information. The Guild may review those documents upon request. Please do **not** submit individual background check reports to the Guild at this time.

Complete the following table for each key founder.

Key Founder Full Legal Name	Type and Date of Criminal Background Check	Result of Criminal Background Check	Bankruptcy History	Date of Bankruptcy Discharge	Notes (if applicable)

Add additional rows to the table as necessary.

Certification:

By signing below, I hereby certify that the Criminal Background Checks and Bankruptcy Disclosures provided above are accurate. If one or more checks or disclosures produce adverse information, I agree to immediately notify the Guild to discuss the results.

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

Printed 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.

LOI and Initial Capacity Interview Reviewer Summary

Strengths			
Areas for Improvement			
Questions			
	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
All LOI requirements are addressed.			
The LOI presents a compelling plan to develop and implement a new charter school.			
The need and demand study (attached) presents a clear need and parent demand for the new charter school.			
School founders have sufficient and necessary experience, expertise, and knowledge to start a new charter school.			
The LOI and initial capacity interview demonstrates the founding group is ready to submit a full new charter school application.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			
OVERALL RATING			

LOI and Initial Capacity Interview:

Each criterion listed above will be rated as follows:

- **Meets:** Addresses 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.
- **Approaches:** Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- **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.

The applicant group will also receive an overall rating of Beginning, Approaches, or Meets. **The group must receive an overall rating of Meets to be eligible to submit a full application.**

New Charter School Full Application

Application Instructions:

Full Application

- **An email containing an electronic version of the application must be received by the Guild via email by 11:59p on January 15th.** Applicants must send an electronic copy of the full application, including all attachments, in either Microsoft Word, Excel, and/or PDF via e-mail to jim.zacchini@guildschools.org. A developing group must be invited to submit a full application based on the review of the group's LOI and capacity interview.

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. *Limit attachments to those that are requested.*

Required Attachments (see below for more information):

- Articles of Incorporation (if the organization is incorporated)
- Proposed bylaws
- Proposed enrollment and lottery policy
- Letters of support from community organizations
- List of potential students with email addresses and phone numbers provided
- Founder contact list
- Founder résumés
- Proposed organizational chart (if not included in the application narrative)
- Market need and demand study
- 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 in which the new charter school proposes to locate
- Evidence of parent and community interest in the school
- CMO/EMO: The proposed management agreement or other comprehensive service agreement (if applicable)

Application Requirements:

Important Note: *These application requirements are aligned with the Minnesota Department of Education's (MDE) most recent New Charter School Affidavit Instructions, located [here](#), MDE's Charter School Start Up Grant – Winter Competition Application, located [here](#) and changes enacted in the 2024 Minnesota Legislative Session.*

Full Application – Due January 15
New Charter School Application

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

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

Full Name	Mailing Address	Email Address	Phone Number

Add additional rows, if necessary.

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

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Print Founder Name

Founder Signature and Date

Add additional rows, if necessary.

Full New Charter School Application

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

Section	Suggested Section Page Limit
I. Executive Summary	3
II. Vision and Mission	1
III. Statutory Purposes and Priorities	4
IV. Need and Demand Study, Grade Levels and Total Number of Students Served	5
V. School Founders/Developers	3
VI. Educational Program	10
VII. Accountability Goals, Student Performance Expectations, and Evaluation Plan	5
VIII. Governance, Management, and Administration	10
IX. Staffing and Professional Development	4
X. School Operations	6
XI. Financial Plan	4
XII. Early Learning Program (If Applicable)	Separate
Total Pages	55

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 \(2\)](#).
3. State the grade levels and number of students to be served.
4. State the intended location of the new school. A specific city must be identified.
5. Briefly describe the educational philosophy, instructional approach, and key programmatic features the school will implement in order to accomplish its vision and mission.

6. Describe plans to improve the learning, achievement and success of all students 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 [Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness](#) (CACR) goals the school will address.
8. Summarize the relevant experience of the school’s developers.

Executive Summary Reviewer Summary

Strengths			
Areas for Improvement			
Questions			
	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
All section requirements are addressed.			
A clear, concise overview explains the key elements of the proposed charter school.			
The Executive Summary corresponds with the remainder of the application.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			
OVERALL SECTION RATING			

Section II. Vision and Mission (1 page)

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 new school is aligned with the Guild’s commitment to the promotion of teacher leadership and teacher-powered schools (encouraged, but not required).

Vision and Mission Reviewer Summary

Strengths			
Areas for Improvement			
Questions			
	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
Clear, concise and compelling vision and mission statements articulate the desired long-term outcomes 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 commitment to the promotion of teacher leadership and teacher-powered schools (encouraged, but not required).			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			
OVERALL SECTION RATING			

Section III. Statutory Purposes and Priorities (4 pages)

The statutory purposes (primary purpose and additional purposes) the school intends to fulfill, per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.01, subd. 1.](#)

1. As articulated in the statute referenced above, ***The primary purpose of mission-driven charter schools is to improve the learning, achievement and success of all students.*** 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 additional 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). As also articulated in statute referenced above, additional purposes of a charter school are:
 - a. Increase quality learning opportunities for all students;
 - b. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;

- c. Measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes;
 - d. Establish new forms of accountability for schools; and
 - e. Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site (*this additional purpose is encouraged, but not required.*)
3. Per Minnesota’s Federal CSP Grant Project, describe how the charter school will address the following optional priority areas (strongly encouraged, but not required):
- a. The application proposes a project that includes the creation of a high-quality charter school that is developed and implemented with meaningful and ongoing engagement with current or former teachers and other educators beyond the statutory requirement of a teacher developer.
 - b. The application proposes a project that includes the creation of a high-quality charter school that is developed and implemented using a community-centered approach that includes an assessment of community assets, informs the development of the charter school, and includes implementation of protocols and practices designed to ensure that the applicant will use and interact with community assets on an ongoing basis to create and maintain strong community ties.
 - c. The application proposes a project that includes collaboration between the applicant and traditional public schools or districts that benefit students and families across schools.
 - d. The application proposes a project that includes at least one high school grade (grades 9–12) within the first two years of implementation.

Statutory Purposes and Priorities Reviewer Summary

Strengths			
Areas for Improvement			
Questions			
	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
All section requirements are addressed.			
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 purpose(s) 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 will address federal CSP priority areas (strongly encouraged, but not required.)			

- **Meets:** Addresses 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.
- **Approaches:** Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- **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.

OVERALL SECTION RATING

Section IV. Need and Demand Study, Grade Levels and Total Number of Students Served (5 pages)

Provide a **market need and demand study** (submit as an **attachment** to your application narrative - does not count toward page limit) that includes the six elements stated in the [Minnesota Statutes 124E](#). Per statute, "Market need and demand study" means a study that includes the following for the proposed location(s) of the new school:

- (1) current and projected demographic information;
- (2) student enrollment patterns;
- (3) information on existing schools and types of educational programs currently available;
- (4) characteristics of proposed students and families;
- (5) availability of properly zoned and classified facilities; and
- (6) quantification of existing demand for the school or site.

Your response to above should include a comprehensive 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 existing and already approved school options in the proposed location.

1. Based on the above analysis and market need and demand study, 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*.
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 as an attachment*. Detail the strategies that have been used to engage the community in the development of this school. Include information about key community partners.
3. Grade levels and total number of students to be served when fully operational. Please complete a table similar to the one below to identify the number of students expected to attend the charter school each year by grade level. Add rows with estimates/projections for each year as necessary until projected maximum enrollment is achieved.

Year of Operation	Pre-K/ Preschool	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
One															

Year of Operation	Pre-K/Preschool	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Two															
Three															
Four															
Five															

4. Provide persuasive 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.

Need and Demand Study, Grade Levels and Total Number of Students Served Reviewer Summary

Strengths					
Areas for Improvement					
Questions					
			Beginning	Approaches	Meets
All section requirements are addressed.					
A market need and demand study is provided <i>as an attachment</i> and includes the six elements stated in Minnesota Statutes 2023.					
The market need and demand study includes 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.					
The response clearly describes 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. 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.					
This section describes community support for an additional school in this geographic area and includes evidence of community support for, and interest in, the proposed charter school sufficient to support the school to reach its					

anticipated enrollment. Letters/emails of support from community organizations are provided as an attachment . The application discusses strategies that have been used to engage the community in the development of this school and provides information about key community partners.			
Grade levels and total number of students to be served when fully operational are indicated in the chart provided.			
Compelling evidence documents the need for a school with these characteristics and proposed grade configuration in the location identified.			
Clear evidence of community support is presented that is likely to further the school’s mission and program.			
Documented and persuasive evidence of parent interest in the new charter school is presented.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			
OVERALL SECTION RATING			

Section V. School Founders/Developers (3 pages)

The experience and background, including any criminal and/or bankruptcy history, of the school’s developers (i.e., school’s founders, developers, and applicant team)

- Describe how the school founders and board members *collectively* have the capacity to develop, plan, and implement a new high-performing charter school. Demonstrate that the founding group and board:
 - 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 plans for financial stability following the completion of the CSP grant project.
 - Have experience and expertise that includes pre-kindergarten-12th grade education (as applicable), legal compliance, real estate and facilities, school financial management and accounting, fundraising and development, community engagement, and parent involvement.
- 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;

- d. Whether they intend to become a member of the initial board of directors per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.07](#);
 - e. Whether they intend to apply for employment at the new school;
 - f. Affiliations/relationships with other founders and current/potential consultants and vendor organizations; and
 - g. Any criminal and/or bankruptcy history (failure to discuss information may result in disapproval of the new charter school application.)
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).

School Founders/Developers Reviewer Summary

Strengths			
Areas for Improvement			
Questions			
	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
All section requirements are addressed.			
<p>Primary school founders are well-positioned to develop, plan, and implement a new high-performing charter school. The founding group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Has capacity to oversee the successful development and implementation of the educational program presented in the application; o Has capacity to oversee the effective and responsible management of public funds; o Has capacity to oversee and be responsible for the school’s compliance with its legal obligations; and o 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. 			
<p>The application clearly describes founders’:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Intent to become a member of the board; o Intent to apply for employment at the new school; o Affiliations/relationships with other founders and current/potential consultants and vendor organizations; and o Criminal and bankruptcy history. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● Beginning: Lacks significant detail, demonstrates lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s 			

OVERALL SECTION RATING

Section VI. Educational Program (10 pages)

Describe a complete, coherent educational program design with clear plans to improve the learning, achievement and success of all students.

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 the learning, achievement and success of all students at grade levels to be served, including the school's **approach to instructional methodology, curricula and instructional techniques**.
4. Describe the school's plan to address the **social and emotional learning needs of students and student support services**.
5. **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 [Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness](#) (CACR):**
 - **___ Meet school readiness goals.**
The applicant describes plans to ensure all children are successfully prepared to attend school.
 - **___ Close the academic achievement gap among all racial and ethnic groups of students and between students living in poverty and students not living in poverty.**
The applicant describes plans to decrease achievement gaps by ensuring academic achievement targets are met.
 - **___ All students attain career and college readiness before graduating from high school.**
The applicant describes plans to prepare students for post-secondary success.
 - **___ All students graduate from high school.**
The applicant describes plans for student graduation.
 - **___ Prepare students to be lifelong learners.**
The applicant describes plans to prepare students for success after high school and beyond.
6. Provide compelling and current research (please cite research that is no more than 10 years old) and data that indicate the educational program is effective for the students targeted by the school, including the curriculum and instructional practices that will be used.
7. Provide information on the **innovative aspects** of the proposed education program.
8. Describe how students will receive a **comprehensive** education. Demonstrate how the program is clearly designed to support state academic content standards and how the program will enable all students to meet **Minnesota's student academic achievement standards**.
9. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** Discuss how the charter school will strive to eliminate disparities for racial and ethnic groups. Include **equity and inclusion plans** that demonstrate understanding of the challenges to academic

achievement for students in racial and ethnic groups and/or with disabilities. Identify how the education program is designed to engage students in ways that are *culturally and linguistically appropriate, responsive, and relevant*.

10. Describe how the school will offer **both remediation and acceleration** where appropriate based on the need and demand study. 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.
11. Describe the board's plans to support the school in developing systems and infrastructure to meet the U.S. Department of Education's definition of high-quality charter schools (HQCS) and as reflected in the MDE's 2024 High-Quality Charter School Comprehensive Performance Framework.

High-quality charter school

The term "high-quality charter school" means a charter school that-

- a. shows evidence of strong academic results, which may include strong student academic growth, as determined by a State;
- b. has no significant issues in the areas of student safety, financial and operational management, or statutory or regulatory compliance;
- c. has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students served by the charter school; and
- d. has demonstrated success in increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for each of the subgroups of students, as defined in section *6311(c)(2)* of this title, except that such demonstration is not required in a case in which the number of students in a group is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.

12. **Special Education Management and Services:** Describe the school's plan to **provide special education management and services** including how the charter school will comply with sections *613(a)(5)* and *613(e)(1)(B)* of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, including:
 - a. 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 and that demonstrates evidence of understanding legal requirements.
 - b. Describe the school's appropriate Child Find Process.
 - c. 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 contractors; 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.
 - d. Describe how the school will employ or contract with an appropriately licensed special education director, teachers, specialists, etc.
 - e. 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.
13. **English Learners.** Describe how the school will meet the educational needs of English-language learning students. Describe 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.
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 minimum instructional hours per Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.03, subd. 6 and section 120A.41. Include (either in attachments or in application narrative):
 - a. A description of a student's "typical day" experience.

- b. A snapshot of the school’s proposed daily/weekly schedule that includes length of day.
- c. A snapshot of the school’s proposed school year calendar that includes total annual instructional hours.

15. Clearly indicate if the new charter school is planning to incorporate consistent with applicable statutes and rules:

- Digital, online, hybrid or blended learning; and/or
- Project-based learning; and/or
- Work-based learning.

If the new charter school is not planning to incorporate any of the above, include a statement indicating such.

16. If the school plans to provide any **out-of-school time programs** such as before/after school or summer school, describe those programs. A charter school must have authorizer approval before implementing out-of-time school programs.

Education Program Reviewer Summary

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Is fully and clearly described; o Is based on current research; o Is aligned to state standards; o Provides for a comprehensive education; and o Presents a clear plan to improve student academic achievement. 			
A clear plan to address the social and emotional learning needs of students and student support services is provided.			
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 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR).			
Innovative aspects of the school’s education program are clearly described.			

DEI: 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.			
The board's plans to develop systems and infrastructure to meet the High-Quality Charter School is clearly described.			
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.			
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.			
If applicable, clear plans are presented to incorporate digital, online, hybrid or blended learning; project-based learning; and/or work-based learning.			
If applicable, out-of-school or extracurricular programs are clearly and completely described .			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			
OVERALL SECTION RATING			

Section VII. Accountability Goals, Student Performance Expectations, and Evaluation Plan (5 pages)

Provide specific academic and nonacademic outcomes that students must achieve.

Provide up to six **student achievement/growth** measurable academic achievement goals that focus on improved student achievement. Include outcomes that address the expectations of a high-quality charter school including academic proficiency, academic growth and/or graduation rate.

Present all goals in SMART format that focus on *improving the learning, achievement and success of all students* in mathematics, reading, and science per Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.01.

- o Three of these goals should use state assessments as the method of measurement in mathematics, reading, and science (for all students tested.)
- o If your school will serve 12th grade students in the first four years of operation, provide **one graduation rate goal** based on the state’s measurement/definition of graduation as required by CACR.

Provide up to two **other student** performance goals in SMART format that are school/mission specific.

- o You may also include a student academic goal using an alternate assessment (NWEA, FastBridge, etc.) or what is referred to in statute as “non-academic” (e.g., using the HOPE survey to measure student autonomy.)

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.)

- o These goals are school specific and highlight the unique aspects of your school.
- o Generally, one to two goals should be developed.

Instructions:

1. Provide all goals in SMART Goal format. Use this table to present each goal.

Goal #	Goal Heading: [Write the SMART Goal here with annual performance targets for the contract term] Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Goal Area (CACR): [Identify the CACR goal area applicable to this specific goal (i.e., ready for school, closing achievement gaps, career and college ready by graduation, all students graduate, and prepare students to be lifelong learners.)]				
Contract Year	Year One SY2027 (Baseline)	Year Two SY 2028	Year Three SY 2029	Year Four SY 2030	Year Five SY 2031
Goal Percentage or Number					
Rationale for Goal					

2. For each contract outcome/goal, **provide a brief rationale statement** at the end of the SMART goal (e.g., why the goal is important for your school, how does it promote a high quality 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.
3. After stating all goals, describe a strong plan for how the school will use assessment data to affect teaching and learning to *improve the learning, achievement and success of all students*. 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.

Accountability Goals, Student Performance Expectations, and Evaluation Plan Reviewer Summary

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 in reading, math and science using state assessments.			
Goals clearly address the primary purpose 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.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			
OVERALL SECTION RATING			

Section VIII. 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).
 - a. Include a rationale for the management and leadership structure.
 - b. Provide an Organizational Chart (either in the application narrative or as an attachment) that clearly distinguishes between governance (board) and management/administration (school leadership) and provides key roles and responsibilities of each.
 - c. If applicable, provide a draft of the school's management agreement or other comprehensive service agreement (as an attachment).

2. Charter Management Organization (CMO):
 - a. If applicable, discuss your school's plans to contract with a CMO, educational management organization (EMO) or other comprehensive service provider. NOTE: Federal CSP grant funds cannot be used for CMO/EMO services/contracts.
 - b. Provide specific evidence demonstrating the provider's successful track record in academic, operational and financial performance.
 - c. Clearly define the role of the provider in managing/administering the charter school's CSP subgrant.

LEGAL DEFINITIONS (Updated to reflect changes in the 2024 Legislative Session):

- Charter Management Organization (CMO): Defined as "a nonprofit entity or organization that operates or manages a charter school or a network of charter schools or can control all or substantially all of a school's education program or a school's administrative, financial, business, or operational functions."
 - Education Management Organization (EMO): Defined as "a for-profit entity or organization that operates or manages a charter school or a network of charter schools or can control all or substantially all of a school's education program or a school's administrative, financial, business, or operational functions."
3. Describe the school's governance plan and how the board will ensure effective and accountable governance of the school's operations. The plan should:
 - a. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a charter school board, including board duties outlined in [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.07, subd. 6](#).
 - b. Describe how the governing board provides strong policy adoption and oversight.
 - c. 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.
 4. Describe the school board's plan to ensure effective and transparent management of the school's operations:
 - a. 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.
 - b. Management plans are sufficient to deliver the proposed educational program, accountability goals, outcomes, and state education priorities.
 - c. Organizational, management and financial plans demonstrate operational effectiveness and fiscal viability.
 - d. The Application demonstrates intent to use a fair and open process to select a well-qualified school leadership team including recruitment and hiring timelines (this will need to be verified if a CSP subgrant is awarded.)
 - e. Disclose the names of any founders or board members intending to serve on the school's interim board, to apply for employment at the new school and/or to contract for services with the new school.
 5. 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.
 6. 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.
 7. Consistent with [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.12, subd. 2.](#), describe the *qualifications* for all persons that hold administrative, supervisory, or instructional leadership roles at the school.

8. Consistent with [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.12, subd. 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.
9. Describe the *process for hiring individuals in administration and 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.
10. Describe the *plan for initial and ongoing training of board members*. Include plans for onboarding of new board members.
11. Explain how the board will *comply with Open Meetings and Open Records laws*.

Governance, Management, and Administration Reviewer Summary

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) and provides key roles and responsibilities of each.			
If the school intends to contract with a CMO or other organization for management services, all required information is provided and specific evidence is cited that demonstrates the provider’s successful track record in academic, operational and financial performance.			
The school’s governance plan and how the board will ensure effective and accountable governance of the school’s operations is described and addresses school board duties per Minnesota statute.			
The application clearly describes how the board will provide strong policy adoption and oversight.			

<p>Board member recruitment plans address how well-qualified individuals will be recruited to serve on the board including recruitment of individuals who are representative of students and families to be served at the school.</p>			
<p>The school board’s plan to ensure effective and transparent management of the school’s operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Management plans are sufficient to deliver the proposed educational program, accountability goals, outcomes, and state education priorities. ● Organizational, management and financial plans demonstrate operational effectiveness and fiscal viability. ● Application demonstrates intent to use a fair and open process to select a well-qualified school leadership team including recruitment and hiring timelines (this will need to be verified if a CSP subgrant is awarded.) ● The application includes a disclosure of the names of any founders or board members intending to serve on the school’s interim board, to apply for employment at the new school and/or to contract for services with the new school. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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.” 			
<p>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.</p>			
<p>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.</p>			
<p>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.</p>			
<p>Presents a clear description of the board’s plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For initial and ongoing training of board members, including plans for onboarding new board members; and ○ To comply with Open Meetings and Open Records laws. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			

OVERALL SECTION RATING			
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Section IX: Staffing and Professional Development (4 pages)

Describe the proposed school’s plan for staffing the school with appropriately qualified and licensed personnel, including the school’s plan for staff professional development.

1. Describe the school’s plan for recruiting, training, and retaining well qualified, appropriately licensed, and high quality instructional staff to meet the unique needs of the school’s educational program.
2. Describe the instructional leadership structure at the school. Discuss the school’s teacher leadership roles and how the school will promote a teacher-powered model of school leadership (*encouraged but not required*).
3. Discuss how the educational staff’s skills and experiences will be sufficient to carry out the educational program model efficiently and effectively. Present a clear plan for recruiting, training, and retaining high quality staff.
4. 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.
5. Explain how 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.

Staffing and Professional Development Reviewer Summary

Strengths			
Areas for Improvement			
Questions			
	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
The school has a plan for recruiting, training, and retaining well qualified, appropriately licensed, and high quality instructional staff to meet the unique needs of the school’s educational program.			
The instructional leadership structure at the school is clearly described.			
The section discusses the proposed school’s teacher leadership roles and how the school will promote a teacher-powered model of school leadership (optional).			

The educational staff’s skills and experiences appear sufficient to carry out the educational program model efficiently and effectively. The section includes a clear plan for recruiting, training, and retaining high quality staff.			
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 is described. The plan clearly addresses job-embedded professional development initiatives that are likely to sufficiently prepare teachers to deliver the school’s unique program to the targeted student population.			
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.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			
OVERALL SECTION RATING			

Section X. School Operations (6 pages)

1. **Marketing and Outreach:** Describe the school’s plan for ongoing marketing, outreach and dissemination of information about the school’s offerings and enrollment procedure to families that reflect the diversity of Minnesota’s population and targeted groups under [Minnesota Statutes 2023, section 124E.17, subd. 1\(a\)](#). Based on results of your attached need and demand study, describe the marketing and outreach strategies that will be used to reach all students. A complete response will include:
 - Ongoing marketing, outreach and dissemination of information about the school’s offerings and enrollment procedure to families reflect the diversity of Minnesota’s population and targeted groups under Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.17, subd. 1(a)
 - Outreach and recruitment plans demonstrate understanding of the students to be served and are likely to be effective, including reaching families traditionally less informed about educational options.
 - Plan addresses how students will be informed about the new 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.
 - Enrollment projections are realistic and supported by evidence of actual or potential demand (Market Need and Demand Study) and marketing and recruitment plans seem likely to generate enrollment sufficient to meet projections. Discuss plans in the event that enrollment is lower than projected. Please refer to the Enrollment Table located above.

- 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.*
 - An open admissions and lottery process is described which indicates that the school will not limit admission beyond grade level and class size capacity and will only provide enrollment preference to prospective students who are provided such preferences in federal guidance and state law.
 - A lottery process is described that determines enrollment for the new school.
 - Provide evidence of *ongoing efforts* to engage community interest and progress towards meeting enrollment targets.
2. Describe the school’s operational plan including facility planning, transportation, food service, health services, student discipline, and parent and community involvement:

Facilities

- 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.
- 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

- Describe the school’s planned transportation arrangements.

Food Service

- Describe the school’s planned food service program.

Health Services

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

Student Discipline

- 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.

Parent and Community Involvement

- Parent and community engagement begins in the design of the school and continues in substantive ways throughout the planning and implementation phases of the new school. 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.

3. Describe how the school’s board and administration will ensure compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

School Operations Reviewer Summary

Strengths	
Areas for Improvement	
Questions	

	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
<p>Outreach and recruitment plans demonstrate understanding of the community to be served and are likely to be effective, including reaching families traditionally less informed about educational options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan includes ongoing marketing, outreach and dissemination of information about the school’s offerings and enrollment procedure to families that reflect the diversity of Minnesota’s population and targeted groups under Minnesota Statutes 2023, section 124E.17, subd. 1(a). • 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. 			
<p>Enrollment projections are realistic and supported by evidence of actual or potential demand (based on market need and demand study) and marketing and recruitment plans seem likely to generate enrollment sufficient to meet projections. Section discusses plans in the event enrollment is lower than projected.</p>			
<p>An open admissions process is described and an enrollment and lottery policy are provided (as an attachment). 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 give enrollment preference to prospective students that are provided preference in federal guidance and state law.</p>			
<p>The application discusses ongoing efforts to engage community interest and progress towards meeting enrollment targets.</p>			
<p>The facilities plan is described completely and is 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.</p>			
<p>Potential conflicts of interest related to facilities are identified.</p>			
<p>The school’s planned transportation arrangements are reasonable.</p>			
<p>The school’s planned food service program is reasonable.</p>			
<p>The health services plan is reasonable.</p>			
<p>The student discipline process 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.</p>			

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.			
This section includes specific plans describing how the school’s board and administration will ensure compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets: Addresses 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. • Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. • 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. 			
OVERALL SECTION RATING			

Section XI. Financial Plan (4 pages)

Describe the school’s financial plan to start up school operations and sustain the school’s finances after opening, including short and long-term financial projections, budget(s), and business management procedures. If the school intends to apply for federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant funds, the financial plan should include contingencies if CSP funds are not awarded or available.

1. A financial plan to start up school operations and sustain the school’s finances after opening.
 - o If the school intends to apply for **Federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant funds**, the financial plan should include appropriate CSP funding levels based on projected enrollment and contingencies if CSP funds are not awarded or available.
 - o If the new charter school includes an instructional preschool or prekindergarten program, describe the school’s plans to fund the program. Refer to “UFARS Revenue and Expenditures Guidance” and “At-A-Glance: Early Learning Program Guidance for Charter Schools and Authorizers” available on MDE’s **Charter School Resources web page** under Early Learning Guidance for Charter Schools. Indicate whether the program is free to all participants or fee-based. If fee-based, include the fee structure that will be used. If applicable, describe the school’s intent to pursue a **Minnesota Parent Aware Rating** through the **Accelerated Pathway** for the early learning program, as well as other possible funding sources to sustain the program if available, such as **Early Learning Scholarships, Voluntary Prekindergarten or School Readiness Plus**, and **Title I**.
2. 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:
 - a. Develop and approve the annual budget;
 - b. Monitor the school’s expenditures and revenues in relation to the budget;
 - c. Develop and implement appropriate financial policies and practices, including but not limited to purchasing, accounting, and payroll;
 - d. Ensure timely and accurate financial reporting;

- e. Select the financial auditor;
 - f. Monitor the near term and long-term financial health of the organization;
 - g. Manage the school’s finances day-to-day;
 - h. Maintain strong internal controls; and
 - i. Include a plan to establish an emergency/long-term reserve fund balance.
3. 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:
- a. Demonstrate an understanding of funding sources available to the charter school and the types of expenditures required to operate the charter school.
 - b. Identify realistic assumptions and their basis.
 - c. Identify minimum enrollment needed for solvency and is aligned with the enrollment table provided above.
 - d. Align staffing assumptions/expenditures with the narrative in other application sections.
 - e. Account for direct student instructional expenses, PERA/TRA contributions, and other benefits.
 - f. If your application includes an instructional preschool or prekindergarten, include potential revenues and expenditures for the program.
 - g. List any planned services to be contracted to outside providers.
 - h. Includes an alternate budget if the school does not receive a federal CSP grant.
4. 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:
- a. A narrative that includes detailed assumptions; and
 - b. A Year 1 cash flow contingency plan (start-up year), delineating a plan if the school does not receive a CSP grant.
 - c. An accounting for state funding holdbacks.

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

Financial Plan Reviewer Summary

Strengths			
Areas for Improvement			
Questions			
	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
All section requirements are addressed and attachments included.			
The financial 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.			

If applicable, the budget reflects expected revenues and expenditures for the instructional preschool or prekindergarten program.			
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.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			
OVERALL SECTION RATING			

Section XII. Early Learning Program (if applicable)

Charter school free or fee-based preschool or prekindergarten programs must meet high-quality early learning instructional program standards that are aligned with Minnesota's early learning standards for children per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.06, subd. 3\(b\)](#).

Introduction:

1. Check the box(es) that relate to the proposed Early Learning Program. **Include this information in your section narrative.**

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:

2. Provide a summary of the school's proposed early learning program(s), including the fee structure of the program(s) (if fee-based). Clearly describe how the early learning program(s) will be funded. *This should also be reflected in your budget in the Financial Management section of your application.* Address the following criteria in your response:

(I) Intentional Instructional Practice: Provide intentional instructional practice aligned with [Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress \(ECIPs\) – Minnesota's Early Learning Standards](#). 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. Provide a brief overview of the program's early learning approaches (such as use of play-based learning, inquiry-based learning, learning centers, interactive learning, etc.).
2. Indicate if the early learning program will provide full-day programming, half-day programming, or both. Provide an outline of the typical daily schedule and experience for children in the early learning program. Consider the developmental needs of young children (e.g., large motor, rest, snack, community building).
3. Briefly describe the curriculum used in the early learning program. The school should consider using ***Minnesota Parent Aware aligned curricula***.
4. Describe how the ECIPs are used to inform instruction and support the development of each child.
5. Provide an overview of instructional practice to support children's early literacy skills development.
6. Describe how the instructional practice is responsive to the cultural and linguistic needs of children in the school's early learning program.

(II) 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 preschool/prekindergarten 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.
 - a. The assessment must be used at least at program entrance and program exit.
 - b. 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.
 - c. The child assessment should be one [approved by Minnesota Parent Aware](#). It must be a valid and reliable child assessment instrument that is developmentally appropriate and comprehensive.
 - d. The comprehensive child assessment must align with [Minnesota's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress – Minnesota's Early Learning Standards](#), Revised 2017.
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.

(III) 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. The transition plan should be responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of children and their families enrolled 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.

(IV) 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.
 - a. 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 child care programs.
 - b. The coordination with community-based services should reflect the needs of the children enrolled in the early learning program.
 - c. The community-based services utilized should be responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of children and their families enrolled 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.

(V) Staff Ratios and Licensure: Ensure staff-child ratios of one-to-ten and maximum group size of 20 children led by qualified early childhood teachers.

1. Briefly describe program staffing, class size, and ratios designed to ensure a high-quality early learning program.
2. For each preschool/prekindergarten instructional class, identify staff licensure area and Minnesota 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. It is the responsibility of the school to submit staff licensure areas and Minnesota teaching license folder numbers and other credentials when staff is hired to MDE Early Learning Services at mde.els@state.mn.us.
3. If qualified early learning teaching staff are supervised by a licensed early childhood teacher, please describe the supervision process (e.g., weekly early learning team meetings, monthly observations by licensed teacher, etc.).

(VI) Teacher Content Knowledge: Ensure teachers are knowledgeable in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, native and English language programs, and instruction.

1. Describe plans for staff training and professional development specific to early childhood curriculum content, assessment, native and English language programs, and instruction. Schools are encouraged to use the [Knowledge and Competency Framework](#) as a guide in supporting the professional growth of early learning teachers.

(VII) Plan for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE): Ensure enrolled children receive ECSE services.

1. Describe how the school ensures children enrolled in the school's early learning program are receiving ECSE services through the children's resident district(s). If the charter school intends to apply to MDE to offer a state-approved voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) or school readiness plus (SRP) program, provide the school's plans for identifying, evaluating, and developing students' initial Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and for providing the services and supports identified in the IEPs for students enrolled in the charter school's VPK/SRP program.

(Please note: A charter school cannot provide ECSE services until it has a state-approved VPK or SRP program, at which point the responsibility for providing ECSE services shifts from enrolled children's resident district(s) to the charter school.)

(VIII) Completion of Early Childhood Screening: Ensure enrolled children have completed health and developmental screening within 90 days of program enrollment under Minnesota Statutes 2023, sections [121A.16](#) to [121A.19](#), and Minnesota Rules, parts [3530.3000](#) to [3530.4310](#).

1. Provide a description of how and where enrolled children receive health and developmental screening either through a traditional school district or comparable screening from Head Start, Child and Teen Checkups, clinics or through local public health organizations if the charter school is not providing the early childhood health and developmental screening program. Parents may conscientiously object to the screening requirement if they submit a statement in writing, per [Minnesota Statutes 2023, section 121A.17, subd. 3\(e\)](#).

(Please note: It is not necessary for the charter school to provide early childhood health and developmental screening, but the affidavit must describe how children receive the comprehensive health and developmental screening to identify possible concerns 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 and follow up will be made for vision, hearing, medical insurance, early childhood special education or mental health, early learning programs or public health home visiting programs.

Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening (if applicable)

Only complete if you are seeking approval to offer an early childhood health and developmental screening program.

Describe the school's plan and capacity to provide the early childhood screening program in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 2023, sections [121A.16](#) to [121A.19](#), and Minnesota Rules, parts [3530.3000](#) to [3530.4310](#).

1. Describe the qualified staff who will provide developmental screening. Staff must attend live or virtual/online training by MDE and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) for developmental screening as well as Vision and Hearing screening. (More detail on screening training is described on the [MDE screening professional learning webpage](#).)
2. Identify the observational developmental screening instrument and the parent report social-emotional screening instrument the school will use, as required by [Minnesota Rules, part 3530.3400](#). Beginning July 1, 2023 a virtual option for screening must be provided to families who request it due to health reasons per [Minnesota Statutes 2023, section 121A.17, subd. 3\(a\)](#). The [Minnesota Department of Health website](#) lists the recommended screening instruments. (Note, for virtual screening, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 is recommended for the developmental screening component.)
3. Describe how the school health and education professionals will ensure screening of each required component including vision, hearing, immunization review, review of risk factors that may impact learning, developmental screening (cognitive, fine/gross motor, speech/language, social-emotional), health care provider coverage,

height, and weight. More information, including screening standards, is available on [MDE’s Early Childhood Screening webpage](#).

4. Describe how the school will provide screening for English learners, including use of interpreters, translated forms, and translated screening instruments. Resources are available on [MDE’s Early Childhood Screening Administration Forms webpage for educators](#) and [MDE’s Early Childhood Screening webpage for parents](#). Translated screening instruments are available in Spanish, Somali and Hmong.
5. Provide the school’s plan to ensure all enrolled kindergarten students who have not previously been screened will receive the screening within 30 days after the first day of attendance.
6. In discussing the school’s plan and staff 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 2023, section 121A.17](#). This includes the establishment of the Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) Preschool Screening (PS) record and the annual data submission of the [Early Childhood Education Outcomes Screening report](#) 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, Head Start, Child and Teen Checkups, or a clinic.

(Please note: The purpose of establishing the MARSS PS record is to provide screening state aid to the school and to ensure the screening requirement has been met. The charter school must also assign MARSS PS records for submissions of comparable screening records from parents that were completed by Head Start, Child and Teen Checkups or clinics, as well as if the parent is a conscientious objector, using the registration form. The charter school will need to work with its Student Information System (SIS) support staff to set up the grade MARSS PS within the SIS to submit MARSS PS records for state aid. Charter schools will report grade PS to site 005 or to elementary 010 site, which would already be set up. The charter school will also have the option to set up a new site specific for reporting PS, which is classification 83. More detail on establishing the MARSS PS record is described in [MARSS Procedure 26](#). State aid is not paid for screenings not administered by the school. A charter school remains ultimately responsible for services provided through a contractor.)

Early Learning Program Reviewer Summary

Strengths			
Areas for Improvement			
Questions			
	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
Introduction: All requirements are addressed.			
I. Intentional Instructional Practice: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. The application describes an early learning program based on intentional instructional practice that is aligned with Minnesota’s ECIPs – Minnesota’s Early Learning Standards. B. Instructional practices are 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. C. Application prompts 1 - 6 are specifically addressed. 			

<p>II. Comprehensive Child Assessment:</p> <p>A. The application describes the school’s plan to 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.</p> <p>B. Application prompts 1 - 5 are specifically addressed.</p>			
<p>III. Kindergarten Transition:</p> <p>A. The application thoroughly describes how it will coordinate appropriate kindergarten transition with parents and kindergarten teachers.</p> <p>B. Application prompts 1 - 4 are specifically addressed.</p>			
<p>IV. Community-Based Services:</p> <p>A. The application discusses how the school will coordinate relevant services and programs with community organizations.</p> <p>B. Application prompts 1 - 2 are specifically addressed.</p>			
<p>V. Staff Ratios and Licensure:</p> <p>A. The early learning program described will ensure staff-child ratios of one-to-ten and maximum group size of 20 children led by qualified early childhood teachers.</p> <p>B. Application prompts 1 - 3 are specifically addressed.</p>			
<p>VI. Teacher Content Knowledge:</p> <p>A. The early learning program described will ensure teachers are knowledgeable in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, native and English language programs, and instruction.</p> <p>B. Application prompt 1 is specifically addressed.</p>			
<p>VII. Plan for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)</p> <p>A. The application describes plans to ensure enrolled children receive ECSE services.</p> <p>B. Application prompt 1 is specifically addressed.</p>			
<p>VIII. Completion of Early Childhood Screening:</p> <p>A. The application describes plans to ensure enrolled children have completed health and developmental screening within 90 days of program enrollment under Minnesota Statutes 2023, sections 121A.16 to 121A.19, and Minnesota Rules, parts 3530.3000 to 3530.4310.</p> <p>B. Application prompts 1 - 2 are specifically addressed.</p>			
<p>Optional: Early Childhood Health and Development Screening: This section is completed if the applicant is seeking approval to offer an early childhood health and developmental screening program.</p> <p>A. The application describes the school’s plan and capacity to provide the early childhood screening program in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 2023, sections 121A.16 to 121A.19, and Minnesota Rules, parts 3530.3000 to 3530.4310.</p>			

B. Application prompts 1 - 6 are specifically addressed.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meets: Addresses 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. ● Approaches: Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive. ● 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. 			
OVERALL SECTION RATING			



**New Charter School Application
Review Rubric Summary
{Date Here}**

School Name:	Reviewer Name:
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Strengths:

Areas for Improvement:

Overall Recommendation	Approval	Additional Information Required	Denial
Narrative Justification of Recommendation:			

Overall Section Ratings			
	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
I. Executive Summary			
II. Vision and Mission			
III. Statutory Purposes and Priorities			
IV. Need and Demand Study, Grade Levels and Total Number of Students Served			
V. School Founders/Developers			

VI. Educational Program			
VII. Accountability Goals, Student Performance Expectations and Evaluation Plan			
VIII. Governance, Management, and Administration			
IX. Staffing and Professional Development			
X. School Operations			
XI. Financial Plan			
XII. Early Learning Program (if applicable)			

Evaluation Rating Key

- **Meets:** Addresses 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.
- **Approaches:** Addresses only some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- **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.

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

Second Capacity Interview - New Charter School Application
Review Rubric Summary
{Date Here}

Second Capacity Interview Goal:

To further explore and determine the charter applicant founding team’s capacity to establish and implement a successful high-quality charter school.

School Name:	Reviewer Name:		
Overall Strengths			
Key Areas Needing Improvement			
Criteria:	Beginning	Approaches	Meets
The founding group demonstrates sufficient knowledge of and experience in starting a new charter school			
Founders proposed involvement in school development and implementation appears sufficient to start a new high-quality charter school			
The founding group demonstrates competency to establish and govern a successful high-quality charter school			
Founders present a clear and compelling need for a new charter school in the targeted location.			
Founders are familiar with the terms of the full application and are sufficiently able to answer questions about the proposed school.			
The interaction among founders is positive and collaborative			
The founding group interview demonstrates capacity and potential for success			
OVERALL RATING			

Capacity Interview Evaluation:

Each area listed above will be rated as follows:

- **Meets:** Addresses 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.
- **Approaches:** Addresses some of the criteria, or lacks meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
- **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.

The applicant group will also receive an overall rating of Beginning, Approaches, or Meets. The group must receive an overall rating of Meets to be further considered for charter approval. Please note, after the second capacity interview, the applicant group may be requested to clarify, in writing, one or more aspects of the application/budget.