



**2014**  
**Request for Proposals (RFP)**  
**Application to Receive Approval as an**  
**Authorizer of Minnesota Charter Schools**

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## Introduction

In cities and states across the country, high quality charter schools have become powerful and complementary strategies to improve public education in their communities. Local school superintendents, state superintendents, colleges, governors, mayors, university leaders, community leaders, not-for-profits, state departments of education and others are taking bold action to develop plans, form public-private partnerships, allocate resources, provide facilities, and implement policies to support high quality charter schools.

From the moment that our Legislature gave birth to charter schools by enacting the first charter school law in the country in 1991, Minnesota has long been a leader in the charter school sector. In 2012, Minnesota celebrated the 20th anniversary of our charter school law and the first charter school in the country, which opened in Minnesota in 1992. Since then, Minnesota charter schools have grown steadily to approximately 150 schools serving more than 43,000 public school students.

As a national leader in the charter school sector, we have learned through practice and experience that authorizers have a significant impact on the nature and quality of these public schools. The authorizer makes at least two critical decisions in the life of every charter school: whether to approve the school's application and whether to renew the school's contract. In addition, the authorizer has an ongoing relationship with approved schools through which it balances the need to represent the public interest in monitoring the school with ensuring that each school has the operational autonomy that is critical to the charter school model. There are specific characteristics of a quality authorizer that fulfill those responsibilities well. This request for proposals is designed to facilitate the submission of authorizer applications that reflect and align with those characteristics in a clear manner to promote authorizer excellence

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) worked closely with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to develop this authorizer approval process. NACSA was founded on the principle that every child should have the right to choose a high-quality school and advances that vision by promoting the establishment of quality charter schools through responsible oversight in the public interest. NACSA has also developed and implemented a system for comprehensive evaluation of authorizer quality. The central language in Minnesota's authorizer quality legislation, Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3, draws directly from NACSA's Principles and Standards for Quality Authorizing, and this request for proposals aligns directly with the Minnesota Legislature's mandate, the quality authorizing principles that provide the foundation for that mandate, and the performance measures of Minnesota's charter school authorizer performance evaluation system.

As individuals and organizations seek to become approved authorizers of charter schools in Minnesota, they join this history of school choice, autonomy, and innovation. MDE applauds those who apply to become approved authorizers as the application itself demonstrates commitment to the students of Minnesota and to improved outcomes for students and high-performing charter schools.

## Authorizer Application Review Timeline and Process

This review process is the only round of authorizer application reviews MDE will conduct in 2014. It begins with release of this request for proposals (RFP) and ends with the commissioner's final decisions. Following are the key stages and dates in the 2014 authorizer application review process.

Stage	Date
Request for Proposals Release	<b>Thursday, July 31, 2014</b>
Applicant Orientation/Information Session	<b>Thursday, August 21, 2014</b> (afternoon webinar) Contact <a href="mailto:mde.charterschools@state.mn.us">mde.charterschools@state.mn.us</a> by August 13, 2014 to participate in the webinar.
*Intent to Apply Notice due to MDE	<b>Friday, August 22, 2014</b>
Proposals Due/Application Deadline	<b>Friday, September 19, 2014</b> (must be received by 4:30 p.m. Central Time)
Applicant Interviews	Middle of October
Initial Approval/Disapproval Decisions and Notifications	No later than <b>November 25, 2014</b> **Within 45 business days of the application deadline
Submission to Demonstrate Satisfactory Remedy of Deficiencies	***"Within 20 business days of notification"
Final Decisions	***"After 20 days expire, the commissioner has 15 business days to make a final decision to approve or disapprove the application."***

### Intent to Apply Notice

\*In order to determine an appropriate number of reviewers and secure sufficient space for applicant interviews, an Intent to Apply Notice (see Attachment A) is due to MDE no later than **August 19, 2014**. Each applicant must submit an Intent to Apply Notice via email to [mde.charterschools@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.charterschools@state.mn.us).

*\*\*Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3(c), "The commissioner must approve or disapprove an application within 45 business days of the application deadline. If the commissioner disapproves the application, the commissioner must notify the applicant of the specific deficiencies in writing and the applicant then has 20 business days to address the deficiencies to the commissioner's satisfaction. After the 20 business days expire, the commissioner has 15 business days to make a final decision to approve or disapprove the application."*

## Authorizer Application Submission Instructions

### Complete Application

Only complete applications with all required narrative and attachments will be reviewed.

### Preparing Responses

*Read and adhere to the submission instructions for each Part of the application.*

**Part A** is up to a seven page narrative, plus relevant attachments.

**Part B** is up to a seven page narrative, plus relevant attachments.

**Part C** is an interview between the review panel and the individuals representing the applicant relevant to proposed authorizing duties.

**Attachments** submitted by the applicant are an essential component of the authorizer application. They are to be included following each part. The list of required attachments is included in Attachment E: Application Summary Form. Other relevant attachments should be labeled properly and referenced on Attachment E as well.

### Submission Instructions

Parts and attachments must be submitted and labeled in the same order as listed in these directions (see Attachment G: Order of Application Submission). It is important that the applicant submit materials in an organized fashion, including page numbers. Include attachments to the authorizer application following each part in the same order that they are listed on the Application Summary Form (see Attachment E).

The applicant must submit a total of six (6) unbound hard copies of the application to MDE:

- One (1) original single-sided copy; and
- Five (5) double-sided (back-to-back) copies.

In addition, applicants must submit **one or more PDFs** of the complete application by email ([mde.charterschools@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.charterschools@state.mn.us)) or on a USB-compatible flash drive.

### Where to Submit the Application

Complete applications, including six (6) hard copies and one (1) flash drive as described above, may be mailed or delivered to:

Minnesota Department of Education  
Attn: Jodi Brenden Amir  
Charter Center  
1500 Highway 36 West  
Roseville, MN 55113

## **When to Submit an Application**

The Intent to Apply Notice (see Attachment A) must be submitted electronically to <mailto:mde.charterschools@state.mn.us> by **August 22, 2014**. The submission deadline for the 2014 Authorizer Application is **September 19, 2014**. The commissioner will make initial application decisions within 45 business days following the submission deadline.

Applications must be received by MDE before 4:30 p.m. Central Time on the date due.

## **Application Cycle: 2014**

### **Submission Deadline: September 19, 2014**

### **Amending Responses**

**Do not** send unsolicited amendments to the application following its initial submission.

If an application is initially disapproved, the commissioner's notice will include reviewer feedback identifying any content that has been reviewed and determined to be unsatisfactory. Per Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3(c), if an application is disapproved, "the commissioner must notify the applicant of the specific deficiencies in writing and the applicant then has 20 business days to address the deficiencies to the commissioner's satisfaction. After the 20 business days expire, the commissioner has 15 business days to make a final decision to approve or disapprove the application." [View full text of statute here.](#)

### **Disposition of Responses**

Once an application is received, MDE may release to the public the name and mailing address of the applicant. All materials submitted in response to this request for proposals will become property of the State of Minnesota and will become public record in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 13, after the evaluation process is completed.

Completion of the evaluation process occurs when the commissioner has notified every authorizer applicant of final approval or disapproval. If the responder submits information in response to this request for proposals that it believes to be trade-secret materials as defined by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, section 13.37, the responder must:

- Clearly mark all trade secret materials in its response at the time the response is submitted.
- Include a statement justifying the trade-secret designation for each item.
- Defend any action seeking release of the materials it believes to be a trade secret, and indemnify and hold harmless the state, its agents and employees, from any judgments or damages awarded against the state in favor of the party requesting the materials, and any and all costs connected with that defense. This indemnification survives the state's award of a contract. In submitting a response to this request for proposals, the responder agrees that this indemnification survives as long as the trade-secret materials are in possession of the state.

## Authorizer Application Instructions, Evaluation Criteria, and Rating Scale

The authorizer approval process is designed to assess how well an applicant proposes to fulfill the role of a charter school authorizer, based on the requirements set out in Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10 (Charter Schools) and consistent with the National Association of Charter School Authorizer's *Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*. Each element of the authorizer application directly aligns with the performance measures of Minnesota's charter school authorizer performance evaluation system.

Reviewers will evaluate authorizer applications according to the same rating scale in MDE's authorizer performance evaluation system to evaluate existing authorizers at their five year benchmark. The scale allows for specificity, differentiation of performance, and precision in identifying strengths and weaknesses of proposed authorizer practices.

4	<b>Well-Developed and Promising Practice</b>	Content meets the minimum statutory requirements AND does an exceptional job of meeting MDE's standards for quality authorizing. Warrants notice from, and emulation by, other authorizers.
3	<b>Approaching Well-Developed</b>	Content meets the minimum statutory requirements AND exceeds standards in meeting MDE's standards for quality authorizing.
2	<b>Satisfactory</b>	Content meets the minimum statutory requirements AND meets minimum standards of MDE's standards for quality authorizing.
1	<b>Approaching satisfactory</b>	Content does not meet the minimum statutory requirements OR improvement is needed in order to meet MDE's standards for quality authorizing.
0	<b>Unsatisfactory or Incomplete</b>	Content is either lacking altogether or falls well below the minimum statutory requirements for authorizing AND/OR MDE's standards for quality authorizing.

*Please note that, in order to be an approved authorizer, an applicant must receive a satisfactory rating or higher on all rubric items.*

### Commissioner Approval or Disapproval

By law, the commissioner must make a determination regarding whether to approve or disapprove each eligible organization that submits a timely and complete application. Performance ratings are generated to support the commissioner's decision regarding approval or disapproval.

**Approval** - An approval by the commissioner means that the application, including proposed practices at a minimum, meets the statutory requirements for authorizing and MDE's standards for quality authorizing. An approval will be accompanied by the length of approval (up to five years). An approved authorizer will be subject to more frequent reviews if subsequent circumstances give MDE cause to conduct such reviews pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 3(g).

**Disapproval** - A disapproval by the commissioner means that MDE has found that, in whole or in part, the application, including proposed practices, does not meet the statutory requirements for authorizing and/or MDE's standards for quality authorizing. A recommendation to disapprove will be accompanied by documentation of the deficiencies in the application.

## Part A: Authorizer Capacity and Infrastructure

The purpose of Part A is to provide applicants an opportunity to demonstrate their capacity and commitment to further the purposes of Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10. This portion of the application directly aligns with the performance measures of Part A of the authorizer performance evaluation system.

Part A has several evaluated sections. Provide up to a **seven page narrative** for Part A plus attachments that address the applicant's mission and vision and capacity and infrastructure to authorize charter schools. In addition to the narrative, attachments must be included as noted.

### A.1 - Authorizer Mission

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant has a clear and compelling mission for charter school authorizing.

**Essential Elements:**

- The mission is stated and fully aligns with Minnesota charter school law
- The response includes a description of how the process of chartering schools is a way for the organization to carry out its mission

### A.2 – Authorizer Vision and Organizational Goals

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant has a comprehensive vision for charter school authorizing with clear organizational goals and time frames for achievement that are aligned with the purposes of Minnesota law.

**Essential Elements:**

- The vision aligns with state statute with measurable organizational goals and criteria by which the organization can evaluate its success as an authorizer
- The organizational goals address the first five years as an approved authorizer
- The vision includes any organization-specific purposes
- The vision addresses with specificity the desired characteristics of the schools it will charter

### A.3 – Authorizer Structure of Operations

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant has a clear structure of duties and responsibilities and sufficient resources to effectively oversee its portfolio of charter schools.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes a clear structure of duties and responsibilities which is reflected in an organizational chart and is at a level adequate to meet the needs of the portfolio
- The applicant describes how the organization will manage and safeguard information and records related to authorizing
- The applicant describes how the organization anticipates the operational structure and chartering responsibilities will occur over the next five years (number of schools chartered, ratio of authorizer staffing to the size of the portfolio of schools, etc.)
- The applicant describes the amount of time anticipated for each personnel member

**Required Attachments:**

- Job descriptions of authorizer's expected personnel
- An organizational chart that shows clear lines of reporting and authority/decision-making as well as projected staffing increases due to expansion over the next five years

#### **A.4 - Authorizer Staff Expertise**

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant has appropriate skills and expertise to sufficiently oversee the portfolio of charter schools.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes anticipated personnel roles on the authorizing staff with qualifications that address curriculum, instruction, management, facilities, finance, and law in charter schools

**Required Attachments:**

- A list of those currently involved in the application to become an approved authorizer, what each person's role is currently, and what each person's role will be if application is approved. Each person noted on the applicant information page must be addressed in this attachment.
- Resumes of existing personnel. Each should identify all schools, local education agencies (LEAs), state education agencies (SEAs), etc., with which the individual(s) has/have been associated/affiliated. Each person noted on the *Application Cover Sheet 2 – Applicant Contacts* must be addressed in this attachment.

#### **A.5 – Authorizer Capacity and Skill Development for Authorizing Leadership and Staff**

**Guiding Statements:** The applicant has a plan to build the knowledge and skill base of its authorizing leadership and staff through professional development. The applicant has a plan to provide professional development aligned with its operations, vision and goals for overseeing its portfolio of charter schools.

**Essential Elements**

- The applicant describes a plan to offer professional development to authorizing leadership and staff
- The applicant describes the frequency and nature of potential professional development as well as personnel expected to attend

#### **A.6 - Authorizer Operational Budget for Authorizing the Portfolio of Charter Schools**

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant has a plan to allocate resources commensurate with its budget, needs and responsibilities of authorizing the portfolio of charter schools.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant provides a five-year budget which details its financial needs, devotes sufficient financial resources to fulfill its authorizing responsibilities and includes the following:
  - Anticipated revenue sources (examples: fees collected annually from schools and additional funds from outside sources)
  - Anticipated expenditures such as staff, travel, consultants, and office costs
  - Anticipated authorizer staff increases in relation to portfolio growth
  - Applicant's specific resource development plan to ensure the organization has sufficient finances between the time of commissioner approval to authorize and

of the start of collecting school fees for services to launch and implement its authorizing activities

- o The budget projects the number and size of schools in the portfolio

**Important note:** this establishes the approved maximum portfolio size for the authorizer's initial five year approval

**Required Attachment:**

- Five-year projected budget which meets the criteria above

## **A.7 - Authorizer Operational Conflicts of Interest**

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant plans to implement a clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision making processes concerning the portfolio of charter schools.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes a clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision making processes concerning the portfolio of charter schools
- The applicant describes how the policy will be implemented (forms, process, etc.) in order to avoid conflicts of interest that might affect the applicant's capacity to make objective, merit-based application and renewal decisions, including avoiding decisions and interventions that hold the authorizer accountable for the school's performance

**Required Attachment:**

- Proposed authorizer conflict of interest policy and implementation process (could include forms, check lists, etc.)

## **A.8 - Ensuring Autonomy of the Schools in the Portfolio**

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant plans to implement a policy to preserve and support the essential autonomies of the portfolio of charter schools.

**Essential Element:**

- The applicant describes a clear policy to insure school autonomy
- The applicant describes an implementation plan to uphold school autonomy
- The applicant describes a focus on holding schools accountable for outcomes rather than on processes

## **A.9 - Authorizer Self-Evaluation of Capacity, Infrastructure, and Capacity**

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant plans to self-evaluate its internal ability (capacity, infrastructure, and practices) to oversee the portfolio of charter schools.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes a plan to regularly review its internal ability to oversee the portfolio of charter schools
- The applicant describes the organization's process to implement continuous improvement plans which will result in more effective authorizing practices
- The applicant describes the process the organization will use to evaluate its work regularly against its mission, vision, and goals
- The applicant describes the organization's frameworks for addressing any needs for improvement when falling short of its mission, organizational goals or strategic plan

## **A.10 - Authorizer High Quality Authorizing Dissemination**

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant plans to disseminate best authorizing practices and/or assist other authorizers in high quality authorizing.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes the organization's proposed process to share best practices and/or provide assistance to other authorizers in Minnesota
- The applicant describes the organization's intent to engage with other professionals (such as state or national associations) in order to promote high quality authorizing dissemination

**A.11 - Authorizer Compliance to Responsibilities Stated in Statute**

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant intends to comply with reporting, submissions, and deadlines set forth in Minnesota Statute.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes its internal process which will ensure that it will comply with reporting, submissions, and deadlines set forth in Minnesota Statutes

## Part B: Authorizer Processes and Decision Making

The purpose of Part B is to assess the organization's understanding of and plans to implement critical authorizer practices. The majority of this part of the application focuses on these proposed practices with each section addressing a functional area of the authorizing role. This portion of the application directly aligns with the performance measures of Part B of the authorizer performance evaluation system.

Provide up to a **seven page narrative** for Part B plus attachments that address the applicant's plans for charter school decision making, contracting and oversight, performance-based accountability and autonomy.

In addition to the narrative, the application must include attachments as noted in the sections.

*Please note that MDE understands some or all of these attachments may be located in a single resource (such as a chartering manual). If that is the case, in addition to identifying the page number on the Application Summary Form (see Attachment E), please ensure the narrative response to each section clearly identifies where each attachment is located.*

### B.1 - New Charter School Decisions: Standards and Process

**Guiding Statements:** The applicant has clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate new charter school proposals. The applicant outlines decision making processes that will promote the growth of high quality charter schools.

#### Essential Elements:

- The applicant describes the organization's comprehensive new school application process for developing schools. The response includes clear application questions and guidance as well as fair, transparent procedures and rigorous criteria
- The applicant describes the timeline of the new school application process consistent with statutory deadlines per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 4](#)
- The applicant describes the application criteria for developing schools as consistent with the applicant's performance standards/framework as described in B.4
- The applicant describes the details of new school applications which address each of the following items:
  - Mission/Vision
  - Need/Demand
  - Primary statutory purpose of improving pupil learning and student achievement ([Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 1](#)) and how the school will report the implementation of it to the applicant
  - Additional purpose(s) and how the school will report the implementation of said purpose(s) to the authorizer
  - Program designed for students to meet or exceed the outcome expectations adopted by the commission for public school students ([Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 10](#))
  - Academic plan: description of the school program, specific academic and nonacademic outcomes that students must achieve, educational philosophy and approach, school culture, curriculum and instruction, assessment and services for special populations

- Operational plan: governance and management, administration, human resource recruitment and development, student recruitment and enrollment, admission policy, school calendar, parent and community involvement, operational outcomes and compliance with applicable laws and regulations
- Financial plan: short and long-term financial projections, budget(s), business management procedures, financial outcomes and facility planning

**Required Attachments:**

- Proposed new charter school application, policies, procedures, timelines, and processes (including charter school application packet that covers, at a minimum, all elements found in this section)

**B.2 - Interim Accountability Decisions (i.e. school opening, expansion and change in authorizer)**

**Guiding Statement:** The applicant has a clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate school opening decisions as well as proposals of existing charter school expansion requests and interim changes.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes the timeline of processes for interim decisions consistent with statutory deadlines per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 4](#)
- The applicant describes application processes for interim decisions which are comprehensive; include clear application questions and guidance; and include fair, transparent procedures, timelines and rigorous criteria. The response should address each of the following items:
  - The applicant describes the sound academic, operational and financial conditions that must be met in order for the school to be approved to open
  - The applicant describes the sound academic, operational and financial conditions that must be met in order for the school to be approved to expand
  - The applicant describes the sound academic, operational and financial conditions that must be met in order to be approved for a change in authorizer affidavit
  - The applicant describes criteria which afford schools a meaningful opportunity to present evidence related to their performance and to amend the contract to reflect the current state of the school

**Required Attachment:**

- Ready to open standards, processes and timelines to verify a school is ready to opening before serving students
- Proposed expansion application, policies, procedures, timelines and processes (including charter school application packet that covers, at a minimum, all elements found in this section)
- Proposed change in authorizer application, policies, procedures, timelines and processes (including charter school application packet that covers, at a minimum, all elements found in this section)

**B.3 - Contract Term, Negotiation, and Execution**

**Guiding statement:** The applicant has contracts that clearly define material terms and rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant's proposed contracts meet all current statutory requirements (See [Charter Contract Guidance](#) on the MDE website)
- The applicant's proposed contracts clearly state the rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer
- The applicant describes timelines and processes for contracts in order to meet the following expectations
- Contracts are fully executed by the start date of the contract term
- Contracts are submitted to MDE within 10 business days of contract execution

**Required Attachment:**

- Sample charter contract (See [Charter Contract Guidance](#) on the MDE website)

## **B.4 - Performance Standards**

**Guiding statement:** The applicant has a performance framework under which to execute contracts with clear, measurable, and attainable performance standards.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes a performance framework which meets all statutory requirements for performance standards per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 1](#)
- The performance framework states that the primary purpose of the charter schools in the applicant's future portfolio will be to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement ([Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 1](#))
- The performance framework states that the charter schools in the applicant's future portfolio will design their programs to meet or exceed the outcome expectations adopted by the commission for public school students ([Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 10](#))
- The applicant describes a performance framework which defines clear, measurable and attainable academic, operational, and financial performance standards for all schools in its portfolio per [Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 1](#)
- The applicant describes clear standards for consequences for meeting or not meeting performance standards

**Required Attachment:**

- Proposed Performance Framework

## **B.5 - Authorizer's Processes for Ongoing Oversight of the Portfolio Charter Schools**

**Guiding statement:** The applicant has processes to monitor and oversee the schools in its portfolio in the areas of academic, operational, and financial performance.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes an oversight plan which clearly defines the roles of the authorizer and the school
- The applicant describes an oversight plan which clearly establishes the criteria, processes, and procedures that the authorizer will use to competently evaluate performance and monitor compliance; ensure schools' legally entitled autonomy; protect student rights; and inform intervention, termination, and renewal decisions

## **B.6 - Authorizer's Standards and Processes for Interventions, Corrective Actions, and Response to Complaints**

**Guiding statement:** The applicant has clear and comprehensive standards and processes to address complaints, interventions and/or corrective action.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes proposed standards and processes to address and resolve complaints, intervention and/or corrective action
- The applicant describes an implementation plan of the standards and processes

### **B.7 - Charter School Support, Development, and Technical Assistance**

**Guiding statement:** The applicant has an established process to support its portfolio of charter schools through intentional assistance and development offerings.

**Essential Element:**

- The applicant describes its intent to provide support and technical assistance in a variety of areas and in a manner to preserve school autonomy

### **B.8 - High Quality Charter School Replication and/or Dissemination of Best School Practices**

**Guiding statement:** The applicant has an established process to promote the replication and dissemination of best school practices of high performing charter schools in the portfolio.

**Essential Element:**

- The applicant describes a clear plan for successful model replication and dissemination of best practices

### **B.9 - Charter School Renewal or Termination Decision**

**Guiding statement:** The applicant has clear and comprehensive standards and processes to make high stakes renewal and termination decisions.

**Essential Elements:**

- The applicant describes transparent and rigorous standards and processes designed to use comprehensive academic, financial, student performance, and operational performance data to make merit-based renewal decisions and terminate charters when necessary to protect student and public interests
- The applicant describes the criteria, processes, and procedures that will be used to evaluate school academic, operational, and financial performance to make high stakes decisions consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivisions [6\(7\)](#), [6\(8\)](#), and [15\(a\)](#)
- The applicant describes the criteria, processes, and procedures that will be used to evaluate that students have met or exceeded the outcome expectations adopted by the commission for public school students ([Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Subdivision 10](#))
- The applicant describes the criteria, processes, and procedures by which the formal written performance evaluation of the terms of current contract will be used to determine eligibility for contract renewal
- The applicant describes the criteria, processes, and procedures by which termination of contract and/or school closure decisions will be made when lack of performance of

contracted academic, operation, and/or financial outcomes indicate a need for said decision

- The applicant describes criteria, processes, and procedures for oversight of orderly school closure in the event of revocation, non-renewal or voluntary relinquishment of the charter

**Required Attachment:**

- Proposed renewal application, policies, procedures, timelines and processes
- School Closure Plan

## Part C: Applicant Interview

The communication and implementation of the applicant's proposed practices are of vital importance to charter school authorizing. Following the desk review of Parts A and B, reviewers will generate interview questions to reflect points of interest, areas for clarification, or concerns that emerged from the review process. Individuals relevant to the organization's authorizing duties will be interviewed. The interview session will be conducted at MDE.

The purpose of the Applicant Interview is to gain clarity on questions or concerns that arise from the review of the application. In addition, it provides an opportunity for the applicant to clearly articulate the overall authorizing plan, including the philosophy, policies, processes and short and long-term plans.

**Guiding Question:** Can the applicant clearly articulate an understanding of the overall authorizing plan and how the plan would be implemented?

### Evaluation Criteria

This portion of the application evaluates the applicant's **understanding of and ability to clearly articulate** the authorizing plans. This includes displaying clarity and comprehension as well as a commitment to becoming an effective authorizer.

- **Clarity:** The applicant's responses are precise, effective, thoughtful and direct
- **Comprehension:** The applicant is well-informed and demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of the written application
- **Commitment:** The applicant conveys a genuine interest and commitment to becoming an effective authorizer

## RFP Attachments – Authorizer Application Process

Attachment	Title
A	Intent to Apply Notice
B	Application Cover Sheet (Sheet 1 –Contact and Eligibility Information)
C	Application Cover Sheet 2 –Existing Personnel
D	Application Cover Sheet (Sheet 2 – Assurances)
E	Application Summary Form
F	Order of Application Submission

### Intent to Apply Notice

**Instructions:** In order to determine an appropriate number of reviewers and secure sufficient space for applicant interviews, MDE respectfully requests all applicants submit this Intent to Apply Notice no later than August 22, 2014.

Submit the notice via email to [mde.charterschools@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.charterschools@state.mn.us).

<b>Name of Organization</b> (intended applicant):	
<b>Name of Applicant's Primary Contact:</b>	
<b>Applicant's Primary Contact Information</b> (include email, mailing address and phone number):	
<p><b>Type of Organization</b> (Check the appropriate boxes below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Independent school district school board</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate school district school board</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Education district organized under sections 123A.15 to 123A.19</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Institution of higher education - check the authorizer category the organization meets           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minnesota private college that grants two- or four-year degrees and is registered with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education under chapter 136A</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community college, state university, or technical college, governed by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> University of Minnesota</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit corporation subject to chapter 317A, described in section 317A.905, and exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)6 of the Internal Revenue Code</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Single Purpose Authorizer - check the authorizer category the organization meets           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under section 317A as a corporation with no members</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under section 322B.975 as a nonprofit limited liability company for the sole purpose of chartering schools</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Please note:</b> Single purpose authorizers "shall consider and approve applications using the criteria provided in subdivision 4 and shall not limit the applications it solicits, considers, or approves to any single curriculum, learning program, or method" (Minn. Stat., § 124D.10, Subd. 3(b)(5)).</p>	

## Application Cover Sheet 1 – Contact and Eligibility Information

*(Submit with Authorizer Application)*

<b>Name of Organization</b> (applicant):	
<b>Name of Applicant's Primary Contact:</b>	
<b>Applicant's Primary Contact Information</b> <i>(include email, mailing address and phone number):</i>	
<p><b>Type of Organization</b> <i>(Check all appropriate boxes below):</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Independent school district school board, intermediate school district school board, or education district organized under sections 123A.15 to 123A.19</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (exclusions apply; see Minn. Stat 124D.10, Subd 3(b) for complete information.).</p> <p><b>Include as labeled attachments the organization's most current version of every item requested below:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of the applicant's <i>current</i> status under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.</li> <li>• Documentation to evidence the organization's current membership with the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits or the Minnesota Council on Foundations (membership must be active when the application is submitted).</li> <li>• Documentation of the organization's "Active" registration with the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General when the application is submitted to MDE.</li> <li>• Documentation from the Minnesota Secretary of State to evidence the organization has been incorporated in the state of Minnesota and has been operating continuously for at least five years.</li> <li>• Documentation to verify the organization does not operate a charter school.</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Institution of higher education - check the authorizer category the organization meets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minnesota private college that grants two- or four-year degrees and is registered with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education under chapter 136A</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community college, state university, or technical college, governed by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> University of Minnesota</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit corporation subject to chapter 317A, described in section 317A.905, and exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)6 of the Internal Revenue Code</p> <p><b>Include as an attachment the organization's most current version of both items requested below:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation from the Internal Revenue Service to evidence the organization's federal income tax exemption under section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.</li> <li>• Documentation from the Minnesota Secretary of State to evidence the organization has been incorporated in the state of Minnesota and existed as a nonprofit for at least 25 years (i.e., since September 1987.)</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Single Purpose Authorizer <i>(Check the authorizer category the organization meets below):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Charitable, nonsectarian organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under section 317A as a corporation with no members</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code under section 322B.975 as a nonprofit limited liability company for the sole purpose of chartering schools</li> </ul> <p><b>Include as an attachment the organization's most current version of both items requested below:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Documentation from the Internal Revenue Service to evidence the organization is a charitable, nonsectarian organization formed under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.</li> <li>2) Documentation from the Minnesota Secretary of State to evidence the organization is incorporated in the state of Minnesota as a charitable, non-sectarian organization.</li> </ol>	



**Application Cover Sheet 3 – Assurances**

*(Submit with Authorizer Application)*

**LEGALLY BINDING**

By signing this form, I/we acknowledge that I/we am/are aware of authorizer responsibilities in their entirety as stated within the application materials and shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, ordinances, rules, regulations and provisions stated therein should the organization be approved to authorize charter schools in Minnesota. I/we hereby assure and agree to comply with all conditions of the approved application and submit required documents and certifications as required should the organization be approved as an authorizer.

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION**

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**IDENTIFIED OFFICIAL WITH AUTHORITY**

---

Type Name and Title

---

Signature *(person with authority to sign legal documents on behalf of the organization)*

---

Date

**Organization's Primary Contact for this Application** *(if different from above)*

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Typed Name and Title

---

Signature

---

**Application Summary Form**  
(Submit with Authorizer Application)

**Instructions:** The documents listed below are **required** as part of the application process. Additional documents should be added to the chart below and included in the order listed following the relevant Section. Use additional pages, as needed.

Application Section	Document Title	Location in Application <i>(page number)</i>
	Attachment B RFP Application Cover Sheet 1: Contact Information	
	Organization's eligibility documentation (as required on Cover Sheet 1)	
	Attachment C RFP Application Cover Sheet 2: Existing Personnel	
	Attachment D RFP Application Cover Sheet 3: Assurances	
	Attachment E – RFP Application Summary Form	
<b>Part A: Authorizer Capacity and Infrastructure</b>		
Section A.1:	No attachments required	
Section A.2:	No attachments required	
Section A.3	Job descriptions of authorizer's expected personnel	
Section A.3	Organizational chart	
Section A.4	List of currently involved persons, their current roles, and their future roles	
Section A.4	Resumes of existing personnel	
Section A.5:	No attachments required	
Section A.6:	Five-year projected budget	
Section A.7:	Proposed authorizer conflict of interest policy and implementation process (could include forms, check lists, etc.)	
Section A.8:	No attachments required	
Section A.9:	No attachments required	
Section A.10:	No attachments required	
Section A.11:	No attachments required	
<b>Part B: Authorizer Processes and Decision Making</b>		
Section B.1:	Proposed new charter school application, policies, procedures, timelines, and processes (including charter school application packet that covers, at a minimum, all elements found in this section)	
Section B.2:	Ready to open standards, processes and timelines to verify a school is ready to opening before serving students	
Section B.2:	Proposed expansion application, policies, procedures, and processes (including charter school application packet that covers, at a minimum, all elements found in this section)	
Section B.2:	Proposed change in authorizer application, policies, procedures, timelines and processes (including charter school application packet	

<b>Application Section</b>	<b>Document Title</b>	<b>Location in Application</b> <i>(page number)</i>
	that covers, at a minimum, all elements found in this section)	
Section B.3:	Sample charter contract (See <a href="#">Charter Contract Guidance</a> on the MDE website)	
Section B.4:	Proposed Performance Framework	
Section B.5	No attachments required	
Section B.6	No attachments required	
Section B.7	No attachments required	
Section B.8	No attachments required	
Section B.9	Proposed renewal application, policies, procedures, timelines and processes	
Section B.9	School Closure Plan	

## **Order of Application Submission**

*(Do not submit this page)*

### **Documents must be organized and submitted in the following order:**

Cover page

RFP Attachment B: *Application Cover Sheet 1: Contact Information*

Organization's eligibility documentation *(as required on Attachment B - Cover Sheet 1)*

RFP Attachment C: *Application Cover Sheet 2: Applicant Contacts*

RFP Attachment D: *Application Cover Sheet 3: Assurances*

RFP Attachment E: *Application Summary Form*

Part A: *Narrative*

Part A: *Attachments*

Part B: *Narrative*

Part B: *Attachments*